



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

**Procurement Services**

12424 Research Parkway, Suite 355

Orlando, FL 32826-3249

## ADDENDUM

IMPORTANT DOCUMENT – INVITATION TO NEGOTIATE

ITN NUMBER: 2023-10TCSA

ITN TITLE: FINANCIAL AID LEVERAGING CONSULTING SERVICES

OPENING DATE & TIME: May 3, 2024 @ 2:00PM EST

ADDENDUM NUMBER: II

ADDENDUM DATE: 04/19/2024

**The purpose of this addendum is to:**

- **Answer questions submitted during the Question/Answer period.**

PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THIS ADDENDUM AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR OFFER.  
FAILURE TO SIGN AND RETURN WITH YOUR OFFER COULD RESULT IN REJECTION OF YOUR OFFER.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PROPOSER'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT OR TYPE PROPOSER'S NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
COMPANY NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS

## Answers to Questions ITN2023-10TCSA

**QUESTION 1:** Does UCF have a budget or not to exceed (NTE) amount for this work?

**Answer:** The budget should not exceed \$100K annually.

**QUESTION 2:** Is the university interested in additional recommendations such as financial aid videos, net price calculator, predictive modeling for retention, or student retention surveys?

**Answer:** We are interested in having a net price calculator along with the financial aid leveraging tool.

**QUESTION 3:** What are the university's top three objectives for this work? (i.e., increasing graduation rates, balancing merit/need, expanding student diversity, increasing out of state students, raising academic ability, other?)

**Answer:** We are interested in developing a merit-aid model for both in-state and out-of-state students that allows us to strategically spend our dollars while maintaining the number of high achieving students. We are also interested in developing a need-based aid model for both FTIC and Transfer students that helps to increase retention and graduation rates.

**QUESTION 4:** Per section 2.2, can UCF please provide the decision timeline for this ITN?

**Answer:** June 2024

**QUESTION 5:** Per section 2 of the Contractual Services Acknowledgement Form, are you willing to accept an electronic signature in lieu of a wet ink signature on all forms?

**Answer:** Yes

**QUESTION 6:** Per section 2.21, can UCF explain if "The University's expectation is to receive recommendations during September 2024 to consider any financial aid changes for the incoming class in Fall Semester 2025" is the contract start date October 1, 2024, or would it be willing to start a contract sooner (e.g., July 1, 2024)?

**Answer:** Potentially, yes.

**QUESTION 7:** Per Appendix VII, we are extremely cautious in sharing information that contains our security safe measures for data (e.g., HECVAT). Would UCF accept this information via a secured box link?

**Answer:** Yes. UCF IT suggests including it as an attachment on an encrypted email as well.

**QUESTION 8:** Per section 1.1, are you interested in a Net Price Calculator as part of bidder's ITN response?

**Answer:** Yes

**QUESTION 9:** Section 1.1 Statement of Objective - Will the University provide the number of resources/FTEs on the internal team they expect to be involved throughout the project and will the University allocate a project manager to the project?

**Answer:** Yes

**QUESTION 10:** Section 1.1 Statement of Objective - Will the University provide the expected number of resources they expect to interact with the solution? Please provide numbers by roles of each user (Administrator, full user, limited user, read only user), across respective units expected to utilize the tool?  
**Answer:** Administrator: 2, Full user: 4, Limited user: 3, Read only user: 2

**QUESTION 11:** Section 1.1 Statement of Objective - How many University resources will be available/allocated for integration and what role do you expect them to play throughout the project?  
**Answer:** Up to 4 university resources.

**QUESTION 12:** Section 1.3 Environment - What, if any, is the current annual internal spend for solutions already in place and to support this process (including resources)?  
**Answer:** \$150K including the solution and staff resources.

**QUESTION 13:** Section 1.3 Environment - What tools and systems does the University currently own for BI, Integration, Cloud, Data Warehouses, etc. (such as Tableau, Power BI, Informatica, DBT, FiveTran, MuleSoft, Salesforce, Google, AWS, Snowflake, etc.) that are currently licensed, used by the University, and might be available for the eventual project? A comprehensive understanding of what is currently owned / licensed by the University would be helpful to ensure an understanding of what can be leveraged to provide a best-in-class solution and the highest value.  
**Answer:** Tableau but the financial aid office does not use it. The financial aid office uses SAS EG.

**QUESTION 14:** Section 1.3 Environment - What tools and solutions does the University currently use to integrate software's across the current environment, with Slate and PeopleSoft Systems, and what is your integration standard?  
**Answer:** Slate for Undergraduate Admissions and PeopleSoft Systems for Financial Aid.

**QUESTION 15:** Section 1.3 Environment - Is it desired or expected that the chosen solution be able to integrate with other financial planning/modeling tools used across campus?  
**Answer:** No, that is not an expectation.

