

	State of South Carolina Request for Qualifications (RFQ)	Solicitation: 5400022892 Date Issued: 03/04/2022 Procurement Officer: CANDIS GOLSTON Phone: 803-898-9666 E-Mail Address: candis.golston@ddsn.sc.gov Mailing Address: SCDDSN - Central Office Attn: Receiving 3440 Harden Street Extension Columbia SC 29203
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DESCRIPTION: **Consulting Services for Acuity Assessments**

USING GOVERNMENTAL UNIT: **SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs**

SUBMIT YOUR OFFER ON-LINE AT THE FOLLOWING URL: <http://www.procurement.sc.gov>

SUBMIT OFFER BY (Opening Date/Time): **03/22/2022 3:00 PM** (See "Deadline For Submission Of Offer" provision)

QUESTIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY: **03/15/2022 10:00 AM** (Questions must be emailed to: candis.golston@ddsn.sc.gov)
See "Questions From Offerors" provision)

NUMBER OF COPIES TO BE SUBMITTED: **One (1) ONLINE SUBMISSION or to the above mailing address no later than the "Submit Offer by" date and time.**

CONFERENCE TYPE: Request for Qualifications Meeting DATE & TIME: March 14, 2022 @ 10:00 AM (As appropriate, see "Conferences - Pre-Bid/Proposal" & "Site Visit" provisions)	LOCATION: Teams Meeting To gain access information, please submit a request to candis.golston@ddsn.sc.gov Subject Line: RFQ Meeting
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You must submit a signed copy of this form with Your Offer. By signing, You agree to be bound by the terms of the Solicitation. You agree to hold Your Offer open for a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days after the Opening Date. (See "Signing Your Offer" provision.)

NAME OF OFFEROR (full legal name of business submitting the offer)	Any award issued will be issued to, and the contract will be formed with, the entity identified as the Offeror. The entity named as the offeror must be a single and distinct legal entity. Do not use the name of a branch office or a division of a larger entity if the branch or division is not a separate legal entity, i.e., a separate corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, etc.
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE (Person must be authorized to submit binding offer to contract on behalf of Offeror.)	DATE SIGNED
TITLE (business title of person signing above)	STATE VENDOR NO. (Register to Obtain S.C. Vendor No. at www.procurement.sc.gov)
PRINTED NAME (printed name of person signing above)	STATE OF INCORPORATION (If you are a corporation, identify the state of incorporation.)
OFFEROR'S TYPE OF ENTITY: (Check one) (See "Signing Your Offer" provision.) ___ Sole Proprietorship ___ Partnership ___ Other _____ ___ Corporate entity (not tax-exempt) ___ Corporation (tax-exempt) ___ Government entity (federal, state, or local)	

COVER PAGE - ON-LINE ONLY (MAR. 2015)

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(Return Page Two with Your Offer)

