MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MSDE

RFP# R00B0600011

MARS MDCS O&M

February 24, 2021

This Addendum is hereby made part of the RFP specifications on which the Contractor shall bid, and is issued to modify, explain or correct the original specifications. All bidders shall acknowledge receipt of this Addendum on the Acknowledgement of Receipt form. It is understood that all bids submitted in response to RFP-R00B0600011, will be presumed to be based upon full knowledge of the contents of Addendum No.1.

1. **Questions and Answers:**

Q1. Can an MBE Certified firm bid on this proposal as a Prime and also a Sub (Minority Partner) with another vendor?

A1. Yes

Q2. Is there an incumbent for this project? If yes, then what is the name of the incumbent, the existing contract's start and end dates, and the total contract value of the existing contract?

A2. Yes, MARS and MDCS have existing support contracts. Both contracts are in place and will also provide transitional services (i.e., knowledge transfer).

- MARS is supported by The Canton Group
- MDCS is supported by Serigor.

Q3. What is the anticipated date of award and contract start date?

A3. The award of the contract depends on the level of responses, but we will require the contractor to start within 10 days after notice to proceed.

The current projection for notice to proceed is June.

Q4. Page 86, section 5.4.2 A 5 asks to identify the location from which the services will be provided. Are the vendor personnel expected to work at MSDE's location or can they work remotely?

A4. Most of the time, developer and Q&A teams work off-site, but prior to the pandemic safety measures, we had several occasions where MSDE was best served by having developers and Q&A members be onsite to work with MSDE resources. Post pandemic, the critical resources will be required to attend scheduled onsite meetings.

Q5. Page 86, section 5.4.2 A 6 states "Description of technical risk of migrating from the existing TO Contractor". Can you please provide some clarification on what types of risk you want addressed in this section?

A5. 5.4.2 A6 - Description of technical risk of migrating from the existing TO Contractor As an experienced vendor we would expect the vendor to identify risk and mitigations to taking on this contract.

Q6. Page 95, Table 2 states Appendix 5- Non Disclosure Agreement is due before the Task Order Proposal. Do you have a specific date or number of days before the TO Proposal when the NDA needs to be submitted?

A.6 The offeror NDA is - Non Applicable. The contractor NDA is due 5 days after notice of recommendation of the award.

Q7. Page 94, Table 2 -Label C-MBE Forms – The Table states the forms to be submitted 10 Business Days after Recommended Award. Whereas on Page 81 Section 4.7.1 states "A Master Contractor that responds to this TORFP shall complete, sign, and submit all required MBE documentation at the time of TO Proposal submission (See Attachment D Minority Business Enterprise Forms). Failure of the Master Contractor to complete, sign, and submit all required MBE documentation at the time of TO Proposal submission will result in the State's rejection of the Master Contractor's TO Proposal." Please clarify when we need to submit the MBE Forms-Attachments D, D-2, D-3 D-3A, D3-B. Attachment D-1A, MBE utilization and fair solication

A7. Affidavit & MBE participation schedule is due with the proposal. All other MBE forms are due as directed by table 2.

Q8. The responsibilities of the Integration Specialist described in section 2.3.5.1 include a lot of release management activities. Please clarify if the primary role of the Integration Specialist is that of release management as described in this section.

A8. As an Agile project, both MARS and MDCS have sprints leading to releases. This qualified resource will be responsible for assembling packages and pushing releases to production, and user acceptance environments hosted at MSDE. They will also lead and execute configuration requests to the vendor's environments and the virtual machines at MSDE.

Q9. How many resources are required under this contract in addition to the 4 key personnel?

A9. The level of work varies, the combined number of resources for MARS and MDCS support is minus the 4 key resources is 7, but there have been as many as 14 resources on tasks assigned to the MARS and MDCS system.

Q10. Can the Offeror experience listed under section 3.9.2 include the experience of the proposed team (prime vendor and subcontractor) or is the prime vendor alone required to have all the experience described in this section?

A10. Prime Contractor alone.

Q11.Who is the incumbent contractor?

A11. Answered in #2

Q12. Is the incumbent contractor eligible to bid?

A.12 Yes

Q13. Who is the MBE involved in the current contract?

