REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

For

Quality Assurance Services for
Enterprise-wide Pre-Award and Regulatory Research
Compliance Administration Software Platform
Implementation Project

Issued
January 30, 2015

The Research Foundation for the State University of New York
35 State Street
Albany, New York 12207-2826

Submission Deadline: February 27, 2015 at 5 p.m. E.S.T.

www.rfsuny.org
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You are invited to submit a bid proposal to The Research Foundation for SUNY (RF) in response to this Request for Proposal (RFP). For more information about the RF visit our website @ www.rfsuny.org.

Section 1: General Information and Instructions

A. Summary and Scope

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit bids to procure the services of a quality assurance (QA) contractor to help evaluate and support the oversight of the Research Foundation for SUNY’s implementation of its pre-award and regulatory research compliance administration software also known as Pre-Award and Compliance System (PACS). Such evaluation consists of: the QA of design, development, schedule, and implementation activities and deliverables related to the implementation PACS, QA of performance of project management and the PACS vendor; QA of the quality of work by the PACS vendor; and the QA monitoring of any other activities related to the transition to a new system.

QA responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- Provide an ongoing critical review and assessment of the deliverables of the PACS vendor and project management;
- Provide an ongoing critical review and assessment of the performance of the RF project management and PACS vendor;
- Independently report on the project status and potential risks; and
- Provide ongoing review of transition planning as well as transition activities.

To protect the intellectual property and confidentiality of the PACS vendor, software vendors that market pre-award and compliance systems are excluded from consideration for this RFP.

To protect against any potential conflict of interest, the entity awarded the contract for the Enterprise-wide Pre-Award and Compliance System is not eligible for this proposal.

B. RFP Proposal Submission and Due Date

When submitting a proposal, you must:

1. Prepare a clearly readable document that provides information in the order requested and attach all required information.

2. Indicate any deviations from the specifications.

3. Sign the proposal. Your signature indicates full knowledge and acceptance of this RFP.

4. Firms should submit an electronic copy of their proposals, to: Lisa.LeBlanc@rfsuny.org with the subject line stating: “Proposal: PACS Software Project Quality Assurance”

5. Submit the proposal so that it is received by 5 pm E.S.T. on Friday February 27, 2015. Materials arriving after 5 pm on February 27, 2015 will not be considered.
C. Response to Inquiries/Bidder’s Conference

Any inquiries about the requirements of this RFP or any apparent omission or discrepancy will be addressed during a bidder conference call on Thursday, February 12, 2015 from 1 – 3 p.m. E.S.T.

All bidders are invited to participate to assure an equitable distribution of information. Please register by sending an e-mail to Tracey Drew (Tracey.Drew@rfsuny.org). The RF also asks that you submit your questions in advance by close of business on Monday, February 9, 2015.

The bidder conference call information will be sent to those registered bidders.

Oral statements or instructions do not constitute an amendment to this RFP. If a change is necessary, the RF representative will issue a written amendment to this RFP.

D. Reserved Rights

The RF reserves the right to:

1. Reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP.

2. Request references and financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year.

3. Contact any or all references.

4. Waive requirements or amend this RFP on notification to all bidders.

5. Adjust or correct cost or cost figures with the concurrence of the bidders if mathematical or typographical errors exist.

6. Negotiate with bidders responding to this RFP within the requirements necessary to serve the best interests of the RF.

7. Begin contract negotiations with another bidder in order to serve the best interests of the RF, should the RF be unsuccessful in negotiating a contract with the successful bidder within an acceptable time frame.

8. Reject any or all portions of any offer, to negotiate terms and conditions consistent with the solicitation, and to make an award for any or all remaining portions.

9. Request clarifications from bidders for purposes of assuring a full understanding of responsiveness, and further to permit revisions from all bidders being considered for contract award, prior to award.

10. Waive minor irregularities.
E. Compliance with Laws and Regulations: Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Obligations

The awarding of this business and continuation of services are subject to the requirements of Executive Order 11246 and 11375 and the rules and regulations of the Secretary of Labor (41 CFR Chapter 60) in promoting Equal Employment Opportunities.

The successful bidder must certify that it does not and will not discriminate or unduly favor any employees or agents on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability. As part of this contract, bidder must agree to comply with all applicable provisions of Section 503, Title V of the Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1972, as the same may be from time to time amended, together with all applicable regulations there under and all applicable provisions of Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-516) as the same may be from time to time amended, together with all applicable regulations there under.

The Research Foundation maintains a strong culture of compliance and requires all vendors to be aware of and comply with the Research Foundation Code of Conduct.

F. Liability and Indemnification

The successful bidder will be responsible for the work, direction and compensation of its employees, consultants, agents and contractors. Nothing in the resulting agreement or the performance thereof by the successful bidder will impose any liability or duty whatsoever on the Research Foundation including, but not limited to, any liability for taxes, compensation, commissions, unemployment insurance, Workers’ Compensation, disability benefits, Social Security, or other employee benefits for any person or entity. The successful bidder shall hold harmless and indemnify the Research Foundation, their officers and employees from and against any injury, damage, loss of liability to persons or property resulting from or arising out of (a) the agreement, and (b) the acts, omissions, liabilities, or obligations of the successful bidder, any affiliate, or any person or entity engaged by the successful bidder as an expert, consultant, independent contractor, subcontractor, employee or agent.

G. Additional Terms and/or Conditions

1. The following items will be incorporated into and made part of, the formal agreement: (1) the RF’s RFP; (2) the successful bidder’s proposal.