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS (Address for offeror's home office / principal place of business)	NOTICE ADDRESS (Address to which all procurement and contract related notices should be sent.) (See "Notice" clause)						
PAYMENT ADDRESS (Address to which payments will be sent.) (See "Payment" clause)	ORDER ADDRESS (Address to which purchase orders will be sent) (See "Purchase Orders and "Contract Documents" clauses)						
_____ Payment Address same as Home Office Address _____ Payment Address same as Notice Address (check only one)	_____ Order Address same as Home Office Address _____ Order Address same as Notice Address (check only one)						
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF AMENDMENTS Offerors acknowledges receipt of amendments by indicating amendment number and its date of issue. (See "Amendments to Solicitation" Provision)							
Amendment No.	Amendment Issue Date	Amendment No.	Amendment Issue Date	Amendment No.	Amendment Issue Date	Amendment No.	Amendment Issue Date
DISCOUNT FOR PROMPT PAYMENT (See "Discount for Prompt Payment" clause)	10 Calendar Days (%)	20 Calendar Days (%)	30 Calendar Days (%)	_____ Calendar Days (%)			
PREFERENCES - A NOTICE TO VENDORS (SEP. 2009): On June 16, 2009, the South Carolina General Assembly rewrote the law governing preferences available to in-state vendors, vendors using in-state subcontractors, and vendors selling in-state or US end products. This law appears in Section 11-35-1524 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. A summary of the new preferences is available at www.procurement.sc.gov/preferences . ALL THE PREFERENCES MUST BE CLAIMED AND ARE APPLIED BY LINE ITEM, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER AWARD IS MADE BY ITEM OR LOT. VENDORS ARE CAUTIONED TO CAREFULLY REVIEW THE STATUTE BEFORE CLAIMING ANY PREFERENCES. THE REQUIREMENTS TO QUALIFY HAVE CHANGED. IF YOU REQUEST A PREFERENCE, YOU ARE CERTIFYING THAT YOUR OFFER QUALIFIES FOR THE PREFERENCE YOU'VE CLAIMED. IMPROPERLY REQUESTING A PREFERENCE CAN HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES. [11-35-1524(E)(4)&(6)] *** PREFERENCES DO NOT APPLY***							
PREFERENCES - ADDRESS AND PHONE OF IN-STATE OFFICE: Please provide the address and phone number for your in-state office in the space provided below. An in-state office is necessary to claim either the Resident Vendor Preference (11-35-1524(C)(1)(i)&(ii)) or the Resident Contractor Preference (11-35-1524(C)(1)(iii)). Accordingly, you must provide this information to qualify for the preference. An in-state office is not required, but can be beneficial, if you are claiming the Resident Subcontractor Preference (11-35-1524(D)).							
*** PREFERENCES DO NOT APPLY***							
_____ In-State Office Address same as Home Office Address _____ In-State Office Address same as Notice Address (check only one)							

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

SCHEDULE OF KEY DATES

All dates subject to change

Distribution of the Request for Qualifications	3/04/2022
RFQ Meeting (10 a.m. EST)	3/14/2022
Deadline for Submission of Questions (by 10a.m. EST)	3/15/2022
State's Written Responses to Questions (tentative)	3/17/2022
Deadline for Submittal of Qualifications (11:00 a.m. EST)	3/23/2022
Short-Listing Notification/Posting (tentative)	3/28/2022
Distribution of Final Request for Proposal (IFB) (tentative)	04/01/2022

Part 1: General Instructions and Procurement Process

- 1.1 SCDDSN will use a two-phase procurement process to select a Contractor to provide consulting services. This Request for Qualification (RFQ) is the first phase in the process to solicit information that SCDDSN will evaluate to determine which prospective will continue to the second phase; the Initiation for Bid (IFB).
- 1.2 By submission of a response to this RFQ solicitation you are applying for consideration to participate in the competition for an award under the subsequently issued IFB for the Scope of Work described herein. This RFQ does not commit the State of South Carolina to an IFB, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of prospective offeror's responses, or to procure or contract for services described herein. The State reserves the right to accept or reject any prospective offeror's qualifications or the subsequent IFB if it is in the best interest of the State to do so.
- 1.3 An evaluation panel has been established by SCDDSN to review the RFQ responses. Selection will be based upon the scoring of the evaluation panel. In accordance with Section 11-35-1520. South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code, prospective offerors will be ranked from most qualified to least qualified on the basis of their qualifications, experience, and ability to perform. Offers will then be solicited from at least the top two (2) qualified prospective offerors by means of an IFB. The determination regarding how many proposals to short list is not subject to review or protest.
- 1.4 Prospective offerors are to include in their response all information as requested herein. Prospective offerors are to submit only that information which is specifically addressed in the RFQ and respond in the format specified.
- 1.5 The RFQ must be made in the official name of the firm or individual under which business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the person, partnership, company, or corporation submitting the RFQ.
- 1.6 Amendments to the Request for Qualifications: (a) The Request for Qualifications may be amended at any time prior to opening. All amendments to this Request for Qualifications shall be in writing from the State. The State shall not be legally bound by any amendment which is not in writing. Prospective offerors should monitor the following web site for the issuance of amendments: www.procurement.sc.gov. b) Prospective offerors shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this Request for Qualifications (1) by signing and returning the amendment, (2) by acknowledging receipt in the prospective offerors' response, or (3) by submitting a response that indicates in some way that the prospective offeror received the amendment.
- 1.7 Questions from prospective offerors: (a) Any prospective offeror desiring an explanation or interpretation of the Request for Qualifications must request it in writing. Oral explanations or instructions will not be binding. Any information given a prospective offeror concerning the Request for Qualifications will be furnished promptly to all other prospective offerors as an Amendment to the Request for Qualifications, if that information is necessary for submitting a response or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to other prospective offerors. We will not identify you in our response to your question. (b) The State seeks to permit maximum practicable competition. Prospective offerors are urged to advise the Procurement Officer as soon as possible regarding any aspect of this procurement, including any aspect of the Request for Qualifications that unnecessarily or inappropriately limits full and open competition. Prospective offerors should advise the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority of any problems they perceive as a result of reviewing this Request for Qualifications document.

