



THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Office of HUB & Procurement Programs

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP NUMBER: RFP01 SOC-20-092
Cyber Security Detection and Response Toolset

PROPOSAL MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE:
2:00 P.M. Central Time (CST) on February 24, 2021

EMAIL RFP RESPONSES TO:
SOPROCUREMENT@TAMUS.EDU
SUBJECT LINE: RFP01 SOC-20-092 – Cyber Security Detection and Response Toolset
Attn: Jeff Zimmermann

NOTE: PROPOSAL must be received by **The Texas A&M University System Office** of Procurement and HUB Programs before the date and time specified for receipt of proposal in Section 2.3.

After the due date and time, only the names of Respondents will be made public.

REFER INQUIRIES TO:

Jeff Zimmermann, Director
The Texas A&M University System
Procurement & HUB Programs
email: soprocurement@tamus.edu

All proposals shall become the property of the State of Texas upon receipt. Proposals may be subject to public review after contracts have been executed. Refer to Section 5.19 for more information regarding public information.

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Scope**

The Texas A&M University System (A&M System) is soliciting proposals to select one or more Respondents to source a Cyber Security Detection and Response platform which provides network and endpoint visibility, threat detection and correlation, and forensic analysis of suspicious activities, dramatically accelerating the ability for Security Operations Center (SOC) analysts to respond to and prevent security events. Note that a single award is expected, however the A&M System has the option to award to more than one Respondent.

The A&M System Security Operations Center (SOC) is the cybersecurity monitoring group for the A&M System. Center responsibilities include Domain Name System (DNS) filtering, threat detection and monitoring, software contracting and evaluation, vulnerability scanning and penetration tests, remote incident response, security training and awareness, log collection and correlation, and security consulting. These duties are expanding annually and currently cover over 20 separate geographically dispersed networks and more than 350,000 endpoints belonging to both educational institutions and governmental agencies.

The selected Respondent would enable SOC personnel to provide services as a managed security service provider (MSSP) across the A&M System, as well as for other educational and governmental institutions. Historically, this scope has expanded regularly, as more organizations have made the decision to utilize SOC services. A Respondent who can account for and respond to this expansion is critical.

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for the selected Respondent to source a Cyber Security Detection and Response platform per the scope and requirements stated in Section 3.

By submitting responses, each Respondent certifies that it understands this RFP and has full knowledge of the scope and nature of the opportunity described herein. Each Respondent also certifies that it understands that all costs relating to preparing and responding to this RFP will be the sole responsibility of the Respondent. Proposals shall be in accordance with the terms, conditions, and requirements set forth in this Request for Proposal (RFP).

Respondent is to independently investigate and verify, at its own discretion, all information acquired from the Texas A&M University System or from any other source which is relied on by Respondent in the preparation of its proposal.

1.2 **Background**

The A&M System is one of the largest systems of higher education in the nation, with a budget of \$6.3 billion. Through a statewide network of 11 universities; a comprehensive health science center; eight state agencies, including the Texas Division of Emergency Management; and the RELLIS Campus, the A&M System educates more than 151,000 students and makes more than 22 million additional educational contacts through service and outreach programs each year. System-wide, research and development expenditures exceeded \$1 billion in FY 2019 and helped drive the state's economy. More information about the A&M System and all of its members can be found at <http://www.tamus.edu/about/>.

1.3 **Priorities/Expectations**

Respondents should note the following priorities/expectations with regard to the possibility of the A&M System establishing a contractual relationship with any Respondent:

- (a) *Ensuring a Quality Level of Service.* This priority encompasses the quality of the level of service that can be provided to the A&M System in a timely, cost effective manner. The A&M System is seeking a Respondent that will ensure the provision of such quality in its delivery of service through proven techniques and established metrics.
- (b) *Level of Experience and Expertise.* Respondent must demonstrate its capabilities in providing the utmost level of experience and expertise to ensure a successful project as determined by the A&M System.
- (c) *Delivery Efficiency as it Relates to Total Costs.* Respondent must demonstrate its ability to deliver the required solution in a cost-effective and timely manner while not sacrificing the quality required by the A&M System.

1.4 Pre-proposal Conference

A virtual pre-proposal conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. CST on February 3, 2021. Attendance at this conference is not mandatory but highly encouraged. To obtain the link to the virtual conference, interested firms should email soprocurement@tamus.edu.

1.5 Calendar Of Events

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date</u>
Release of Request for Proposal	January 27, 2021
Pre-proposal Conference	February 3, 2021
Deadline to Submit Questions	February 10, 2021
Release of Addendum (if applicable)	February 12, 2021
Responses Due	February 24, 2021 by 2:00 p.m. CST
Interview Top Proposal Teams (if applicable)	week of March 8, 2021
Shortlist for Testing Phase	week of March 15 th , 2021
Final Selection of Respondent	anticipated by May 31 st , 2021

The A&M System will make every effort to adhere to the above schedule. The schedule, however, is subject to change. This may be in the event that further clarification of responses or terms of contract are in the best interest of the A&M System and/or in the event the A&M System requires more time to assure that the selection of the Respondent is in accordance with its policies, rules and regulations, as well as actual timing needs.

1.6 Performance Period

Should A&M System, in its sole discretion, enter into an agreement with the successful Respondent(s) as a result of this RFP, any resultant agreement shall be effective upon execution for a period of three (3) years. The resultant agreement may be extended for one additional three (3) year term, providing all parties mutually agree in writing on the extension. Any renewals shall be at the same terms and conditions plus any approved changes to be determined by the A&M System and negotiated in writing with the successful Respondent. The A&M System reserves the right to amend the terms of the resultant agreement as necessary to meet state or federal requirements.

Note that length of terms is negotiable and Respondent may propose an alternate length for both the initial period and any renewal.

SECTION 2 - INSTRUCTION FOR RESPONDENTS

2.1 General Information

This RFP outlines requirements as specified in Section 3. Proposals are to be in accordance with the outline and specifications contained herein, are to remain in effect a minimum of 120 days from the date of submission, and may be subject to further extensions as negotiated. A statement to this effect should be contained in the Respondent's cover letter.