2. In the event of any inconsistency in or conflict among the document elements of the agreement described above, such inconsistency or conflict shall be resolved by giving precedence to the document elements in the following order: (1) the Agreement; (2) this RFP; (3) the successful bidder’s proposal.

3. Any terms that are attached or referenced with a submission shall not be considered part of the bid or proposal, but shall be deemed included for informational purposes only.

4. The resulting agreement shall be binding upon its execution by both parties.

5. The agreement may be revised at any time upon mutual consent of the parties in writing. Such written consent will not be effective until signed by both parties.
6. The relationship of the successful bidder to the Research Foundation shall be that of an independent contractor.

7. Proposed prices should reflect all discounts including educational discounts.

8. The submission of a proposal constitutes a binding offer to perform and provide said services and cannot be unilaterally changed by the vendor. Such binding offer shall be firm and not revocable for a period of one hundred and eighty (180) days after the deadline for proposal submission and will continue thereafter until the successful bidder notifies the Research Foundation otherwise, in writing. Such deadline may be further extended by mutual agreement.

9. In the event the successful bidder uses partners, subcontracts or subcontractors, the successful bidder will remain responsible for compliance with all specifications and performance of all obligations under the contract resulting from this RFP.

10. The Research Foundation will not be liable for any cost associated with the preparation, transmittal, or presentation of any proposals or materials submitted in response to this RFP.

11. All bids or proposals submitted in response to the solicitation become and remain the property of the Research Foundation and should any doubt or difference of opinion arise between the Research Foundation and the bidder as to the items to be furnished or the interpretation of the provisions in the solicitation, the decision of the Research Foundation shall be final and binding upon all parties.

12. This RFP and the resulting contract shall be governed by the Laws of the State of New York.

13. Public announcements or news releases regarding this RFP or any subsequent award of a contract must not be made by any bidder without the prior written approval of the Research Foundation.

14. The successful bidder is responsible for compliance with all applicable rules and regulations pertaining to cities, towns, counties and State where the services are provided and all other laws applicable to the performance of the resulting contract. The successful bidder shall provide all necessary safeguards for safety and protection as set forth by the United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

H. Bidder Certification

As evidence of bidders’ financial stability and ability to meet the service and requirements, Bidder MUST complete all information requested in Attachment A: Application for Contract with the Research Foundation for SUNY and Bidder Certification.

Section 2: Proposal Requirements

A. Overview

This RFP asks bidders for a proposal to provide quality assurance services to support the evaluation of the Research Foundation for SUNY’s pre-award and regulatory research compliance administration software implementation project.
The requirements identified in this RFP will be enforced in evaluating proposals submitted in response to the RFP. The bidder’s compliance with the format prescribed herein, as well as the bidder’s response to each specific requirement stated in the RFP, will be considered during the evaluation process.

B. Mandatory Elements for Qualification

Bidders must submit the following:

1. The completed and signed Attachment A: Application for Contract with the Research Foundation for SUNY and Bidder Certification. This form must have a signature signed by an official authorized to bind the bidder to its provisions.

2. Describe your company’s related quality assurance experience in the following areas:
   a. Large research universities; references are welcomed. The Research Foundation is the largest research foundation of its type with annual revenues of approximately $1 billion, higher education experience with institutions with significant sponsored program and research portfolios is required
   b. Sponsored research
   c. Large scale software implementations

3. Your company’s most recently audited financial statements as a separate attachment.

4. The RF requires that the contractor’s QA team be composed of qualified risk management, quality management and technology experts capable of performing the services and completing the work products outlined in the RFP. Due to the variety of deliverables expected during PACS project, it is likely that different QA skill sets may be required at different times during the project.

   Beyond requiring that a single QA team member be designated as QA director, the RF does not wish to prescribe the makeup of the contractor’s QA team.

5. Description of Experience, Resources and References to include the following information:

   Experience:
   a. Provide a brief company history and the year your entity was founded
   b. Describe your experience in higher education and sponsored programs and research compliance specifically
   c. Describe your company’s size and commitment to higher education
   d. Describe your firm’s experience with similar quality assurance engagements
   e. Tell us anything else about your company’s mission or vision that you think is important
   f. Include any other factors which you believe make your organization especially qualified to perform this service
Resources:

a. Describe the background and experience of the specific personnel that will be assigned to the implementation, including relevant certifications, relevant clients served, and primary home office location
b. Identify specific personnel who will have overall responsibility for the project
c. Clearly state and specifically identify any subcontractors or subcontracts which are to be used to deliver any of the services contained in the proposal. If any, approval of their involvement by the RF will be required
d. Indicate resources/personnel that are required from the RF staff to perform the services contracted

References:

a. List the organizational name, address, telephone number, and name of a contact person for three (3) references with whom you have worked within the past two (2) years and who can measure and attest to your qualifications specific to this area and to the persons you will assign to this project. Please provide a description of the services provided and the length of the relationship
b. Confirm that, as part of this RFP process, your reference would be willing to participate in interviews with the RF. The specific date and location of such interviews will be determined subsequent to the review of proposal submissions

6. Fee Proposal: The RF is seeking top quality services and expertise and understands that organizations that can offer such services are entitled to fair compensation for their services. At the same time, complete transparency in compensation for services is essential. Bidders must submit a separate financial exhibit (as an attachment to the RFP response) showing the fee for services within the scope of this RFP.

7. Insurance: Bidder will at all times during the term of this contract, at their own expense, carry commercial general liability insurance and property damage insurance in the amount of $2,000,000 naming The Research Foundation for the State University of New York and the State University of New York as additional insured, and required professional liability insurance in the amount of $5,000,000. Excess policies can be used to meet required limits.