A13. The current MARS support vendor, The Canton Group, uses MBE resources from ZDAAS, GANTECH, and RCI

The current MDCS support vendor, Serigor, uses MBE resources from Transcend Business

Q14. MSDE awarded the MARS Technical PM contract to Applied Technical Services (ATS) (Via TORFP R00B4400089) on 10/6/2014 and it expired on 6/30/2020.

- a. Did MSDE extend this (TORFP R00B4400089) contract beyond 6/30/2020?
- b. If so, for how long?
- c. and, what is the extension contract value?

A14. ATS contract for a TPM ended. ATS does not hold a contract for a Technical PM at MSDE

Q15. Is the ATS TPM currently providing service at MSDE?

A15. ATS does not hold a contract for a Technical PM at MSDE

Q16. MSDE awarded the MDCS contract to Serigor, Inc., (Via TORFP R00B8400026) on 8/23/2018 and it expired on 6/30/2020.

a. Did MSDE extend this (TORFP R00B8400026) contract beyond 6/30/2020?

- b. If so, for how long?
- c. and what is the extension contract value?

A16. The current vendor is providing gap covered and will provide transitional activities.

Q17. Is Serigor, Inc. personnel currently providing services for MDCS?

A17. Yes

Q18. Is ATS and Serigor, Inc., eligible to bid on this TORFP?

A18. Yes

A19. TORFP R00B0600011 is a separate contract and attempts to provide expanded scope based on lessons learned and attempts to consolidate resources to provide an economies of scale benefit.

Q20. Did ATS TPM and/or Serigor personnel develop or contributed to the development of requirements of this TORFP R00B0600011 MARS MDCS O & M?

A20. No. The TORFP R00B0600011, was assembled by multiple resources at MSDE, DoIT.

Q21. Subcontracting is mandatory or not?

A21. There is a mandator MBE goal of 25%

Q22. We are CA based certified MBE firm, are we eligible for MBE goal or we have to do subcontracting with any Maryland MBE firm?

A22. We are looking for MBE that are certified by the Maryland Department of Transportation. Additionally an MBE vendor submitting a proposal at the prime level may get credit for 50% of the MBE goal, an MBE prime contractor will still need to subcontract with another MBE to fulfil the remaining MBE goal.

Q23. Any type of resume are required to submit with the proposal?

A23. Yes. Please see section 5 of TO

Q.24 Is the SOC2 Audit requirement referenced in Section 3.8, page 58-60 a requirement? What is the reason behind the required SOC2 Type 2 Audit, these are costly and could be prohibitive in terms of opening procurement to smaller businesses capable of priming? We have not seen these in many state procurements.

A.24. Due to data sensitivity and financial reimbursements, this is a requirement set by MSDE and Dolt

Q25. The Primary Place of Performance is referenced as the – TO Contractor's location. Can you confirm this is correct, and remote work will be allowed?

A25. Contractor is expected to maintain a secured development environment and maintain licenses and tools for their development teams. MSDE will provide secure clientless VPN access to environments hosted at MSDE

Q26. What is the state of the solution as it exists today? What are the current issues?

A26. MARS and MDCS are both stable production systems with backlogs of pending tasks to meet legislative requirements, and approved enhancements.

Q27. – In reference to TORFP Section 3.9.5 A (pg. 71) are Appendix 4s required with proposal submission for ALL 15 labor categories included in TORFP Section 2.3.5₇? Or are Appendix 4s only required with proposal submission for the 4 key personnel identified in TORFP Section 3.9.4?

Will need to submit one resume for each person.

A27. Resumes are required for key personnel and labor rates are required for all 15 labor categories

Q28. –Will the due date be extended if required to submit Appendix 4s for all 15 Labor Categories referenced in 2.3.5? Providing resourcing and Appendix 4's for all 15 labor categories is a much larger effort than only providing for the 4 Key Personnel.

A28. We are not extending at this time.

Q29. System Operation and Maintenance Support for Maryland Accountability & Reporting System (MARS) and Maryland Direct Certification System (MDCS). Section 5.4.2.G.2) of the TORFP is as follows: "State of Maryland Experience: If applicable, the Master Contractor shall submit a list of all contracts it currently holds or has held within the past five years with any entity of the State of Maryland." My question is, can a Master Contractor substitute the State of Maryland Experience of a sub-contractor in response to this requirement?

A29.