This RFP contains specific requests for information. Respondents are encouraged to examine all sections of this RFP carefully, in that the degree of interrelationship between sections is critical. In responding to this RFP, Respondents are encouraged to provide any additional information they believe relevant.

Clause headings appearing in this RFP have been inserted for convenience and ready reference. They do not purport to define, limit or extend the scope or intent of the respective clauses. Whenever the terms "must", "shall", "will", "is required", or "are required" are used in the RFP, the subject being referred to is to be a required feature of this RFP and critical to the resulting submittal.

In those cases where mandatory requirements are stated, material failure to meet those requirements could result in disqualification of the Respondent's response. Any deviation or exception from RFP specifications must be clearly identified by the Respondent in its submittal.

Expenses for developing and presenting proposals including the testing phase described in Section 2.6 shall be the entire responsibility of the Respondent and shall not be chargeable to the A&M System. All supporting documentation submitted with this submittal will become the property of the A&M System unless otherwise requested by the Respondent, in writing, at the time of submission, and agreed to, in writing, by the A&M System.

2.2 Examination of the Request for Proposal

Before submitting, each Respondent will be held to have examined the A&M System requirements outlined in Section 3, and satisfied itself as to the existing conditions under which it will be obligated to perform in accordance with specifications of this RFP.

No claim for additional compensation will be allowed due to unfamiliarity with the specifications and/or existing conditions. It shall be understood that the Respondent has full knowledge of all the existing and/or revised conditions and accepts them "as is."

2.3 Proposal Submission Instructions

All proposals must be received by the A&M System, no later than **2:00:00 p.m. CST, February 24, 2021** electronically via email to soprocurement@tamus.edu with the subject line of "RFP01 SOC-20-092 – Cyber Security Detection and Response Toolset". The sent time indicated within the A&M System email server shall be used for the receipt and acceptance of the response. **Late proposals will not be considered under any circumstances.**

Submittal File Format: Submission shall be saved as two (2) separate files in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) according to the items listed below and named as such; I) "**company name – Proposal**" and II) "**company name – Forms**".

2.4 Proposal Components

The following documents and all requirements from noted sections are to be returned as part of your

proposal submittal. Failure to include these documents will be basis for response disqualification.

I. Proposal

- ✓ Cover Letter to include a brief introduction with interest and capability of the Respondent.
- ✓ Table of Contents
- ✓ Proposal, to include the Company Profile, Technical Proposal, Company References, and Cost Proposal (Sections 4.1 – 4.4).

II. Forms

- ✓ Signed Execution of Offer (Exhibit A)
- ✓ Non-Collusion Affidavit (Exhibit B) – signed and notarized
- ✓ Accessibility documentation (Section 4.5)
- ✓ HUB Subcontracting Plan (Section 4.6)

Proposal format: The proposal response shall be presented in the order listed above with sections noted accordingly for easy reference. The Table of Contents shall provide page numbers for each section of the proposal.

Note: Additional information regarding the Execution of Offer and Non-Collusion Affidavit.

Execution of Offer: The signature in the Execution of Offer within the electronic copy shall serve as the official signature of record. Signature can be done electronically with DocuSign, Adobe or another similar tool.

Non-Collusion Affidavit: The Respondent signature on this document may be done electronically with DocuSign, Adobe or another similar tool. While the document must also be notarized, this may be done at a later date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An agreement may not be executed with the awarded Respondent until this document is fully signed and notarized.

2.5 Inquiries and Interpretations

All questions concerning this RFP are to be directed, in writing, to Director, Procurement and Business Services to soprocurement@tamus.edu. Respondent may not contact other individuals at the A&M System to discuss any aspect of this RFP, unless expressly authorized by the A&M System Procurement & HUB Program office to do so. The Deadline for submission of questions is February 10, 2021. The A&M System will publish all questions with responses according to the schedule in Section 1.5.

Responses to inquiries which directly affect an interpretation or change to this RFP will be issued in writing by addendum/amendment and posted to the Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD).

<http://www.txsmartbuy.com/sp> (Input Agency Number “710” and select “Posted” for the Status)

All such addenda/amendments issued by the A&M System prior to the time that proposals are received shall be considered part of the RFP, and the Respondent shall consider and acknowledge receipt of such in their proposal. Only those A&M System replied to inquiries which are made by formal written addenda shall be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarification will be without legal effect.

2.6 Selection Process

The evaluation of the proposals shall be based on the proposal that the A&M System deems to represent the **best value** to the A&M System. The RFP provides the information necessary to prepare and submit

proposals for consideration by the A&M System. The A&M System will rank the Respondents in the order that they provide the overall “best value” to the A&M System based on an evaluation of the responses to the RFP. The A&M System may interview one or more of the top ranked Respondents as part of the evaluation process.

The evaluation process will consist of two phases; initial evaluation of written proposals and the testing phase.

Initial Evaluation

All properly submitted proposals will be reviewed, evaluated, and scored and/or ranked by the A&M System. A shortlist of Respondents will be determined from this initial evaluation for a testing phase.

Testing Phase

The intent of this phase is to test the solutions proposed by the shortlist of Respondents over a short period of time. The A&M System does not anticipate a cost being associated with this testing phase as all costs during this process shall be the responsibility of each Respondent. Testing would be done by working with the selected Respondents in temporarily setting up their software/hardware solution on a smaller scale within the A&M System network for an estimated period of 2-3 months. If a Respondent has an alternative to this option, we are open to that as well. Evaluation of each Respondent may be based but not limited to effectiveness, integration capability, ease of use, and their ability to fill the optional/preferred solution capabilities.

The A&M System will then develop a new ranking based on the results of this testing to determine one or more Respondent solutions for award.

Final Award

After proposal tabulation and such investigation of Respondents as the A&M System deems appropriate to include but not limited to the initial evaluation and testing phase, an award may be made to the Respondent(s) whose proposal it judges to represent the best value to the A&M System. Final determination for award will be made on the overall best value to the A&M System. The A&M System reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

Submission of proposals indicates Respondent's acceptance of the evaluation techniques and the recognition that subjective judgments must be made by A&M System during the evaluation process.