C. Scope of Work

Overview

The RF seeks a contractor to provide quality assurance services for the RF’s PACS project. These efforts are important to ensure that the PACS Project meets key objectives of the RF and the campuses we support; pays for performance; adheres to fiscal discipline; and identifies and minimizes disruptions to critical business processes.

The primary focus of the contractor is to ensure that the products implemented and processes employed by the PACS vendor meet specified requirements and standards, and are consistent with the project plans. The contractor will advise the RF whether each of the project deliverables, as well as, any additional deliverables and enhancements are acceptable per the specifications set forth in the PACS RFP, contract terms and conditions, and any accepted change/enhancement requests.
The QA team will function independently from the PACS team in charge of developing and implementing the PACS; however, the QA team will have timely access to the PACS vendor's key personnel, interim and final products, outputs and deliverables. In addition, the QA team may attend and monitor meetings and presentations regarding project status, planning, risk and issue management, system design, user feedback, and deliverables walk-through.

The successful bidder’s QA Director and the rest of its PACS QA team will report to the RF’s Vice President of Internal Audit Services. Overall QA project management and control will be retained by the Vice President of Internal Audit Services. Interim and final approvals for PACS QA project deliverables, including any corrective actions that may be necessary, will be at the discretion of the RF.

The QA vendor will assist the RF by:

1. Providing quality assurance services during the PACS project.
2. Determining if deliverables are acceptable, and thus eligible for payment, at various stages of the PACS project.
3. Assuring that a full range of performance standards are met by the PACS vendor and project management, including, but not limited to:
   a. Information security
   b. Data integrity
   c. Timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of data conversion
   d. System availability
   e. System performance
   f. User experience
   g. Defect resolution speed and yield
   h. Availability and quality of support
   i. Timeliness of deliverables
   j. Quality of the deliverables
   k. Training
   l. Software adoption

The PACS vendor will be required to engage and support the QA vendor for fulfilling routine audit and documentation of performance standards. The PACS vendor will track and submit all relevant data and reports required by the QA vendor.

In addition to assisting with Performance Standards, the QA vendor is expected to:

1. Review, evaluate all deliverables;
2. Recommend signoff for performance based payment.
3. Independently report on the project status and potential risks.
4. Monitor the vendor’s and management’s quality management processes.
5. Monitor and report on implementation processes.
6. Evaluate training plan and execution.
7. Monitor knowledge transfer.
8. Provide ongoing risk reporting.
9. Assess the result of system testing.

The PACS contractor, including parent and or subsidiaries or other companies in which it has a financial or legal interest, selected as a result of the PACS RFP for the procurement or any of its subcontractors or
agents, are precluded from involvement as a contractor, subcontractor, or agent in the contract awarded in response to this RFP.

**Contracted Services**

The RF will provide space, equipment and software that are currently used by the RF to the contractor for the provision of the services listed in the next section. The RF uses standard Microsoft tools (e.g., Operating System, Office and Project). Contractors can bring other items (i.e., hardware, software) at the RF’s discretion. All access to and use of RF systems and hardware will be consistent with applicable RF policies. Vendor must be willing to agree to those policies.

Unless otherwise specified within the description of the contracted services, ("Service") the Services required in the resulting QA for PACS contract may include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Provide ongoing QA Consultation Services**

In order to provide QA consultation services, the contractor shall be responsible for the following throughout the term of the QA for PACS contract:

1. Providing one or more dedicated staff to maintain a presence, according to a schedule proposed by the bidder, on-site at the RF and PACS implementation site, or other project work sites, as necessary.
2. Managing the schedules and work assignments of the QA Director and any other QA staff.
3. Serving as an integral member of the project team, providing ongoing assistance with project management decision-making and planning efforts.
4. Providing documentation regarding risks, issues, and recommendations for any project management meetings, project status meetings, and/or steering committee meetings, as required.
5. Establishing procedures for monitoring the PACS project deliverables.
6. Providing analysis and recommendation for performance based payment to PACS vendor.
7. Implementing and utilizing the quality management and issue/problem tracking/resolution and risk management methodologies, as proposed in the work approach portion of the technical proposal.

**Participate in PACS Project Meetings**

Designated members of the QA for PACS project team will be permitted, but not required to participate in weekly PACS project status meetings.

The contractor is invited to participate in these meetings for the purpose of:

1. Tracking PACS project issues.
2. Evaluating the PACS contractor’s implementation methods and ensuring the PACS project team is completing tasks and action items.
3. Monitoring PACS project progress.
4. Assisting and reporting.
Review and Evaluate PACS Contractor Deliverables

The PACS vendor will be required under the PACS project contract to provide deliverables to the RF. Review and evaluation of each of these will require a different approach for the QA contractor. For the purposes of this RFP and the implementation of the successful proposal, review is defined as checking for completeness and accuracy, much as the RF will review the bids in the early stages for the bid evaluation process, and evaluate is defined as an assessment of the quality of work or measure the degree to which the deliverables meet the requirements. While the RF will also be reviewing and evaluating the deliverables, and is solely responsible for accepting or rejecting a deliverable, the RF will consider the results of the QA contractor’s review and evaluation in arriving at their decision.

Monitor System Customization and Enhancement Requests

Customization and enhancements are defined as additional deliverables and additional functionality that are not present in the PACS RFP, but shall be determined and requested during the PACS project through a process described in the PACS project contract.

The RF and the QA contractor will be responsible for confirming that the enhancement request process is being followed correctly, and examining whether the proposed hours are reasonable and realistic.

