

September 11, 2019

**Clarification I: Question and Answer**

**Ref: Bid #220-05 – Information Technology (IT) Consulting Services**

Grand Valley State University responded to the following questions asked during our Skype conference call held on September 10, 2019 at 3:00 PM E.S.T. in regards to our request for proposal(s) for IT Consulting Services. Please reference questions and answers listed below.

**Question #1** – Adnan Shaben

After this assessment is done, what is the end goal for Grand Valley State University (GVSU)? Is this an internal document only? What is the purpose of the engagement?

**Answer #1** – Robert Adams

GVSU’s new President’s vision for where the University might be in the future with enrollments and demographic population changing. GVSU cannot rely on 18-20-year-old students only and GVSU is looking to see how we can diversify who we can serve others like veterans, retirees, people who are changing careers, people who want to advance current career and so forth. A large part of that is the IT infrastructure and all the support structure that goes into the university. My view of this project is taking a holistic view of the IT infrastructure and asking questions like will it serve us moving forward, growing not only in terms of number of students but in terms of instruction modalities, in terms of how operations does its work, billing, tuition, registration. Again, all of the technical aspects of how the university runs.

**Question #2** – Adnan Shaben

No matter what the recommendation is, will the information just be used internally or is there opportunities for vendors to participate in some of the recommendations? You have a pretty sizeable staff and what your thoughts are for resources going forward?

**Answer #2** – Ed Aboufadel

This maybe one of the questions we might explore in this process, to figure out going forward what the right size is for our information technology unit.

**Answer #2** – Robert Adams

It would not be out of the question if the best solution is an external solution, then we would look at that.

**Answer #2** – Ed Aboufadel

We are not starting with that assumption. We are trying to assess where we are at in terms of IT here on our campus. From there, we will start making some decisions.

**Answer #2** – Sue Korzinek

The new president continues to talk about the capacity in different areas on campus. The primary goal is to see if IT is at its capacity now with its current resources, is there more the department could be doing, and or should we stop doing some things in order to move the Department and the University into the future. We want to look at things from a different lens, considering capacity as well as our performance. We want to determine if we are adding value, what more could we can be doing if we had different resources or whether or not existing resources could or should be allocated differently.

**Question #3**

Regarding your staff, it is 74 full time staff? Are you thinking we should be interviewing each of these staff? How do you want the assessment from a staffing point of view? Are the right people in the right spots or is that too detailed?

**Answer #3** – Sue Korzinek

Correct. We are already working on that here as a team. We are inviting people to participate in anticipation of working with the selected vendor and figuring out what the biggest value is and who we should talk to. Certainly not every person in IT and not every person who has volunteered to participate. However, we are asking for everyone’s input if they want to give it. Individuals may have some ideas of what to do or what they would do differently if they had an opportunity. Therefore, we are in the process of doing prep work to help the selected vendor with a jump start on figuring out the key stakeholders to talk to in each of the areas we identified.

**Answer #3** – Ed Aboufadel

Not anticipating one on one conversations but focus groups.

**Answer #3** – Sue Korzinek

There could be one on one if the selected firm decided that was needed in certain areas but I think we are going to get the biggest amount of value by some focus groups.

**Question #4** – Joe Rossmeier

Does the institution have a strategic plan and what year of that plan is in operation this year?

**Answer #4** – Sue Korzinek

We currently have a strategic plan through 2021. Available on our website.

**Answer #4** – Ed Aboufadel

We have started conversations about writing the next strategic plan.

**Question #5** – Joel Evans

How much data or information will be available to share versus how much will have to come out of focus groups?

**Answer #5** – Sue Korzinek

We have a number of combined documents of projects within IT and multiple units on campus in order to quantify the work we are doing to get at the capacity. There will be some reports to hand over to the firm that is selected as well as some focus groups who have had some discussions this past spring in looking at future technologies and where they see the need in their functional areas. Primarily in the areas that drive the business: admissions, records, financial aid, business & finance, human resources. We have done a little study this past spring so we can provide those documents also. The rest would come from talking with focus groups.

**Question #6**

On page 6, you had listed four dimensions of the IT services. Is that what you exclusively want us to focus on, is that where the focus groups will be provided? You had network and infrastructure, digital learning and experience, data management and management overall.

**Answer #6** – Sue Korzinek

Yes, that will be the main focus. The second area of focus is the decentralized IT. We will need to spend time with some focus groups from those areas too. Those are areas that have gone off with their own resources and developed technology services that are needed by the institution and are also challenged for scalability and maintenance, renewal.