The selection of the successful proposal may be made by the A&M System on the basis of the proposals initially submitted, without discussion, clarification, or modification. In the alternative, selection of the successful proposal may be made by the A&M System based on negotiation with any of the Respondents. The A&M System shall not disclose any information derived from the proposals submitted by competing Respondents in conducting such discussions.

All proposals must be complete and convey all of the information requested to be considered responsive. If a proposal fails to conform to the essential requirements of the RFP, the A&M System alone will determine whether the variance is significant enough to consider the proposal susceptible to being made acceptable, and therefore a candidate for further consideration, or not susceptible and therefore not considered for award.

A&M System may perform reference checks and seek further information, as needed from all Respondents whose proposals A&M System, at its discretion, considers viable, based on the initial evaluation and scoring. The Respondent's response to this requirement officially authorizes A&M System to contact these organizations to discuss the services and other considerations which the Respondent has provided to such organizations and authorizes the organizations to provide such information to A&M System and Respondent shall and hereby does release and hold harmless A&M System, the state of Texas, and the organization of any and all liability whatsoever, in connection with providing and receiving all such

information. Any negative responses received from reference checks may be grounds for disqualification of the proposal.

A&M System reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers, to waive informalities and technicalities, to accept the offer considered most advantageous, and/or to make the award to the most responsive Respondent.

SECTION 3 – SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The awarded Respondent(s) shall provide a Cyber Security Detection and Response platform. This platform will provide network and endpoint visibility, threat detection and correlation, and forensic analysis of suspicious activities, dramatically accelerating the ability for SOC analysts to respond to and prevent security events.
- 3.1.2 The awarded Respondent(s) will enable SOC personnel to provide services as a MSSP across The Texas A&M University System, as well as other educational and governmental institutions outside of the A&M System. Historically, this scope has expanded annually, as more organizations have migrated to utilizing SOC services. A service provider who can respond to this expansion is critical.
- 3.1.3 Upon final selection and award, performance under an agreement pursuant to this RFP is anticipated to commence upon execution of an agreement. Time is of the essence in the deployment of the solution and timeframe for implementation will be included in the evaluation criteria.
- 3.1.4 This is a fixed price engagement. It is expected that all change requests after notification of award will not be considered unless otherwise requested by A&M System.

3.2 Necessary Solution Capabilities

The Respondent's solution MUST have at a minimum these eleven (11) capabilities:

1. Ingest network and endpoint generated data.
2. Multi-tenant interface including both tenant and MSSP views.
3. A well-documented RESTful API, with parity between GUI and CLI.
4. Extensible reporting features.
5. SAML (SSO) authentication with support for disparate authentication sources per tenant and the MSSP.
6. Forward alert detections via Syslog, Kafka, Webhook, API, etc.
7. Persistently track hosts, users and detections over time.
8. Import custom IOCs, both manually with STIX data files and programmatically from TAXII-compliant threat feeds to trigger detections, and export IOCs to STIX data files and TAXII-compliant threat feeds to support information sharing.
9. Correlate multiple detections and suspicious activity together to detect advanced threats (campaigns).
10. Whitelist detections for future tuning.
11. Bulk-triage detections.

3.3 Optional Solution Capabilities

The following capabilities are preferred from the Respondent's solution.

1. Ingest network event data via Netflow in addition to SPAN & TAP.
2. Ingest DNS and cloud (O365/Azure) generated data.
3. Integrate with the following:

- a. Jira Service Desk Cloud for IT Incident Management (create and update incidents)
 - b. Azure Active Directory for user provisioning (SCIM)
 - c. Windows Defender ATP (and any other EDR products) for endpoint security event detections and response actions
 - d. Cisco Umbrella for DNS event detections
4. Correlate events/info/telemetry from the following sources:
 - a. Windows Defender ATP and any other EPP or EDR products
 - b. Other network information toolsets
 - c. Windows Events
 - d. Infoblox DHCP
 - e. Cisco Umbrella DNS or other DNS filtering tool to enrich existing detections
 5. Provide layer 7 inspection and/or protocol decoding
 6. Customizable and exportable dashboards
 7. Customizable MSSP branding in UI, reports, generated emails, etc.

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL RESPONSE

The Respondent recognizes that in its selection process A&M System will rely, in part, on the answers provided in response to this section. Accordingly, Respondent warrants to the best of its knowledge that all responses are true, correct and complete. In addition, A&M System may select one or more Respondents to provide a temporary testing environment as described in Section 2.6.

4.1 Company Profile

- 4.1.1 Provide a contact name for this RFP response, including title, address, telephone number and email address.
- 4.1.2 Number of Years in Business
Number of Employees: _____(company wide)
Annual Sales Volume: _____(company wide)
- 4.1.3 State that you will provide a financial rating of your company and any documentation (such as a Dunn and Bradstreet Analysis) which indicates the financial stability of your company, if requested by A&M System.
- 4.1.4 Provide any details of all past or pending litigation or claims filed against your company that would negatively impact your company's performance under an agreement with the System.

4.2 Technical Proposal

Respondents shall address the following items in the proposal response:

- 4.2.1 Highlight the capabilities and experience of your company as it relates to the scope of this RFP.
- 4.2.2 A demonstrated ability to deliver the scope per Section 3. At a minimum this shall include information to clearly demonstrate the ability to meet the capabilities stated in Section 3.2. Also address which, if any, of the optional capabilities listed in Section 3.3 can be met.
- 4.2.3 Provide information regarding the strength of the proposed team assigned to the project to include resumes.
- 4.2.4 Provide a timeline for the deployment and implementation of the proposed solution.
- 4.2.5 Provide an estimated lifecycle support timeline for any required hardware to be sourced by the Respondent.
- 4.2.6 Provide a training solution on the cyber security detection and response platform for SOC employees.

4.3 Cost Proposal

At a minimum, Respondents shall address each of the items listed below within the Cost Proposal.