The PACS contractor will be required to track and submit reports during the performance of the enhancement showing the actual number of hours per job title used for the reporting period. The RF and the QA vendor will review the reported usage to determine the accuracy of the estimated work effort in the enhancement request.

Each month, the contractor shall review all prior month’s approved enhancement requests for appropriateness and accuracy with the RF.

Monitor PACS Contractor’s Quality Management Processes

Quality management processes are defined as those that oversee the activities and tasks needed to maintain a desired level of excellence. These generally include quality planning, quality assurance, quality control, and quality improvement. The PACS contractor is responsible for developing their own quality management processes; the QA contractor is required to monitor those processes, validate that they are appropriate, and verifying that they are being carried out by the PACS contractor according to specifications. The QA contractor is expected to not only identify any areas of deficiency with regard to the PACS contractor’s quality management processes, but also to offer suggestions to remedy those deficiencies.

Assess Pilot Implementation

One of the work products that will result from this QA service is the pilot implementation assessment report. The PACS implementation track begins with pilot implementation at the RF locations, followed by a sixty-day (60) period to assess the effectiveness of the PACS contractor’s training and implementation processes. The end result of this assessment is an informed “Go” or “No Go” decision as to whether to roll out the solution to the remaining locations.

Per the PACS project schedule, the pilot implementation is expected to be completed before the QA contract begins. Therefore, the QA contractor shall review any pilot assessment materials produced by
the PACS contractor and/or the RF team, and optionally, conduct additional assessments to produce a “lessons learned” report.

The QA contractor is required to have staff onsite and in attendance for the end-user training at each pilot location. The contractor shall review both the PACS contractor’s Pilot results report and the RF’s own Post-Pilot assessment for each site, as well as, independently assess the training and implementation processes to produce the Pilot assessment report.

An Implementation Assessment for the PACS Pilot should discuss, at minimum, the:

- Effectiveness of the PACS training delivered to the RF end-users by the PACS contractor;
- Areas where the implementation process can be improved in terms of speed, accuracy, and effectiveness; and
- Extent to which the implementation team achieved “buy-in” from end-users and suggestions for continued improvements in this area.

Any other topics that the contractor deems important in helping to standardize and streamline the PACS training and implementation process may also be included.

Taking into consideration both the PACS contractor’s and the QA contractor’s post-pilot assessments, the RF team alone will decide whether to proceed with the remaining implementations.

*The RF reserves the right to require the QA contractor to participate in and attend training classes for three (3) “rollout” (sites implemented after the pilots are completed) implementations, and complete post-implementation assessments for these rollout sites as well.

**Monitor Knowledge Transfer**

Knowledge transfer is defined in the PACS RFP partly as “the exchange of written or electronic information pertaining to the PACS usage, maintenance, development, troubleshooting or other relevant system-related concerns.”

Per the PACS RFP, the knowledge transfer should include information on the daily care and maintenance of the RF PACS, third-party software, developed software and interfaces.

While this knowledge transfer will occur throughout the term of the PACS project, the knowledge transfer monitoring service to be performed by the QA contractor will focus on the final six (6) months of the period of maintenance and support that the PACS contractor is providing. The period of maintenance and support provided by the PACS contractor begins on day 1 of the first PACS pilot. The final six (6) month period is the period in which maintenance and support responsibilities transition from the PACS contractor to the RF team.

The contractor shall monitor the knowledge transfer between the PACS contractor and the RF and report on any observed deficiencies that could prevent the RF from operating the PACS independently of the PACS contractor once the PACS contract is complete.
Provide Ongoing Risk Management

The contractor must provide ongoing risk management services to the RF. These services must include, but not be limited to, support in the following areas:

1. Assist conflict resolution, consistent with the RF’s policies, during all project phases.
2. Reviewing and monitoring all project status reports, and investigating and reporting on items that could result in increased risk to the project.
3. Evaluating the impact and probable causes of missed deadlines, identifying corrective actions, developing plans to minimize the impact of missed deadlines, and monitoring the progress of corrective actions.
4. Identifying potential risk indicators, such as project activities or events that may cause significant levels of risk to the functioning of the system including all system components.
5. Investigate issues, offer solutions and provide expertise related to insufficient and/or failed PACS deliverables; provide diagnostic review and corrective action recommendations.

When a risk is identified, the contractor must provide the RF with a written recommendation that includes suggested mitigation and intervention strategies as part of the QA report. The RF must receive immediate notification for any identification of risk to the project.

Assess PACS Contractor and the RF/Information Services (IS) Application Testing

The PACS contractor and the RF/IS team intended to conduct two (2) separate rounds of application testing. Additional testing will occur throughout the life of the project as custom functionality and enhancements are developed and released and defects are found and remediated.

The PACS contractor will be responsible for conducting:

- Integration testing to validate that:
  - Dependent business processes across functional areas and system components interact seamlessly; and
  - Enhancements, security, workflow, configurations, data conversion programs, interfaces, reports, and forms work together.
- System testing, to confirm that dependent business processes and functional requirements can be fully executed and produce the predefined expected results for each business scenario and test script. The testing effort will not focus on testing each specific configuration item or the core product functions, but rather the end result of the solution and customizations for the RF.

The RF/IS will be responsible for conducting user acceptance testing to validate the system is functioning as designed, verify the conversion process, and confirm the system is ready to be moved into the production environment.

Additional existing PACS functionality will be deployed, as well as new functionality that will be designed according to the RF requirements.

The QA contractor will be required to review and comment on PACS contractor and the RF/IS application testing. The application testing review and comments should focus on validating that the system, integration, user acceptance and any other test scripts based on the PACS requirements will accomplish
the desired purpose of demonstrating that the requirements are met and verifying the RF testing results through reviewing the RF test plans and test script outcomes.