**QUESTION 16:** Section 1.3 Environment - Outside Slate and PeopleSoft, are there any other data sources you currently use to develop and analyze your financial aid processes and awards.  
**Answer:** No

**QUESTION 17:** Section 1.3 Environment - Can the University confirm they are not using an external, 3rd party, financial aid tool and is currently performing all tasks internally via a homegrown solution?  
**Answer:** All awarding is done through the PeopleSoft Financial Aid Module.

**QUESTION 18:** Section 1.3 Environment - What is the current financial aid modeling process and can the University provide any process flows, tools used (excel, SQL, etc.) or documentation detailing the current process?  
**Answer:** The current financial aid modeling process is done through a series of equations to include SQL in the PeopleSoft Financial Aid Module. These processes are all documented and will share with the selected vendor.

**QUESTION 19:** Section 1.3 Environment - Can the University provide its current financial aid awarding timeline?

**Answer:** The financial aid office is looking to start financial aid awarding for the 2024-25 academic year, the week of April 22<sup>nd</sup> and will continue as viable and correct FAFSA's are received.

**QUESTION 20:** Section 1.3 Environment - What are the key issues and primary areas of improvement the University sees/has with its current process?

**Answer:** We have maintained the same processes for years and believe that the current processes are not as strategic as they could be, and we want to leverage the funding we have using data to guide the decision making process.

**QUESTION 21:** Section 1.3 Environment - Has the University leveraged outside providers or consultants to process and propose current/past aid packages (e.g. yield and optimization consulting)? If so, what vendors have been leveraged, for how long have they been leveraged, what specific functions have they been used for, do any of those services expect to be replaced by this project, and what is the range of approximate historical spend over the past 3 years?

**Answer:** We've worked with a current vendor for two years on financial aid leveraging of merit and need-based aid. The work they done would be fully replaced with the new vendor if they are no longer the selected vendor.

**QUESTION 22:** Section 2.2 Approximate Calendar of Events - Can the University provide the approximate timeline for steps/actions after the RFP submission leading up to project start such as the following:

- Notification of down selection
- Presentation of Project Approach and Demonstration of Solution
- Intent to Award Notification
- Contract Execution
- Project Start Date

**Answer:** Per Section 2.10 of the ITN, any submitted offer shall in its entirety remain a valid offer for 120 days after the offer submission due date. For steps after offer submission, please refer to the below sections of the ITN and question.

- [Section 2.8 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process](#)
- [Section 2.9 Posting of Recommended Selection](#)
- [Section 2.21 Term of Contract](#)
- [See Question 4](#)

**QUESTION 23:** Section 2.3 Respondent Communications and/or Inquiries - Has the University met with or had any presentations or demonstrations with any vendors related to in the preparation for this ITN that may respond within the past 18 months? If so, please provide the names of the vendors, module/solution discussed, and the month of those meetings?

**Answer:** No

**QUESTION 24:** Section 2.8 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process - What is the make-up and representation of the titles, groups, and departments involved in the evaluation and tabulation of the responses to the ITN?

**Answer:** The potential make-up and representation of the group of evaluators is explained in Section 2.8, item C of the ITN.

**QUESTION 25:** Section 2.8 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process - While our solution directly solves this need for Aid / Scholarships and the capabilities requested, our platform is typically also leveraged for other use cases by budget and finance, enrollment management, IT, capital and facilities, HR and other departments within an organization, potentially at zero to minimal additional software cost. Can the University confirm representation from a member of the budget and finance department (or other department) on the evaluation committee, if not can they be added to the committee to ensure other groups understand how a solution may help / be leveraged by their unit or more easily provide data (such as 4-year cost of awarding) more easily.

**Answer:** This project is solely related to financial aid leveraging and no other purpose. There will not be other stakeholders from HR, Finance, or Facilities.

**QUESTION 26:** Section 2.8 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process - Will there be a demonstration of the solution and a presentation detailing our background and project approach as part of this evaluation process?

**Answer:** The Decision Maker can request to have vendor(s) presentation if desired as part of the decision making process. Per Section 2.8, item C, The Decision Maker shall review, in the manner and to the extent he/she deems reasonable under the circumstances, the ITN, the offers, and evaluators' scoring forms. While not bound to them, the Decision Maker may give deference to the scoring forms. Based on what the Decision Maker determines is in the best interest of UCF, the Decision Maker will then make the final decision whether or not to recommend the award of a contract to a Respondent to this ITN, negotiate with the respondent(s) whose offer(s) may be beneficial to the university, or cancel the ITN.