- Total aggregate cost for providing the services outlined in Section 3, including any necessary hardware.
- Confirm that if selected for the testing phase, Respondent will not charge any fees associated with this part of the evaluation process.
- Any additional fees, such as travel to assist with install or training.
- Respondent may propose that some services (i.e. online subscription services) are to be paid as annual recurring costs and not included in the total aggregate cost. Sufficient information shall be provided

within the proposal detailing any proposed recurring charges.

4.4 Company References

Respondents shall provide at least three (3) references, preferably one from an institution of higher education with a similar project scope. Each reference shall include at least the following:

- Company name
- Contact person name and title
- Contact phone number and email address
- General description of the completed scope and services provided

Note: References provided may be from experience for a member of the proposed team and not necessarily from the company who is responding. For all references make it clear who on your team was responsible for each one provided.

4.5 Accessibility

Electronic and Information Resources (EIR) accessibility requirements and technical standards from Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Chapter 206 and Chapter 213 have been determined to apply to this RFP. Respondents must describe how the EIR product deliverables included as part of the service requirements meet at least those technical provisions identified as applicable in the attached Voluntary Product/Service Accessibility Templates (VPATs).

For EACH applicable EIR product, Respondents should provide the following accessibility information by way of Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs) per the attached template or other equivalent reporting templates. Respondents must describe how the EIR product deliverables included as part of the service requirements meet the following requirements.

- 1) The appropriate Technical Accessibility Standards based on EIR Category (see table below)
- 2) Functional Performance Criteria described in 1 TAC §213.35 (i.e., Section 508 equivalent - 36 CFR Part 1194 Subpart C)
- 3) Information, Documentation, and Support described in 1 TAC §213.36 (i.e., Section 508 equivalent - 36 CFR Part 1194 Subpart D)

EIR Category	Technical Accessibility Standards	Section 508 equivalent
Software Applications and Operating Systems	1 TAC §213.30	36 CFR §1194.21
Websites	1 TAC §206.70 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 , Level AA	36 CFR §1194.22
Telecommunications Products	1 TAC §213.31	36 CFR §1194.23
Video and Multimedia Products	1 TAC §213.32	36 CFR §1194.24
Self-Contained, Closed Products	1 TAC §213.33	36 CFR §1194.25
Desktop and Portable Computers	1 TAC §213.34	36 CFR §1194.26

Only proposals which contain adequate information to document their responsiveness to the EIR accessibility requirements (VPATs and supporting documentation including test documentation) will be eligible for consideration.

4.6 HUB Subcontracting Plan

It is the policy of the state of Texas and the A&M System to encourage the use of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) in our prime contracts, subcontractors, and purchasing transactions. The goal of the HUB program is to promote equal access and equal opportunity in A&M System contracting and purchasing.

Based on the scope of this RFP, Respondents must determine if they can perform the entire scope with their own resources or if it will be necessary to subcontract any portion of the scope. Subcontracting opportunities are defined as those opportunities contracted with a vendor to provide services, supply commodities, or contribute toward completing work for a governmental entity.

Subcontracting opportunities are possible for this RFP and therefore a HUB Subcontracting Plan (HSP) is **required**. Failure to submit a comprehensive, acceptable HSP will be considered a material failure to comply with the requirements of the RFP and will result in rejection of the submittal. The HUB Subcontracting Plan shall be submitted **with** the RFP response by the date and time specified.

Complete the HSP as found at <https://www.tamus.edu/business/hub-procurement/hub-programs-3/system-offices-hub-program/> and submit it with the RFP response. If there are pre-existing agreements in place with companies who will be hired as subcontractors, the Respondent will show those vendors as subcontractors on the HSP and provide an explanation as to why solicitations were not done, e.g. contractual requirements. If no pre-existing agreements with companies who will be hired as subcontractors exist, then the Respondent will be expected to make a good faith effort according to the HSP instructions. Don't forget to include any backup documentation and sign the HSP form. **The applicable HUB participation goal for this RFP is 11% for Other Services and every effort shall be made to obtain this goal.** Note that subcontracting opportunities include the purchase of equipment and materials which must be considered when working through the good faith effort and completing the HSP.

If the Respondent is completing as **self-performing** a statement which attests that the respondent shall perform the subcontracting opportunities identified by the agency, with its own employees and resources is required. The sections in the HSP form to be completed for self-performing are Section 1, 2a (check No), 3 with your statement included in the open text field, and 4.

For information regarding the HUB Subcontracting Plan requirements, please contact Keith Williams from the A&M System's HUB Program at (979) 458-3265 or soprocurement@tamus.edu for assistance in determining available HUB subcontractors and proper completion of the HSP. **Respondents have the opportunity to submit a draft of the HSP prior to submittal of their response to the RFP for review by Mr. Williams.**

SECTION 5 - GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 5.1. TERMS AND CONDITIONS: A&M System reserves the right to accept, reject, modify, and/or negotiate any and all submittals received in conjunction with this RFP. It reserves the right to waive any defect or informality in the submittals on the basis of what it considers to be in its best interests. Any submittal which A&M System determines to be incomplete, conditional, obscure, or which has irregularities of any kind, may be rejected. A&M System reserves the right to award to the firm, or firms, which in our sole judgment, will best serve our long-term interest.

This RFP in no manner obligates A&M System to the eventual purchase of any products or services described, implied, or which may be proposed, until confirmed by written agreement, and may be terminated by A&M System without penalty or obligation at any time prior to the signing of a contract.

The Respondent must include a formal copy of any Respondent terms and conditions applicable to this transaction. Evaluation and acceptance and/or modification of these terms and conditions by A&M System Office of General Counsel are essential prior to the award of any resultant agreement. In the event the Respondent does not supply terms and conditions with their submittal, A&M System terms and conditions will govern this transaction.