Q30. What is –Will the due date be extended if required to submit Appendix 4s for all 15 Labor Categories referenced in 2.3.5? Providing resourcing and Appendix 4's for all 15 labor categories is a much larger effort than only providing for the 4 Key Personnel.

A30. We are not extending at this time.

***END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MSDE

RFP NO. R00B0600011

MARS MDCS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

The undersigned acknowledges that <u>Addendum No. 1</u> dated February 24, 2021 to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Specifications for RFP No. R00B0600011 has been received by the undersigned and will be incorporated into all copies of said specifications in the possession of the undersigned.

It is understood that all bids submitted in response to RFP No. R00B0600011 will be presumed to be based upon full knowledge of the contents of <u>Addendum No. 1</u>

•	(Signature-Authorized Official)	
	(Title)	
	(Date)	

NOTE:

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MSDE

RFP# R00B0600011

MARS MDCS O&M

February 24, 2021

This Addendum is hereby made part of the RFP specifications on which the Contractor shall bid, and is issued to modify, explain or correct the original specifications. All bidders shall acknowledge receipt of this Addendum on the Acknowledgement of Receipt form. It is understood that all bids submitted in response to RFP-R00B0600011, will be presumed to be based upon full knowledge of the contents of Addendum No.2.

1. **Questions and Answers:**

- Q1. What is the estimated budget of this TORFP?
 - *A1.* MSDE has a budget to fully fund this contract.
- Q2. Please disclose the previous spending of this contract?
 - A2. Do not have that information at this time
 - Q3 Please disclose the incumbent name.

A3. MARS is managed by the Canton Group, MDCS is Managed by Serigor

- Q4 If possible please provide the incumbent technical and cost proposal?
 - A4. Not possible at this time.
 - Q5. Does the MSDE have other resources under the same project? *A5.* MSDE/OCNP has a project manager to assist with oversight and Dolt manages the network infrastructure

Q6. What is the estimated start date of this contract?

A6. There is no estimated start date at this time

Q7. We would like to request the MSDE to release the transcript of the preproposal conference?

A7. This will be attached with the release of the Q&A

Q8 Refer to "5.4 - Volume I - TO Technical Proposal -G. Master Contractor and Subcontractor Experience and Capabilities". Please specify whether the vendors need to provide the references where they have provided staff for similar positions or where they have provided the requested services defined in 3.9.2 Offeror Experience.

A8. References are required for the vendor demonstrating their experience offer Similar Maintenance and Support efforts and references for the four key resources.

Q9. Refer to "4A Minimum Qualifications Summary" it is stated that the "Minimum qualifications and required certifications as defined in Section 2.1 of this TORFP" whereas the certification is defined in Section 1. Kindly confirm.

A9. Yes

Q10 Is this the amount for all 5 years or for the base year and will the department receive additional funds for the following 4 years?

A10. For all 5 years

Q11. Is the work divided into modules? Are all modules awarded to 1 Master Contractor? Can we bid for a particular module?

All. The vendor must bid on the total contract

Q12. Can we hire Key Personnel from existing Vendors?

A12. Recruitment practices are up to the vendor

 $Q13. \ \mbox{Can}$ we bid for the whole project as an MBE or do we need to have a MBE Sub-Contractor?

A13. Yes you have to have MBE sub-Contractor.

Q14. Are there any Upstream or downstream / data file/s dependencies from where the data is received & sent by offeror that we need to be aware of from an SLA standpoint?

A14.

Q15. What are the Application availability requirements? Is it 24/7? Are there any after-hours support expected from the offeror.

A15. MARS and MDCS are web-based application. Except for Monthly maintenance, users access these these applications 7 days a week. Normal Business and peak hours of operation to work with vendors and report issues are 7:30 to 6:00 PM

 $Q16\quad$ We are MDOT certified DBE. Is it acceptable for the 25% MBE requirement for the TORFR?

A16. This 25% State Certify MBE

Q17. Pg. 61: 3.9.1.F.: Key Personnel – A subset of TO Contractor Personnel whose departure during the performance period, will, in the State's opinion, have a substantial negative impact on Task Order performance. Key Personnel proposed as part of the TO Proposal shall start as of TO Agreement issuance unless specified otherwise in this TORFP or the Offeror's TO Technical Proposal.

A17. Key Personnel may be identified after Task Order award.