- 1.8 Submission of questions: Any questions, comments, requests for information or clarifications regarding the Request for Qualifications must be submitted in writing and received no later than 10:00 AM EST, March 2, 2022. After this date, no further questions, comments, requests for information, or clarifications regarding the Request for Qualifications may be addressed.
- 1.9 Any written questions, requests for information or request for clarifications received, will be responded to in the form of a written amendment to the Request for Qualifications. The amendment will also be posted at the following web address: www.procurement.sc.gov.
- 1.10 All questions, comments, requests for information or clarifications regarding the Request for Qualifications should be submitted as indicated below. All questions, comments, requests for information, or clarifications should, to the highest degree possible, cite the specific Request for Qualifications section and paragraph number(s) to which the question refers. All questions, comments, requests for information, or clarifications regarding this Request for Qualifications should include the identity of the sender, firm name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address. Email is the preferred method for submitting questions. Label the subject line of your email: "Questions: Request for Qualifications Consulting Services for Acuity Assessments 5400022892 (RFQ)". Submit questions in an easily copied format such as MS Word. Please do not insert your questions into tables.
- 1.11 Rejection/cancellation: The State reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses and/or discontinue the selection process at any time prior to contract execution.
- 1.12 Submitting your response: (a) All copies of your response, and any other documents required to be submitted with the response should be enclosed in a sealed, opaque envelope or package - (1) Addressed to the office specified on the Cover Page; and (2) Showing the Request for Qualifications number, and the name and address of the prospective offeror. (b) Prospective offerors using commercial carrier services shall ensure that the response is addressed and marked on the outermost envelope or wrapper as prescribed in paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) when delivered to the office specified on the Cover Page. (c) Facsimile or e-mail responses will not be considered.
- 1.13 Submitting confidential information: For every document prospective offeror submits in response to or with regard to this Request for Qualifications, prospective offeror must separately mark with the word "CONFIDENTIAL" every page, or portion thereof, that prospective offeror contends contains information that is exempt from public disclosure because it is either (a) a trade secret as defined in Section 30-4-40(a)(1), or (b) privileged and confidential, as that phrase is used in Section 11-35-410. For every document prospective offeror submits in response to or with regard to this Request for Qualifications, prospective offeror must separately mark with the words "TRADE SECRET" every page, or portion thereof, that prospective offeror contends contains a trade secret as that term is defined by Section 39-8-20 of the Trade Secrets Act. For every document prospective offerors submit in response to or with regard to this Request for Qualifications, prospective offerors must separately mark with the word "PROTECTED" every page, or portion thereof, that prospective offeror contends is protected by Section 11-35-1810. All markings must be conspicuous; use color, bold, underlining, or some other method in order to conspicuously distinguish the mark from the other text. Do not mark your entire response as confidential, trade secret, or protected. In determining whether to release documents, the State will detrimentally rely on prospective offerors' marking of documents, as required by these instructions, as being either "CONFIDENTIAL" or "TRADE SECRET" or "PROTECTED". By submitting a response, prospective offeror agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the State of South Carolina, its agencies, officers and employees, from every claim, demand, loss, expense, cost, damage or injury, including attorney's fees, arising out of or resulting from withholding information by the State of South Carolina or any of its agencies, that prospective offeror marked as "CONFIDENTIAL" or "TRADE SECRET" or "PROTECTED". (All references to S.C. Code of Laws.)