- 5.2. GOVERNING LAW: Respondent agrees that, in the event of a dispute, laws of the State of Texas will prevail.
- 5.3. NON-DISCRIMINATION: The parties agree that in the performance of any resultant agreement they shall not discriminate in any manner on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, genetic information, veteran status or disability protected by law. Such action shall include, but is not limited to the following: employment, upgrading, demotion, transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation. By submitting a submittal, Respondents certify that they will conform to the provisions of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.
- 5.4. IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986: By submitting a state of qualification, the Respondents certify that they do not and will not, during the performance of any resultant agreement, employ illegal alien workers or otherwise violate the provisions of the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, as amended.
- 5.5. DEBARMENT STATUS: By submitting a proposal, Respondents certify that they are not currently debarred from submitting submittals on contracts nor are they an agent of any person or entity that is currently debarred from submitting bids on contracts.
- 5.6. INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS: The Respondent shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless A&M System, its officers, employees and agents, against any and all liability of whatever nature which may arise directly or indirectly by reason of the Respondent's performance under any resultant agreement. The Respondent agrees to protect the State from claims involving infringement of patents or copyrights.
- 5.7. RESPONDENT LIABILITY: The Respondent will be liable for any associated costs of repairs for damage to buildings or other A&M System property caused by the negligence of the Respondent's employees.
- 5.8. EARLY TERMINATION: A&M System shall have the right to terminate any resultant agreement with the Respondent without penalty after a (30) day written notice of termination to the Respondent under the following circumstances:

1. Default of Respondent

It shall be considered a default whenever the Respondent shall:

- i. Disregard or violate material provisions of any resultant agreement documents or A&M System instructions, or fail to execute the work according to the agreed upon schedule of completion and/or time of completion specified, including extensions thereof, or fail to reach agreed upon performance results.
- ii. Declare bankruptcy, become insolvent, or assign company assets for the benefit of creditors.

2. Convenience of A&M System

Termination of any resultant agreement if construed by A&M System to be in its best interest for serving the community and its students, faculty, and staff.

Note: Any contract cancellation notice shall not relieve the Respondent of the obligation to deliver and/or perform prior to the effective date of cancellation.

- 5.9. RESPONDENT PAYMENT/BILLING TERMS: Payment of invoices will be made thirty (30) days after receipt of a correct invoice and approval by the applicable department within A&M System.
- 5.10. CIVIL RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS: All Respondents must comply with applicable civil rights laws.
- 5.11. NON-COLLUSION CLAUSE: The Non-Collusion Affidavit found in **APPENDIX B** must be executed as a part of the Respondent's submittal.
- 5.12. ENTIRE AGREEMENT: Any resultant agreement, when fully executed, shall supersede any and all prior and existing agreements, either oral or in writing, and will contain all the covenants and agreements between the parties with respect to the subject matter of any resultant agreement. Any amendment or modification to any resultant agreement must be in writing and signed by the parties hereto.
- 5.13. SEVERABILITY: It is understood and agreed that if any part, term, or provision of any resultant agreement is by the courts held to be illegal or in conflict with any law of the State of Texas, the validity of the remaining portions or provisions shall be construed and enforced as if any resultant agreement did not contain the particular part, term, or provision held to be invalid.
- 5.14. MODIFICATION OF SERVICE: A&M System reserves the right to modify the services during the course of any resultant agreement. Any changes in pricing and rates proposed by the Respondent resulting from such changes are subject to acceptance by A&M System. In the event prices and rates cannot be negotiated to the satisfaction of both parties, resultant agreement may be subject to competitive bidding based upon the new specifications.
- 5.15. PUBLICITY: Respondents must refrain from giving any reference to this project, whether in the form of press releases, brochures, photographic coverage, or verbal announcements, without specific written approval from A&M System.

Information provided to Respondent by A&M System, including but not limited to information from the members, officers, agents, or employees of The Texas A&M University System or any of its members, and information provided to Respondent by members of the public or any other third party shall belong to A&M System.

- 5.16. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR: The successful Respondent agrees that in all respects its relationship with A&M System will be that of an independent contractor, and that it will not act or represent that it is acting

as an agent of A&M System or incur any obligation on the part of A&M System without written authority of A&M System. As an independent contractor, Respondent will be solely responsible for determining the means and methods for performing the services described. Respondent shall observe and abide by all applicable laws and regulations, policies and procedures, including but not limited to, those of A&M System relative to conduct on its premises.

- 5.17. Not Eligible for Rehire: PROVIDER is responsible to ensure that employees participating in work for any A&M System member have not been designated by the A&M System as Not Eligible for Rehire as defined in System policy 32.02, Section 4. Non-conformance to this requirement may be grounds for termination of any resultant agreement.
- 5.18. CONFIDENTIALITY: In accordance with the Texas Public Information Act, Submittals could be subject to public review after any resultant agreements have been executed. Respondents responding to this submittal are cautioned not to include any proprietary information as part of their submittal unless such proprietary information is carefully identified as such in writing, and A&M System accepts, in writing, the information as proprietary.

Information created, derived, or otherwise produced by Respondent shall remain the exclusive property of Respondent. Respondent acknowledges any final report or papers will be provided in accordance with the agreement, and that any information contained in any report or papers, which Respondent believes is confidential under Texas law will be clearly designated as such by Respondent. In the event A&M System receives a request for public information for any portion of any final report or papers that have been designated by Respondent to be confidential, A&M System will provide notice to Respondent and Respondent may submit a brief to the Office of the Attorney General, as provided by Chapter 552, Texas Government Code.