**Work Products**

Several of the contracted services, alone and in combination, shall result in the creation of work products to be delivered to the RF as part of the contractor’s performance.

The work products delivered by the contractor throughout the contract term include but may not be limited to:

1. A quality assurance plan; due in thirty days after the date of contract approval and updated as needed. The execution of this plan, and QA plan (work product #2) shall result in the provision of many of the contracted services.
2. A validation and verification plan, consisting of initial review and evaluation criteria for PACS contractor deliverables; due thirty days after the date of contract approval and updated as needed.
3. Individual pilot implementation assessment report. The pilot assessment will emphasize the “lessons learned” from the pilot implementation. The pilot assessment report will provide information upon which the RF can base a “Go or No-Go” decision to proceed with the remaining implementations. These work products are to be delivered at a fixed point in time to be set by the RF project schedule.
4. Issues, risk, and project status reports on a monthly and quarterly basis, or as required by the RF.

The contractor is responsible for updating any work products, as needed.

The RF reserves the right to withhold future payment when performance of contracted services or deliveries of work products are determined to unacceptable or not delivered on time. The RF Vice President for Internal Audit Services can make a determination of non-performance based on their judgment that a contracted service or work product does not meet the requirements of the service or product; or that a deadline for delivery of a work product has not been met. In such cases, a Notice of Deficiency will be sent to the contractor, who will then have an opportunity to take corrective action within a period of time to be determined by the RF generally not to exceed five (5) business days.

To demonstrate an understanding of these required work products, it will be helpful to reference an outline of the proposed PACS project work plan, as contained in the **PACS RFP**.

**Quality Assurance Plan**

The contractor’s quality assurance plan must include a detailed work plan, which includes, but is not limited to the following QA activities:

1. Separate tasks for each QA activity and checkpoint.
2. Logical sequence and interdependencies for the RF PACS team and the PACS contractor team.
3. Resource requirements for all parties.
4. Target completion dates for each task.
5. Identification of and compliance with deadlines and milestones.
6. Task and activities necessary to support the implementation of issue/problem tracking/resolution and risk management methodologies.
The QA plan must also describe approaches to monitoring the PACS contractor’s project schedule compliance, the project scope, and the implementation of quality control processes and procedures. In addition, the QA plan must include the contractor’s approach to the evaluation and control of the quality for all of the PACS contractor’s project deliverables.

The contractor must deliver an initial QA plan for the RF approval within thirty business days of contract approval. The QA plan is a living document, which the contractor must update as necessary and submit changes to the RF for approval prior to implementing the plan.

Validation and Verification Plan

The initial validation and verification plan, due within thirty business days of the date of contract approval, will describe the process for reviewing all deliverables from the PACS contractor, including those that initiate a PACS contract deliverable payment. The plan, which is subject to any needed updates on a scheduled or as needed basis, will describe how the contractor intends to work with the RF to determine the quality and acceptability of deliverables.

The validation and verification plan should include any needed reports to be provided to the RF and the PACS contractor regarding the recommended acceptance or rejection of deliverables.

Pilot Implementation Assessment Reports

The PACS contractor is responsible for delivering a pilot implementation assessment report after the completion of the pilot implementation. The report is due on the later of: ninety (90) days after contract approval or sixty (60) days after the completion pilot implementation. The “lessons learned” report and the “training effectiveness assessment” report will support the “Go/No-Go” decision that will occur after the pilot is completed. Additionally, the QA contractor shall share or otherwise make available all pilot implementation assessment materials collected or produced during the pilot within one (1) week of the completion of the pilot at the site.

Pilot Implementation “Lessons Learned”

As the QA for PACS contract will most likely begin after the pilot has been completed, this work product is a retrospective of the training and implementation approach used for the pilot, with an emphasis on which unsuccessful approach to eliminate. The QA contractor is expected to review, at minimum, the PACS contractor’s own pilot results report and any surveys or assessments completed by the RF/IS teams for source material for the “lessons learned”.

Pilot Implementation “Training Effectiveness Assessment”

The QA contractor is expected to attend the training delivered to the pilot facilities, review, at minimum, the PACS contractor’s “pilot results report” and any assessments provided by the RF/IS team, and deliver an independent assessment of the effectiveness of the training given for each pilot implementation location. The contractor is required to submit their own proposed assessment tools (e.g., surveys, interviews) and methodology with the bid in the “scope of services and work approach” section of the technical proposal.

The contractor may attend status meetings (scheduled and ad hoc) as determined by the RF/IS and by the QA plan. The contractor must prepare issues, risk, and project status reports on a monthly basis.
Monthly Status Reporting

The contractor is required to prepare and submit monthly status reports that will cover the status of QA tasks and the review and monitoring of the PACS contractor and the RF/IS PACS project staff tasks.

Status reports on QA tasks must include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Project status and stage of completion.
2. Accomplishments during the reporting period.
3. Problems identified and corresponding resolutions.
4. Immediate goals for the next reporting period.
5. Issues that need to be addressed.
6. Identification and highlighting of scheduled slippages, schedule concerns, and recommendations for resolutions.
7. Current contractor staff assignments, schedules, and locations.

Status reports on the RF/IS and PACS contractor tasks must include, but are not limited to, reviews of the following:

1. Operational issues that need to be addressed.
2. Identification of any schedule slippage, including effect on payment schedule, and strategy for resolution.
3. Corrective action status.
4. Risk indicators that are likely to cause significant levels of risk to the functioning of the project (late deliverables, cost overruns, unanticipated events, etc.).
5. Recommended risk mitigation strategies.
6. Deviations from the PACS project plan and/or RFP requirements.