- 1.14 Deadline for submission of your response: The SCDDSN Procurement Department will receive responses until the opening date shown on the cover page. It is the prospective offerors' sole responsibility to ensure the Office of State Procurement receives their response. Prospective offerors, when mailing the hard copy of your response please allow a sufficient mail delivery period to ensure timely receipt of your response by the Office of State Procurement. Any response received after the date/time set for submittal shall be rejected.
- 1.15 Debriefing meetings: If a prospective offeror not short-listed would like to schedule a debriefing, prospective offeror will have five (5) business days from the date the short-listing notification is issued/posted. Only written requests (emails are acceptable) for a debriefing will be scheduled. Failure to request a debriefing within the five (5) business day period waives the opportunity for a debriefing. Prospective offerors may request return of their responses within thirty (30) calendar days after the date of short-list notification/posting. All cost of returns will be paid by the prospective offeror. Thirty (30) calendar days after the short-list notification/posting all materials submitted by prospective offerors not short-listed may be destroyed.

Part 2: Background

The Agency is an independent agency in state government designated as the State's Intellectual Disability or Related Disability, Autism, and Head and Spinal Cord Injury or Similar Disabilities authority. The Agency's mission is to assist people with disabilities and their families through choice in meeting needs, pursuing possibilities, and achieving life goals, and to minimize the occurrence and reduce the severity of disabilities through prevention. The Agency serves over 37,000 people with disabilities through local Disabilities and Special Needs Boards and other qualified providers (approximately 98%) and Regional Centers (approximately 2%).

Part 3: Description of the Scope of Work to Be Solicited By the IFB

The purpose of the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs seeking to qualify an offeror to conduct research and provide a comprehensive analysis of per-reviewed literature regarding acuity assessments and landscape usage of assessments. The assessment is to ensure the agency meets industry best practices in the selection and utilization of an assessment or multiple assessment to identify level of need of services of people authorized to receive services from DDSN (hereinafter referred as The Agency). The state's existing assessment approach lacks standardization, objectivity, and does not comprehensively incorporate appropriate research and literature to meet best practice.

- a. Assessment(s) of functional needs through empirically tested and validated means, a basis for allocation of resources, standardization of care delivery, and quality outcomes.

The Scope of Work shall include, but may not be limited to, the following tasks:

1. Complete peer-reviewed literature regarding acuity assessments
2. Provide research-based recommendations for the requirements to be included in a procurement of/for an approach to acuity assessment to be utilized in South Carolina that meets best practices in the fields of measurement and health care and psychology, including implementation considerations.
3. Provide research-based recommended standards and procedures for piloting and implementing the new assessment, including measures to be monitored throughout.
4. Serve as technical advisor during pilot and implementation. The Piloting tool will be solicited in a separate solicitation, and any Contractor that submits a bid through this solicitation agrees to serve as the technical advisor during the pilot and implementation year(s).

Research Completion

The Offeror must have the ability to promptly perform work to ensure the assessment is completed as soon as possible but no later than six weeks from kick off meeting, including delivery of the final report with recommendations and a list of reviewed material. There will be biweekly meetings to discuss progress and challenges.

Part 4: Information to be submitted

All prospective offerors that intend to participate in this process must submit information requested by this RFQ including their qualifications, experience, and ability to perform the requirements of the contract. **It is not the intention of SCDDSN to receive specific recommendations or a prospective offeror's approach as part of this RFQ.**

Prospective offerors shall be held responsible for the validity of all information supplied in its response. Prospective offerors are advised that SCDDSN reserves the right to conduct an independent investigation of any information, including prior experience, identified in the responses. Should subsequent investigation disclose that the facts and conditions were not as stated, the offeror's proposal may be rejected or contract terminated for default if after award, in addition to any other remedy available under the contract or by law.