Q18. However, on Pg. 61: 3.9.3 states: As part of the TO Proposal evaluation, Offerors shall propose 4 key personnel who are expected to be available as of the start date specified in the Notice to Proceed (NTP Date). Can you please let us know when we would need to submit the key personnel?

A18. Resumes of Key Personnel are required with the proposal

Q19. Page 14 Section 2.2.2 – This section indicates that the MARS Intranet and Extranet portals are based on the Microsoft .NET platform. Web browsers, Internet Information Services and SharePoint are listed as technologies but it is not clear which web technologies are used within these portals to support the presentation layer (web forms, MVC, etc.). Can additional detail on these technologies be provided?

- A19. MARS and MDCS are custom built application, using HTML, XML, and ASP.net
- Over the life of the contract SharePoint file sharing services will be used to replace the custom legacy solution in MARS
- Q20. Page 21 Section 2.3.1.B. The TORFP states the Transition-In Plan and Project Management Plan will be delivered as fixed price. Attachment B Price Proposal does not have any line items these fixed price entries. Will the State be amending Attachment B to include, or will these be requested by a fixed price Work Order?

A20. DoIT made us remove the fixed price deliverables from the cost sheet. The project management plan should be part of the technical proposal?

Q21. Page 22 Section 2.3.2 – Can the state confirm that the vendor should maintain their own development and testing environments either in a vendor managed data center or cloud hosting environment?

A21. Yes, they vendor is expected to maintain their own secure and properly licensed development and testing environments and tools to tracking the backlog, burn rates, and release management.

• Q22 Page 43 Section 2.6.8 - Will the state remove the SLA Credits? Adequate staffing is needed to commit to SLAs. The State controls the staffing levels on this T&M contract. Section 3.9.3 says the Offeror shall propose 4 key personnel. No other personnel are guaranteed. Imposing service credits on a TO Contractor is not fair when the TO Contractor does not have control over the staffing levels needed to meet the service level requirements. Page 43 Section 2.6.8 - For Service Requirement No. 6 Service Availability, the events beyond the TO Contractor's control should be excluded from downtime. For example, Section 2.2.7.C. says that data center operations network

operations, internet services, and website hosting are outside the scope of TO Contractor's services. We ask that the Measurement be amended to say "All application functionality and accessibility shall be maintained at 99.5% uptime performance levels, excluding scheduled maintenance and downtime caused by events outside of TO Contractor's reasonable control."

A22. No, this operation and maintenance effort is driven by the work items maintained in a backlog. The Vendor will be expected to expand and contract the number of resources to meet the varying workload.

Q23. Page 50 Section 3.8.1 – If all environments and source code is hosted by MSDE/DoIT, what responsibility does the TO Contractor bear for the SOC 2 Type 2 audit; not the State environment but our internal systems and effectiveness of controls?

A23. After each release, the Vendor is expected to export/import the source codes from their secure environment to the MSDE/DoIT secure environment.

Q24. Page 58 Section 3.8 - Will the State change the SOC 2 Type II provision to require the TO Contractor to participate in a SOC 2 Type II audit conducted by MSDE instead of requiring the TO Contractor to conduct its own audit? According to TORFP Section 2.2.7, this TORFP is for T&M resources to complete work orders issued by the State while managing data center operations and network operations are out of scope.

A24. The state infrastructure is managed by DoIT, The vendor is responsible to their development and testing environments. However, the vendor will be responsible for server configurations and securing data in all environments, this mean working DoIT on correcting issues within the MSDE domain.

Q25. Page 80 Section 4.6 - As this is a staffing TORFP, would the State consider changing the Liability of Liability to one (1) time the total TO Agreement amount?

A25. No, Due to the handling and storage of PII data, along with Federal and State compliance the liability cannot be limited to the cost of the agreement.

Q26. On page 34 of the TORFP, we assume 2.3.5.10 – Work Products should be labeled 2.3.5.16. Is this correct?

A26. Yes, this should read 2.3.5.16, This has been corrected on TORFP.

Q27. 3.9.4 61 The key personnel experience is stated as preferred; however, the information is not the same that was in the prefilled attachment 4, page 126, 128, 130, 132 in the TORFP. Which experience should be used to complete attachment 4?

A27.