The contractor must deliver status reports to RF/IS within two (2) business days after the close of the monthly period. The reports will also need to be coordinated with the monthly PACS Project Leadership Committee meetings and steering committee meetings. The contractor will assist the RF/IS project management office (PMO) with the project update at these meetings.

Notice of Deficiency

1. All work products, materials or other submissions provided by the contractor must meet the form and content requirements specified by the RF/IS. Such deliverables or other materials are subject to the RF approval.
2. In the event the contractor fails to submit a work product, or if the RF determines that the QA work product cannot be accepted, the RF will issue a notice of deficiency. The contractor will then have a cure period, beginning with the dissemination of the RF’s notice of deficiency and lasting for ten (10) business days. If, at the end of the cure period, the work product submitted by the contractor cannot be approved, the RF may, at its sole discretion, deny all or part of the next QA invoice payment and any subsequent payments until the work products are acceptable to the RF.
3. In the event the contractor fails to perform one (1) or more contracted services, or if the RF determines that the performance of the contracted services is unacceptable, the RF will issue a notice of deficiency. The contractor will then have a cure period, beginning with dissemination of the RF’s notice of deficiency and lasting for ten (10) business days. If, at
the end of the cure period, the contracted services performed by the contractor still cannot be approved, the RF may, at its sole discretion, deny all or part of the next QA invoice payment and any subsequent payments until the contracted services are acceptable to the RF.

4. The contractor’s work plan must also provide sufficient time, a minimum of ten (10) business days for the RF review and approval of each work product based on the scope of the work product.

5. The contractor must establish project management and reporting standards and communication protocols to be approved by the RF.

Section 3: Selection and Evaluation Criteria and Timelines

A. General Selection Criteria

The contract award will be based on “best value” that optimizes quality, fees, experience, and efficiency among responsive and responsible bidders. Proposals deemed by the RF to satisfy the requirement set forth in this RFP will be evaluated for the awarding of a contract.

Bidder must bid as requested. Award will be to one (1) contractor in total. The award process is based on best value with the award being made to the highest scoring bidder. However, the RF reserves the right to award in its best interest.

If all requirements of bid submissions are met to the RF’s satisfaction, a contract agreement or purchase order may be issued after review and analysis of proposals and confirmation of qualifications, references, etc. Any contract or purchase order which results from this RFP will incorporate the terms and conditions of this RFP, unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

Termination of Contract: Failure of firm to meet the requirements of a contract shall constitute default. In such event, the Research Foundation for the State of New York reserves the right to cancel the contract for cause or convenience on written notice as further addressed in the resulting contract.

B. Proposal Review Process Timeline

February 9, 2015 Questions due
February 12, 2015 Bidders conference call
February 27, 2015 Proposals/responses due
March 9, 2015 Top 2 finalists are selected and notified by close of business
March 12, 2015 Review panel conducts Q&A with finalist firms
March 16, 2015 Review panel recommends finalists to Vice President for Internal Audit Services and Chief Information Officer
March 18, 2015 Final vendor selected by close of business
March 25, 2015 Negotiated and signed contract in place by close of business
C. Evaluation Process and Criteria

All qualified proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

1. Cost effectiveness
2. Qualifications
3. Team
4. Methodology
5. Ability to deliver

A total of 100 points will be awarded based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points subtotal</th>
<th>When to evaluate</th>
<th>Point Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost effectiveness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Upon Submission</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Upon Submission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Upon Submission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Upon Submission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to deliver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership team</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>After Interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>After Interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top two (2) candidates will be selected based on their total scores. The finalists will be invited to the RF for a management interview with their proposed project leadership team.

Section 4: Implementation Strategy

The RF’s desired implementation strategy for the PACs system is illustrated as the following:
A. Pilot Implementation

The vendor software will be implemented within forty-five (45) calendar days, on or about April 15th, 2015, in a centralized cloud environment for two (2) or more of our campuses. The vendor software will also be installed in a centralized cloud environment as a development sandbox for all campuses. This pilot arrangement is to demonstrate that:

1. The software of choice can be installed out of the box and largely meets our business requirements.
2. The software of choice can be installed and operated securely in a cloud computing environment.
3. The software of choice can allow data conversion from existing RF systems and largely meets the RF’s data conversion needs out of the box—such data conversion should not be cumbersome.
4. The vendor of choice can provide basic training to our campuses for adoption of the software.
5. The software of choice can provide the foundation for multi-tenancy.

B. First Release of Customization and Configuration

Twelve months after the pilot implementation, the vendor of choice will customize and configure the software to meet the majority of our business requirements including all high priority requirements. This new release will replace the pilot install for those pilot campuses and become the system of record for the RF’s pre-award and regulatory research compliance system (PACS). During this release, knowledge transfer and broader training will happen.

C. Deployment to All Campuses

All other campuses will access and use the PACS Release 1. During the roll-out, the ability of regular releases and routine updates will be tested and certified and the support model will be established.

Quality assurance services are desired to be initiated before April 15, 2015 as agreed upon during quality assurance contract negotiations.