- 5.19. PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT:
- (a) Respondent acknowledges that A&M System is obligated to strictly comply with the Public Information Act, Chapter 552, *Texas Government Code*, in responding to any request for public information pertaining to this RFP, as well as any other disclosure of information required by applicable Texas law.
 - (b) Upon A&M System's written request, Respondent will promptly provide specified contracting information exchanged or created under the agreement for or on behalf of A&M System.
 - (c) Respondent acknowledges that A&M System may be required to post a copy of the fully executed Agreement as a result of this RFP on its Internet website in compliance with Section 2261.253(a)(1), *Texas Government Code*.
 - (d) The requirements of Subchapter J, Chapter 552, Texas Government Code, may apply to any resultant agreement and the Respondent agrees that the resultant agreement can be terminated if the Respondent knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of that subchapter.
- 5.20. OWNERSHIP OF DOCUMENTS: Upon completion or termination of any resultant agreement, all documents prepared by the Respondent for the benefit of A&M System shall become the property of A&M System. At A&M System's option, such documents will be delivered to A&M System Procurement Office. A&M System acknowledges that the documents are prepared only for the contracted services specified. Prior to completion of the contracted services, A&M System shall have a recognized proprietary interest in the work product of the Respondent.
- 5.21. SUBCONTRACTING: No subcontract or third party personnel will be permitted to perform services described herein, without the written consent of A&M System. Upon written request, the Respondent shall provide copies of all applicable licenses and other written approvals, which may be held by its

subcontractors in order to perform the services described herein.

The Respondent shall be fully responsible for all work performed under any resultant agreement from this RFP. The Respondent shall describe who will be, if any, subcontractor(s) for the resultant agreement. No subcontract, which the Respondent entered into with respect to performance under any resultant agreement, shall in any way relieve the Respondent of any responsibility for the performance of its duties under the terms of the resultant agreement. The Respondent shall notify the agency in writing of any changes in subcontracting.

- 5.22. **INSURANCE:** The Respondent shall obtain and maintain, for the duration of the resultant agreement or longer, the minimum insurance coverage set forth below. With the exception of Professional Liability (E&O), all coverage shall be written on an occurrence basis. All coverage shall be underwritten by companies authorized to do business in the State of Texas or eligible surplus lines insurers operating in accordance with the Texas Insurance Code and have a financial strength rating of A- or better and a financial strength rating of VII or better as measured by A.M. Best Company or otherwise acceptable to A&M System. By requiring such minimum insurance, A&M System shall not be deemed or construed to have assessed the risk that may be applicable to Respondent under the agreement. Respondent shall assess its own risks and if it deems appropriate and/or prudent, maintain higher limits and/or broader coverage. Respondent is not relieved of any liability or other obligations assumed pursuant to the agreement by reason of its failure to obtain or maintain insurance in sufficient amounts, duration, or types. No policy will be canceled without unconditional written notice to A&M System at least ten days before the effective date of the cancellation.

<u>Coverage</u>	<u>Limit</u>
A. <u>Worker’s Compensation</u>	
Statutory Benefits (Coverage A)	Statutory
Employers Liability (Coverage B)	\$1,000,000 Each Accident \$1,000,000 Disease/Employee \$1,000,000 Disease/Policy Limit

Workers’ Compensation policy must include under Item 3.A. on the information page of the workers’ compensation policy the state in which work is to be performed for A&M System. Workers’ compensation insurance is required, and no “alternative” forms of insurance will be permitted

B. Automobile Liability

Business Auto Liability Insurance covering all owned, non-owned or hired automobiles, with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 Single Limit of liability per accident for Bodily Injury and Property Damage;

If a separate Business Auto Liability policy is not available, coverage for hired and non-owned auto liability may be endorsed on the Commercial General Liability policy.

<u>Commercial General Liability</u>	
Each Occurrence Limit	\$1,000,000
General Aggregate Limit	\$2,000,000
Products / Completed Operations	\$1,000,000
Personal / Advertising Injury	\$1,000,000
Damage to rented Premises	\$300,000
Medical Payments	\$5,000

The required commercial general liability policy will be issued on a form that insures Respondent’s or its subcontractors’ liability for bodily injury (including death), property damage, personal and

advertising injury assumed under the terms of the agreement.

Additional Endorsements

The Auto and Commercial General Liability Policies shall name the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents for and on behalf of The Texas A&M University System and the Respondent as additional insured's.

C. Respondent will deliver to A&M System:

Evidence of insurance on a Texas Department of Insurance approved certificate form verifying the existence and actual limits of all insurance after the execution and delivery of the agreement and prior to the performance of any services by Respondent under the agreement. Additional evidence of insurance will be provided on a Texas Department of Insurance approved certificate form verifying the continued existence of all required insurance no later than thirty (30) days after each annual insurance policy renewal.

All insurance policies, with the exception of worker's compensation, employer's liability and professional liability will be endorsed and name The Board of Regents for and on behalf of The Texas A&M University System, The Texas A&M University System and A&M System as Additional Insureds up to the actual liability limits of the policies maintained by Respondent. Commercial General Liability and Business Auto Liability will be endorsed to provide primary and non-contributory coverage. The Commercial General Liability Additional Insured endorsement will include on-going and completed operations and will be submitted with the Certificates of Insurance.

All insurance policies will be endorsed to provide a waiver of subrogation in favor of The Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System, The Texas A&M University System and A&M System. No policy will be canceled without unconditional written notice to A&M System at least ten days before the effective date of the cancellation.

All insurance policies will be endorsed to require the insurance carrier providing coverage to send notice to A&M System ten (10) days prior to the effective date of cancellation, material change, or non-renewal relating to any insurance policy required in this Section.

Any deductible or self-insured retention must be declared to and approved by A&M System prior to the performance of any services by Respondent under the agreement. Respondent is responsible to pay any deductible or self-insured retention for any loss. All deductibles and self-insured retentions will be shown on the Certificates of Insurance.

Certificates of Insurance and Additional Insured Endorsements as required by the agreement will be mailed, faxed, or emailed to the following A&M System contact:

The Texas A&M University System
301 Tarrow Street
College Station, TX 77840
Attn: Jeff Zimmermann
Facsimile Number: 979-458-6101
Email Address: zimmermann@tamus.edu

The insurance coverage required by the agreement will be kept in force until all services have been fully performed and accepted by A&M System in writing.

- 5.23. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION**: The resolution process provided in Chapter 2260, Texas *Government Code*, and the related rules adopted by the Texas Attorney General pursuant to Chapter 2260, shall be used by A&M System and Respondent to attempt to resolve any claim for breach of contract made by Respondent that

cannot be resolved in the ordinary course of business. Respondent shall submit written notice of a claim of breach of contract under this Chapter to the Deputy Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer for A&M System, who shall examine Respondent's claim and any counterclaim and negotiate with Respondent in an effort to resolve the claim.