**Question #7**

Do you have any control over the decentralized service systems? Do you approve them or support them in any way?

**Answer #7** – Sue Korzinek

Very little. Typically, the conversations are around security and access that they need as they are typically approved somewhere else, in another conversation. Some of them we know a little bit more about then others but not a lot of control. Try to work collaboratively to make sure they are successful.

**Question #8**

For security of the network infrastructure on page 6, are you looking to get gap assessments and vulnerability assessments, antivirus, things like that. Is that part of what you are looking for?

**Answer #8** – Sue Korzinek

No, not at all. Just basically do we have policy, procedures, governance around that. No detail as we take care of that in our annually, bi-annually audits.

**Question #9** – Jessica Bonelli

Can you let me know what your LMS is? And do you have a data warehouse currently?

**Answer #9** – Sue Korzinek

Blackboard. We do not have any official ERP data warehouse system in place. There are different pockets that manage their data in different ways. Like a couple of applications like SAS and Argos that go after large datasets for campus or institutional analysis data. But no formal product that is used campus wide.

**Question #10** – Jessica Bonelli

Is there a project management office in place for your IT initiatives?

**Answer #10** – Sue Korzinek

No.

**Question #11** – Jessica Bonelli

Can flat fee proposals be submitted or must it be hourly based?

**Answer #11** – Sue Korzinek

We did ask for detail. The requirements are specific detail. There is a flat fee amount to enter at bottom of RFP. Itemization is required with your proposal on #7, page 3.

**Question #12** – Jessica Bonelli

You want it broken out by area of the four areas? Is that what you mean by itemized?

**Answer #12** – Sue Korzinek

Yes, it would be good to have. If you have an hourly rate but if there is something different you are proposing to do with focus groups or however you plan on attacking this proposal. If there are different methods you would charge differently or if you strictly say it is going to take 200 hours at $200 an hour, and nothing more, expect travel. It just depends on how you break things down. We want every line item of your charges.

**Question #13** – Jessica Bonelli

Are there concrete goals and objectives in your strategic plan that are directly linked to the IT mission statement?

**Answer #13** – Sue Korzinek

Very little. We are a participant in the strategic goals listed in the strategic plan. As far as how to reach those goals, technology discussions in there, or technology requirements, especially when it comes to what courses are offered using technology, how faculty are trained, how students learn…technology is a piece of those strategic plan initiatives. But not a direct link to IT.

**Question #14**

On the references. How important are the higher ed references? How many references are you looking for? The reason I ask is that the process we would likely follow is highly successful in corporations as well as higher ed and wondered what references you would like?

**Answer #14** – Pam Brenzing

Looking for three.

**Answer #14** – Sue Korzinek

We stated that higher ed references, #4 detailed statement of need. We believe there is enough difference in higher ed versus a business that we would want some experience with a firm that has done this type of proposal or similar proposal with higher ed. Therefore, that would weigh heavy.

**Answer #14** – Ed Aboufadel

If they want to talk about experience with corporate, that is ok. That won’t disqualify anyone but our priority is experience with higher ed.

**Question #15** – Ed Joras

There is a defined end date. How firm is this and what is the reason for that end date?

**Answer #15** – Sue Korzinek

Our charge is to complete a report by the end of this calendar year. Therefore, we had to look at the dates and work backwards on where we could begin and end and give a final report to the president and executive committee before the end of this calendar year, thus mid-December.

**Answer #15** – Ed Aboufadel

This is connected to some other initiatives the president is pursuing with other groups on campus, particularly revolving around curriculum. Therefore, when that curriculum group comes with their recommendations at the end of the year, we want to be prepared and have completed our work. Thus, our deadline is pretty important.

**Answer #15** – Sue Korzinek

This potentially could happen, other reports that come in require a number of resources and IT is not equipped to handle that, then they cannot be successful. The president wants to know what the current capacity is, what we are able to do going forward and what the recommendations are to carry us forward. Do we have the right staff, are we equipped to handle it, are the staff trained, can we scale?

**Question #16**

Will you be sending out answers to these questions? Is there any follow up? Do we have to submit the questions we asked today?

**Answer #16** – Sue Korzinek

Yes. We have to submit the questions and answers back to our purchasing department who will submit them to the website where the RFP is posted.

This is being recorded so that those questions and answers can be captured and summarized**.**

Thank you for your participation,

Valerie Rhodes-Sorrelle, C.P.M.

Vendor Relations Manager

***Procurement Services - 2033 Zumberge Hall - Allendale, MI 49401***

***Phone – 616/331-2283 – Fax 616/331-3287***