Section 5: Attachments

Attachment A: Application for Contract with the Research Foundation for SUNY and Bidder Certification

Attachment B: Overview of the RF’s Existing Business Systems
APPLICATION FOR CONTRACT WITH THE RESEARCH FOUNDATION FOR SUNY
AND BIDDER CERTIFICATION

PROGRAM TITLE: Quality Assurance Services for Pre-Award and Regulatory Research Compliance Administration Software Platform

BIDDER NAME: (company):______________________________________________________

BIDDER CONTACT NAME:________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: ___________________________________________________________________

TELEPHONE: ( ) ______________________ FAX NUMBER: ( ) ______________________

EMPLOYER’S FEDERAL ID # ____________________ E-MAIL ADDRESS: __________________

Bidder Certification

1. Is the price quoted the same as or lower than that quoted other corporations, institutions or governmental agencies for similar service and/or like equipment or supplies?
   Yes: _____
   No: _____
   If no, explain:

2. Does your firm agree that all presentations and materials will be free from racial, religious, or sexual bias?
   Yes: _____
   No: _____

3. Are you or any officer of your organization or any part owning or controlling more than 10 percent of your stock if you are a corporation or any member if you are a firm or association, an officer or employee of the Research Foundation of SUNY or of a public benefit corporation of the State of New York?
   Yes: _____
   No: _____

4. Within the past five (5) years has your firm, any affiliate, any predecessor company or entity, owner, director, officer, partner or proprietor been the subject of a government suspension or debarment?
   Yes: _____
   No: _____

Compliance with RFP Conditions and State and Federal Laws
I (we), the undersigned affirm the bidder is willing to comply with all the conditions set forth in this Request For Proposal, and with all applicable laws of the State of New York and the Government of the United States.

Willing To Contract
I (we), the undersigned affirm the bidder understands that a separate contract will be established which will fully detail each party’s responsibilities in relation to the services requested by this RFP.
I (We), the undersigned, attest that I am (we are) authorized to bind the bidder to the provisions of the attached proposal.

NAME AND TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL OR FIRM’S OFFICER AUTHORIZED TO SIGN CONTRACT:

________________________________________________________

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

DATE: ___________________  SIGNATURE: ________________________________

NAME AND TITLE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE):

________________________________________________________

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

DATE: ___________________  SIGNATURE: ________________________________
Overview of the RF’s Existing Business Systems

The RF uses various systems to conduct all business activity. This attachment provides a high-level overview of the business systems the RF uses in these categories:

A. Pre-Award
B. Regulatory Research Compliance
C. Post Award Management
D. Enterprise Reporting

A. Pre-Award

Summary

The University at Albany, Binghamton University, University at Buffalo (UB), Stony Brook University, SUNY ESF and Upstate Medical University currently use an electronic pre-award and regulatory research compliance software system. There are roughly 5,000 individuals who have access to this system.

The system provides pre-award entry, approval routing, and submission of proposals for several campuses. It has functionality for award tracking, negotiations, regulatory research compliance, e.g., Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), sub-award monitoring, and conflict of interest management. It also supports automated proposal submission to grants.gov and other federal agency applications.

There are two (2) interfaces used by campus staff, including:

- A web-based version that allows principal investigators (PIs) and research administrators to view and create proposals, input budgets, complete regulatory research compliance questionnaires, and submit proposals for approval.
- A full-featured application interface for research administrative staff to complete special requirements for institutional approval of proposals, additional budgeting functionality, and the ability to view institutional proposals and awards. This version is also used by system administrators to manage the system’s functionality.

The remaining campuses use a variety of tools to track pre-award data, including:

- Microsoft Access
- Microsoft Excel
- A custom pre-award form in the Oracle business applications
- Paper
- InfoEd
- PDF/Smart Forms
- E-mail
Hosting/Administration

The campuses who use the current electronic pre-award and regulatory research compliance software system share a common production instance that is hosted at UB. There are four (4) database instances that include development, training, quality assurance and production.

These instances are supported during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, by UB’s Administrative Computing Services (ACS) group. Routine maintenance and regular backups occur outside of regular business hours.

Modules Available in Current System

The decision to adopt the current system was based on many factors. The most important factor was the flexibility of the system to meet the individual needs of the campuses—whether university center, medical school or comprehensive college. Currently, the various modules available for implementation include:

- The Proposal Development module allows PIs and research administrators to construct and route complete proposals from their desktop computers. Significant Proposal Development components include detailed cover-sheet information, Proposal Personnel, Budget, Narrative, Questionnaires, and Certifications. The Proposal Development module is integrated with centrally supported database information maintained in the Sponsor table (list of sponsors), Person table (updated by HR), Organization table (list of peer institutions for performance sites and sub-awards), and Rolodex table (list of outside contacts). These extensive data tables are easily accessed via searches, and the resulting data is consistently applied to each proposal. This module allows for proposals to be submitted to sponsors electronically.

- The Institute Proposal contains summary data of proposals that have been approved and submitted to sponsoring organizations. While works-in-progress are stored and edited in the Proposal Development module, only complete submitted works are tracked and stored in the Institute Proposal module. Each proposal is assigned a unique identifier once it has been officially authorized by the organization prior to submission to a sponsor. Through this identifier the user can view basic data on funding source, title, department, PIs, and the amount proposed. Institute Proposal records may be modified to update pertinent information, such as the status of intellectual property review or special review status. Once a proposal is funded, the data in the Institute Proposal record may be used to form the basis of the Award module record or may be linked to an existing award.

- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) module allows campuses to electronically submit, review, and monitor IRB protocols. This also allows the protocol and grant proposal to be linked, making the information easily accessible to the compliance and sponsored programs offices, enabling regulatory research compliance review to be more efficient.

- The Subcontract module provides campuses with a sub-recipient monitoring tool, tracking detailed information on sub-award agreements, and maintaining historical information for the life of the award.
- The **Negotiation** module allows sponsored programs offices to track negotiations for individual proposals and stand-alone contracts, which provides administrators with a tool to keep notes and track progress of a negotiation, facilitates sharing of electronic fields, and generates status reports.