Responses will be accepted only from the entity that would be implementing and deploying the new system. Prospective offerors shall submit online and mailed copies as follows:

- a. One (1) original marked "original" hard copy of the prospective offeror's response (in **SEARCHABLE**) MS Word, MS Excel and/or PDF format where appropriate).

Prospective offerors should submit the following information for purposes of evaluation.

Prospective Offeror's Qualifications and Experience

Provide a narrative designed to demonstrate to the evaluation panel your company's qualifications, and advantages to SCDDSN in selecting your research and provide a comprehensive analysis of per-reviewed literature regarding acuity assessments and landscape usage of assessments. The literature and landscape review, and analysis. The narrative should include the company's experience, business expertise and success in Consulting Services for Acuity Assessments. Include any information you wish SCDDSN to consider about your company's qualifications and experience.

- a. Provide information that demonstrate expertise through a combination of both educational training and experience in all of the following: measurement, statistical analysis, evaluation, psychiatry, medical evaluation, and background with individuals with disabilities from childhood through adult. Individuals performing the SOW should possess a doctorate in the areas in which s/he shall perform work as well as documented work experience.
- b. Provide a summary of your company and its history in 300 words or less. Additionally, provide your company's principal business, ownership, how long your company has been in the business of providing Consulting Services.

Prospective Offeror's Ability to Perform

- a. Provide information reflecting your company's current financial position. Include a copy of your company's audited financial statements for the last three (3) years.
- b. Outline and describe the nature of any business relationships, partnerships, or co-ownership partnerships currently in place. Describe any ongoing responsibilities (financial, strategic, or otherwise) currently in place or that are a result of these relationships. Describe any recent (within the last 3 years) or pending mergers, acquisitions, or re-organizations that have been or may be encountered by your company in the next 12 to 36 months and the anticipated impact of such events on your company.
- c. Provide specific detailed information regarding any and all situations where your company has defaulted on a contract. Provide specific detailed information regarding any and all situations where a contract has

- been canceled or in which a contract was not renewed due to alleged fault on the part of your company.
- d. In the last three (3) years has your company had a project or contract terminated prior to a successful conclusion of assessment? If so, please describe the circumstances. Provide a list of any contracts that were terminated for convenience prior to the original contract end date and the reason for termination.
 - e. For any similar project completed within the last three (3) years, indicate any time where your company caused the delivery schedule to increase by more than 20% from the original schedule over the life of the project. Describe the situation, circumstances, variances, and other relevant information to explain the reason(s) for the variance.
 - f. Provide your company's annual gross revenue during the last three (3) fiscal years. If 2021 is not yet available, provide an estimate for FY 2021 and include FY 2020. What was the percentage of gross revenues invested in government and/or aging services work?
 - g. Describe your company's ability to finance additional costs that would be incurred by your company in the event your company is awarded a contract resulting from the IFB. State the amount your company would need to borrow and provide documentation from the company's lender stating its willingness to lend such amount to the company.
 - h. Provide specific detailed information regarding any legal action(s), including currently pending actions against your company in the past seven (7) years.
 - i. Provide specific detailed information regarding whether your company has been subject to any sanctions or enforcement action related to legal or regulatory issues including but not limited to privacy compliance, HIPPA compliance, civil or criminal sanctions, or enforcement actions.
 - j. Have you had any instance of a data breach or data loss? If yes, please describe the nature of the breach/loss and the manner in which the breach/loss was rectified.

Part 5: Evaluation Process

An evaluation panel has been established by SCDDSN to review the RFQ responses. Selection will be based upon the scoring of the evaluation panel. In accordance with Section 11-35-1520, South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code, prospective offerors will be ranked from most qualified to least qualified on the basis of their qualifications, experience, and ability to perform. Offers will then be solicited from at least the top two (2) qualified prospective offerors by means of an IFB. All Submittals will be considered. The determination regarding how many proposals to short list is not subject to review or protest.