- 5.24. VENUE: Pursuant to Section 85.18, *Texas Education Code*, venue for any suit filed against A&M System shall be in the county in which the primary office of the chief executive officer of A&M System is located.
- 5.25. STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE: Respondent understands that acceptance of funds under the resultant agreement constitutes acceptance of the authority of the Texas State Auditor's Office, or any successor agency (collectively, "Auditor"), to conduct an audit or investigation in connection with those funds pursuant to Section 51.9335(c), *Texas Education Code*. Respondent agrees to cooperate with the Auditor in the conduct of the audit or investigation, including without limitation, providing all records requested. Respondent will include this provision in all contracts with permitted subcontractors.
- 5.26. Respondent shall neither assign its rights nor delegate its duties under the resultant agreement without the prior written consent of A&M System.
- 5.27. Respondent hereby assigns to purchaser, any and all claims for overcharges associated with any contract resulting from this RFP which arise under the antitrust laws of the United States 15 U.S.C.A. Section 1, et seq. (1973) and which arise under the antitrust laws of the State of Texas, Texas Business and Commercial Code Ann. Sec. 15.01, et seq. (1967).
- 5.28. ALTERNATE PROPOSALS: A&M System reserves the right to consider alternate proposals submitted by respondents. Alternate proposals shall be clearly marked "Alternate" with the proposed alternates clearly defined and all pricing/cost advantages included, if applicable.
- 5.29. WARRANTIES: In addition to all warranties established by law, Respondent hereby warrants and agrees that:

All goods and services covered by any agreement shall conform to the specifications or other descriptions set forth in the agreement or otherwise furnished or adopted by A&M System, and shall be merchantable fit for the purpose intended, of best quality and workmanship, and free from all defects. A&M System shall have the right of inspection and approval, and may, at Respondent's expense, reject and return nonconforming goods or require re-performance of services which are not in compliance with the requirements of the agreement. Defects shall not be deemed waived by A&M System's failure to notify Respondent upon receipt of goods or completion of services, or by payment of invoice.

All goods and/or services provided under any resultant agreement shall meet or exceed the Safety Standards established and promulgated under the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Public Law 91-596) and its regulations effect or proposed as of the date of the agreement.

All goods delivered pursuant to any resultant agreement shall conform to standards established for such goods in accordance with any applicable federal, state or local laws and regulations, unless otherwise indicated in the agreement.

- 5.30. ACCEPTANCE OF SERVICES: All services performed under any resultant agreement shall be to the satisfaction of each agency and in accordance with the specifications, terms, and conditions of the agreement. A&M System reserves the right to review the services performed and to determine the quality and acceptability of such services.

- 5.31. SALES AND USE TAX: A&M System, as an agency of the State of Texas, qualifies for exemption from State and Local Sales and Use Taxes pursuant to the provisions of the Texas Limited Sales, Excise, and Use Tax Act. The Respondent may claim exemption from payment of applicable State taxes by complying with such procedures as may be prescribed by the State Comptroller of Public Accounts.
- 5.32. NON-WAIVER OF DEFAULTS: Any failure of the Agencies at any time, to enforce or require the strict keeping and performance of any of the terms and conditions of the resultant agreement shall not constitute a waiver of such terms, conditions, or rights, and shall not affect or impair same, or the right of the Agencies at any time to avail itself of same.
- 5.33. TECHNOLOGY ACCESS CLAUSE: The Respondent expressly acknowledges that state funds may not be expended in connection with the purchase of an automated information system unless that system meets certain statutory requirements relating to accessibility by persons with visual impairments. Accordingly the Respondent represents and warrants to The Texas A&M University System that the technology provided to The Texas A&M University System for purchase is capable, either by virtue of features included within the technology or because it is readily adaptable by use with other technology, of: (1) providing visual and non-visual means; (2) presenting information, including prompts used for interactive communications, in formats intended for non-visual use; and (3) being integrated into networks for obtaining, retrieving and disseminating information used by individuals who are not blind or visually impaired for purposes of the paragraph, the phrase "equivalent access" means a substantially similar ability to communicate with or make use of the technology either directly by features incorporated within the technology or by A&M System Office for HUB and Procurement Programs has recently established.
- 5.34. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: By executing any resultant agreement, Respondent and each person signing on behalf of Respondent certifies, and in the case of a sole proprietorship, partnership or corporation, each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, that to the best of their knowledge and belief, no member of The A&M System or The A&M System Board of Regents, nor any employee, or person, whose salary is payable in whole or in part by The A&M System, has direct or indirect financial interest in the award of the resultant agreement, or in the services to which the resultant agreement relates, or in any of the profits, real or potential, thereof.
- 5.35. PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS WITH COMPANIES BOYCOTTING ISRAEL: To the extent that Texas Government Code, Chapter 2271 applies to any resultant agreement, Respondent certifies that (a) it does not currently boycott Israel; and (b) it will not boycott Israel during the term of any resultant agreement. Respondent acknowledges any resultant agreement may be terminated and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- 5.36. CERTIFICATION REGARDING BUSINESS WITH CERTAIN COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS: Pursuant to Subchapter F, Chapter 2252, Texas Government Code, Respondent certifies it is not engaged in business with Iran, Sudan, or a foreign terrorist organization. Respondent acknowledges any resultant agreement may be terminated if this certification is or becomes inaccurate.
- 5.37. PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS RELATED TO PERSONS INVOLVED IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Under Section 2155.0061, Government Code, the vendor certifies that the individual or business entity named in any resultant agreement is not ineligible to receive the specified contract and acknowledges that the resultant agreement may be terminated and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.

EXHIBIT A

EXECUTION OF OFFER

RFP01 SOC-20-092

DATE:

In compliance with this RFP, and subject to all the conditions herein, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish any or all commodities or services at the prices quoted.

A.1 Respondent Affirmation

NOTE TO RESPONDENTS: SUBMIT ENTIRE SECTION WITH RESPONSE.