- The **Conflict of Interest** module allows users to complete and maintain all conflict of interest and financial interest disclosures. The module allows for flexibility with disclosure submission requirements across the campuses. Regulatory research compliance boards can review and track potential conflicts through the resolution.

**Support of Current System**

Different levels of support and service are required across campuses using the same module because each module is adaptable for local requirements. Each campus provides functional support for their own campus administration, including items such as maintaining user accounts, unit hierarchies, F&A rates, and supporting other operational functions specific to their instance.

There are other functional maintenance issues that are maintained at the campus level that demand a certain degree of technical know-how, such as maintaining routing rules, validation rules, routing maps, questionnaires, and customizing style sheets for campus specific templates. While each campus is responsible for maintaining these items a consortium of users from the larger campuses rely on the system administrator and application administrator at UB and a RF business analyst.

Even though the existing system is installed, hosted and managed at UB there are many integration points between the host servers at UB and servers at each of the campuses. These integration points are necessary to ensure the system uses the most recent and accurate person-data from campus-specific sources, as well as providing campus authentication of user log-in credentials. Each campus and RF central office IT Services provides technical support for the acquisition, formatting and delivery of person-data to the host servers at UB, as well as providing support for the coordinated authentication of user log-in credentials via a campus LDAP server or OID.

**B. Regulatory Research Compliance**

The RF's existing system and processes do not include many of the features and functionality desired in a comprehensive regulatory research compliance system. The regulatory research compliance areas include:

- **FCOI (Financial Conflict of Interest)** includes annual disclosures, identification of financial entities, and links between financial entities and proposals and awards. Authorized users need to check and maintain all conflict of interest and financial interest disclosures that may compromise professional judgment in carrying out research work. **Note**: FCOI is more applicable to the campuses; the RF has a **Corporate Conflict of Interest** program outside of pre-award processes.

- The **IRB** (Institutional Review Board) allows campuses to electronically submit, review and monitor IRB protocols. This also allows the protocol and grant proposal to be linked, making the information easily accessible to the compliance and sponsored programs offices, enabling regulatory research compliance review to be more efficient.

- The **IACUC** (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) **Protocol** allows departmental administrators and investigators to develop complete protocols and electronically route them for IACUC review.
• **Export Controls** include the federal laws that require federal agency approval before the export of designated or controlled items, commodities, technology, software, or intellectual property occurs to restricted foreign countries, persons, or other entities, such as universities.

• **Responsible Conduct of Research** includes most of the professional activities that are part and parcel of a research career.

• **Institutional Bio-Safety Committee** includes all 38 IRB requirements, different required training, links to guidance and regulations, ability to create questionnaires, ability to add additional committees and processing/routing, and the ability to maintain confidentiality.

Campuses use a variety of tools to track regulatory research compliance data, including:

• The existing system to the extent available in implemented modules
• IRBNet
• Microsoft Excel
• COI – Smart
• Paper
• InfoEd
• Microsoft Access
• COI Risk Manager (Osprey)
• PDF/Smart Forms
• E-mail
• CITI Training
• Homegrown databases

**C. Post-Award Management**

The RF uses the Oracle E-Business suite as its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for post award management activities. All campus locations use the Oracle business system to enter transactions, run reports, complete reports and analyze data. The RF’s ERP is grants-centric so that all transactions done in the system have the award, project, and task information embedded in them.

The RF uses these Oracle modules:

• Human Resources (HR)
• Labor Distribution (LD)
• Accounts Payable (AP)
• General Ledger (GL)
• Accounts Receivable (AR)
• Grants Accounting (GA)

In addition, the RF uses these third-party tools in conjunction with Oracle:

• Kbace for in-depth reporting and analysis for HR/payroll transactions.
• GL Wand for general ledger analysis with the capability to drill into the other modules.
• EIS for entering hourly and overtime information for the calculation of the biweekly payroll.
• ECRT for effort reporting.
D. Enterprise Reporting

Summary

The RF uses a reporting application called the RF Report Center that was built using Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE). The RF Report Center provides an analytical tool that allows campuses to view integrated information from the RF business system.

The tool provides data through interactive dashboards and an ad hoc analysis reporting tool. The RF offers two (2) dashboards—the PI dashboard and the RF Activity Interface Reporting dashboard—to help users quickly and easily find data.

The RF Report Center consists of 28 subjects that provide data for both pre-award and post award management and is refreshed on a nightly basis. The data is primarily from the Oracle E-Business Suite but some data is sourced from the RF’s existing pre-award and regulatory research compliance system and other minor systems.

RF Data Warehouse Architecture

- Extract Transform and Load (ETL) processing
  - Informatica 9.1 Mapping and Data Extraction toolset
  - Oracle Database 11.2 G, PL/SQL
  - Appworx process flow and job scheduler
  - Daily processing-- Net Change of Data or Incremental change—from midnight to 4 a.m.

- Database Environment
  - Primarily Oracle 11.2 G for EBS Source Data
  - Oracle 11.2G for ETL/Data Warehouse Database

- Business Intelligence Software and Environment
  - Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition Suite 11.1.1.7
  - Dashboards, Ad hoc Queries, BI Publisher, BI Map View, Score Cards
  - Scheduled Reports and Queries

- Servers
  - Primarily an IBM LPAR 770 Virtual Unix environment running AIX 6.1

Availability
The RF Report Center and data warehouse are available 18-20 hours per day. ETL processing occurs daily— net change of data or incremental change—from midnight to 4 a.m. Monday through Friday.