**QUESTION 27:** Section 2.8 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process - If there is a demonstration and presentation detailing our background and approach to this project, how is this incorporated in the evaluation criteria/weighting? For example, is the weighting provided leading to a shortlist / down selection of 2-3 vendors and the final decision once this occurs solely based on the evaluation of that presentation/meeting?

**Answer:** See Question 26

**QUESTION 28:** What is the current budget for financial aid leveraging?

**Answer:** The current budget is \$100K annually.

**QUESTION 29:** Are you using a current vendor for financial aid leveraging and if so, who?

**Answer:** Yes, RNL.

**QUESTION 30:** If you are using a current vendor, why are you looking to switch vendors?

**Answer:** Per UCF's procurement policy, a formal invitation to negotiate is required for total dollar amount greater than \$150K. The total acquisition cost (annual cost per year including potential renewals) will exceed the university's formal bid threshold.

**QUESTION 31:** Is this RFP a procurement requirement to renew a current contract?

**Answer:** [Given we have an incumbent supplier, if they are the selected vendor, yes, this would allow us to renew our current contract.](#)

**QUESTION 32:** On what date do you anticipate making an award?

**Answer:** [See question 22](#)

**QUESTION 33:** Will you provide vendors with an opportunity to meet or demo prior to award?

**Answer:** [See question 26](#)

**QUESTION 34:** Will a committee be involved in the selection and what are the titles of members participating?

**Answer:** [See question 24](#)

**QUESTION 35:** Is this RFP a procurement requirement to renew your current financial aid consultation vendor?

**Answer:** [See question 31](#)

**QUESTION 36:** What functional/operational issues with the current financial aid model is the University seeking to improve?

**Answer:** [See question 3](#)

**QUESTION 37:** Do you have interest in expanding your use of predictive and prescriptive models outside of financial aid? (i.e. enrollment, student success, retention?)

**Answer:** [No](#)

**QUESTION 38:** Would the University be open to utilizing existing contract vehicles – for instance, E&I – for this work?

**Answer:** [No](#)

**QUESTION 39:** How does the University define “near real-time”? (Page 6)

**Answer:** [See question 44](#)

**QUESTION 40:** Is there a budget range for this project that you can share? (Page 31)

**Answer:** [Budget range is \\$75K - \\$100K](#)

**QUESTION 41:** Where will the Financial Aid Leveraging Solution be hosted? Would you like to have a SaaS solution or host it within your organization's cloud environment?

**Answer:** [The leveraging solution will be used to build packaging plans that are housed within PeopleSoft.](#)

**QUESTION 42:** What cloud platforms do you have subscriptions to (e.g. Azure, GCP, AWS)? What cloud services are being used internally for similar solutions today?

**Answer:** The university has Azure, Slate, Salesforce, and EAB. The Financial aid office does not use these services.

**QUESTION 43:** Is there an existing financial aid solution being used today to replace? Will you require services for data migration and integration?

**Answer:** The financial aid solution is housed within PeopleSoft. We will not require services for data migration or integration however we're open to hearing about it if that's a possibility.

**QUESTION 44:** How would you define "near real-time" when describing aid adjustment calculations? Would daily calculation on batch process be sufficient frequency?

**Answer:** Aid adjustments weekly via batch is the current process.

**QUESTION 45:** How many distinct data sources will need to be used and integrated to the solution (e.g student data, enrollments data)

**Answer:** student data, FAFSA data, enrollment data

**QUESTION 46:** How many distinct screens are expected on the interactive dashboard?

**Answer:** That is difficult to answer. 3 – 5 possibly

**QUESTION 47:** How many users will need use to the solution? What are different user personas (e.g. admin, end user)?

**Answer:** See question 10

**QUESTION 48:** What are some of KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) you are tracking for the financial aid process? Which KPIs would you like to track in the new solution/dashboard?

**Answer:** The KPIs are based on the amount of institutional funding spent to build similar or more desirable incoming classes. Other Key Performance Indicators would be GPA and test statistics for the incoming class and retention and graduation metrics.

**QUESTION 49:** Is there a budget limitation/cap that should be considered when scoping for delivery of all services?

**Answer:** See question 28

**QUESTION 50:** What student information system does UCF utilize?

**Answer:** See question 14

**QUESTION 51:** We have several edits to the terms and conditions included in the ITN. Can you please advise on the University's response:

**Answer:**

Please refer to Appendix I, Supplemental Offer Sheet Terms and Conditions, which includes sections/terms that are negotiable and non-negotiable. Terms that are negotiable can be addressed during negotiation with the awarded supplier. Respondents disagreeing with any negotiable term or condition of this ITN are

to provide a clear and detailed reason for the disagreement and a solution to the disagreement in his/her offer. A Respondent's disagreement with any non-negotiable sections/terms of this ITN may be automatically rejected. See section 2.50.