This execution of offer must be completed, signed, and returned with the respondent's qualifications. Failure to complete, sign and return this execution of offer with the qualifications may result in rejection of the qualifications.

Signing a false statement may void the submitted qualifications or any agreements or other contractual arrangements, which may result from the submission of respondent’s qualifications. A false certification shall be deemed a material breach of contract and, at the A&M System's option, may result in termination of any resulting contract or purchase order.

Addenda Acknowledgment

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the following addenda to this RFP by entering yes or no in space provided and indicating date acquired. Enter "0" if none received.

No. 1 _____	Date _____	No. 3 _____	Date _____
No. 2 _____	Date _____	No. 4 _____	Date _____

A.2 Signature

By signing below, the Respondent hereby certifies as follows, and acknowledges that such certifications will be included in any resulting contract:

- (i) the Response and all statements and information prepared and submitted in response to this RFP are current, complete, true and correct;
- (ii) it is not given, nor intends to give at any time hereafter, any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount trip, favor or service to a public servant in connection with the submitted response or any subsequent proposal. Failure to sign below, or signing a false statement, may void the response or any resulting contracts at the A&M System’ option, and the Respondent may be removed from all future proposal lists at this state agency;
- (iii) the individual signing this document and the documents made part of the RFP is authorized to sign such documents on behalf of the Respondent and to bind the Respondent under any contract which may result from the submission of the Response;
- (iv) no relationship, whether as a relative, business associate, by capital funding agreement or by any other such kinship exists between Respondent and an employee of the A&M System;
- (v) Respondent has not been an employee of the A&M System within the immediate twelve (12) months prior to the RFP response;
- (vi) no compensation has been received for participation in the preparation of this RFP (ref. Section 2155.004 Texas Government Code);

- (vii) all services to be provided in response to this RFP will meet or exceed the safety standards established and promulgated under the Federal Occupational Safety and Health law (Public Law 91-596) and its regulations in effect as of the date of this solicitation;
- (viii) Respondent complies with all federal laws and regulations pertaining to Equal Employment Opportunities and Affirmative Action;
- (ix) to the best of its knowledge, no member of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System, or the Executive Officers of the Texas A&M University System or its member institutions or agencies, has a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in the Project;
- (x) if the Respondent is subject to the Texas franchise tax, it is not currently delinquent in the payment of any franchise tax due under Chapter 171, Texas Tax Code, or is exempt from the payment of such taxes. A false certification may result in the Respondent’s disqualification;
- (xi) under Section 231.006, Family Code, the vendor or applicant certifies that the individual or business entity named in this contract, bid, or application is not ineligible to receive the specified grant, loan, or payment and acknowledges that this contract may be terminated and payment may be withheld if this certification is inaccurate; and,
- (xii) under Section 2155.004, Government Code, the vendor certifies that the individual or business entity named in this bid or contract is not ineligible to receive the specified contract and acknowledges that this contract may be terminated and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.

Respondent shall provide their Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN), full VENDOR name, address and contact information in the spaces below. Failure to sign manually or with electronic signature (such as DocuSign or Adobe Sign) below will disqualify the proposal response. The person signing the submittal should show title or authority to bind his/her firm in contract.

Federal EIN/Taxpayer ID #: _____

Vendor/Company Name: _____

Authorized Signature (INK): _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone No.: _____

Fax No.: _____

E-mail: _____

* By signing this RFP, Respondent certifies that if a Texas address is shown as the address of the respondent, respondent qualifies as a Texas Resident Bidder as defined in Texas Government Code, § 2252.001(4).

**EXHIBIT B
NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT**

The undersigned, duly authorized to represent the persons, firms and corporations joining and participating in the submission of the foregoing Proposal (such persons, firms and corporations hereinafter being referred to as the "Respondent"), being duly sworn, on his or her oath, states that to the best of his or her belief and knowledge no person, firm or corporation, nor any person duly representing the same joining and participating in the submission of the foregoing Proposal, has directly or indirectly entered into any agreement or arrangement with any other Respondents, or with any official of A&M System or any employee thereof, or any person, firm or corporation under contract with A&M System whereby the Respondent, in order to induce acceptance of the foregoing Proposal by said A&M System, has paid or is to pay to any other Respondent or to any of the aforementioned persons anything of value whatever, and that the Respondent has not, directly or indirectly entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other Respondent or Respondents which tends to or does lessen or destroy free competition in the letting of the contract sought for by the foregoing Proposal.

The Respondent hereby certifies that neither it, its officers, partners, owners, providers, representatives, employees and parties in interest, including the affiant, have in any way colluded, conspired, connived or agreed, directly or indirectly, with any other Respondent, potential Respondent, firm or person, in connection with this solicitation, to submit a collusive or sham bid, to refrain from bidding, to manipulate or ascertain the price(s) of other Respondents or potential Respondents, or to obtain through any unlawful act an advantage over other Respondents or A&M System.

The prices submitted herein have been arrived at in an entirely independent and lawful manner by the Respondent without consultation with other Respondents or potential Respondents or foreknowledge of the prices to be submitted in response to this solicitation by other Respondents or potential Respondents on the part of the Respondent, its officers, partners, owners, providers, representatives, employees or parties in interest, including the affiant.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The undersigned Respondent and each person signing on behalf of the Respondent certifies, and in the case of a sole proprietorship, partnership or corporation, each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of their knowledge and belief, no member of A&M System, nor any employee, or person, whose salary is payable in whole or in part by A&M System, has a direct or indirect financial interest in the award of this Proposal, or in the services to which this Proposal relates, or in any of the profits, real or potential, thereof, except as noted otherwise herein.

Signature _____

Company Name _____

Date _____

Notary _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
_____ day of _____, 2021.

Notary Public in and for the County of _____, State of
_____. My commission expires: _____

THE EXECUTION OF OFFER AND NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT MUST BE COMPLETED, SIGNED, AND RETURNED WITH RESPONDENT'S SUBMISSION. FAILURE TO SIGN AND RETURN THESE DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN THE REJECTION OF YOUR SUBMISSION.