Q28 1.2 9 The education requirements listed in section 1.2 is not the same as the requirements listed in the prefilled attachment 4, page 126, 128, 130, 132. Which should be used to completed attachment 4.

A28. Please fill your requirement in attachment 4.

Q29. 4A and 4B 122-125 The information in the prefilled sections related to the duties on pages 126, 128, 130, 132 is different than what is in 1.2 and 3.9.4. Are we to follow what is provided on 126, 128, 130, 132 or the information in 1.2 (which states it supersedes all requirements) or what is listed in 3.9.4?

A29.

Q30. 4A and 4B 122-125 There are prefilled out sections in the TORFP for attachments 4 (pages 126-134), is this supposed to be attachment C or is it supposed to be a continuation of 4B?

A30. Please following all instruction for Qualification Summary and (4A) as well for Labor Classification Personnel Resume Summary

Q31. 7 94 Is TO Financial Proposal Form B due before TO Proposal?

A31. Please follow instruction in Section 7

Q32 7 94 Federal Funds attachment is listed as F in the TORFP but listed as G in the link to the attachment. Please confirm which is correct?

Addendum No.2

A32. Has been corrected.

Q33. 7 95 Conflict of Interest attachment is listed as G in the TORFP but listed as H in the link to the attachment. Please confirm which is correct?

A33. Has been corrected.

Q34 7 95 Non-Discloser Agreement is listed as H in the TORFP but listed as I in the link to the attachment. Please confirm which is correct?

A34. Has been corrected.

Q35. 7 95 Location of Performance of Services is listed as K in the TORFP but listed as L in the link to the attachment? Please confirm which is correct?

A35. Has been corrected.

Q36. 3.7.2 52 It is unclear as to whether background checks are required. Can the state clarify if background checks are required? If not, would the State consider requiring background checks for all personnel assigned to work on the contract due to sensitive nature of the work and data?

A36. Background checks are required for anyone working on this contract.

Q37. As a follow up to the question raised during the pre-conference call related to providing work outside of the United States, what is the process/policy for validating and verification of compliance of the rule in section 2.3.1 and 3.7.5 section of the TORFP.

A37. No work is allowed to be done outside the united states

Q38. 5.3.4-5 84,85 It is stated that the email submissions must be password protected in section 5.3.4.A and in section 5.3.5.B.1 it states the Financial Proposal, and all supporting material is to be password protected. However, it does not state the Technical Proposal document(s) to be password protected in section 5.3.5.A. Is the expectation that the Technical Proposal documents also be password protected or that the Technical proposal be password less and sent withing a password protected zip/gar file?

A38. The expectation that the Technical Proposal documents also be password protected.

Q39. Training Specialist role requires designing courses. Does the Government has any Learning Management System (LMS) framework for designing and delivering courses?

A39. No - LMS is not part of the contract. The training specialist will provide materials and training based on assigned work-orders.

Q40 Is there any compliance requirement for training materials, such as SCORM?

A41. As this is a State and Federal project all products but be secure and ADA compliant

Q42. Automation is going to be integral to the scope of work. Can the government suggest if the available licenses include provisions for PowerAutomate?

A42. As stated in the TORFP the purchasing of software is not part of this agreement.

Q43. The RFP suggests: "Support DoIT initiatives in a limited capacity to provide migration support as it relates to the Systems and any new infrastructure environment". However, we observed that a lot of software components require urgent upgrade. Can the government give some indicative roadmap of the planned upgrades and migrations?

A43. Where possible, DoIT hosts meetings for planned events such as moving and upgrades of equipment, the vendor are part of those efforts.

Q44. 3.5.1 Redundancy, Data Backup and Disaster Recovery - Can a description be provided regarding

measures used to maintain disaster recovery and backup solutions for the current system?

A44. MSDE and DoIT manage backup of the environments hosted by the State along with a business continuity plan

Q45. 3.9.3 Number of Personnel to Propose Are their restrictions on utilizing offshore personnel for this opportunity?

A45. No offshore resource

Q46. 3.9.5 Labor Categories, Additional Personnel We understand that the TO Contractor shall provide additional personnel through the work order process. Is it expected that these roles will be incorporated into the proposal response?

A46. The labor categories for the additional personnel are listed in the TORFP. Only Key Personnel are required at the start of the contract.

Q47 If so, should they also be included in the pricing component?

A47 The pricing sheet should be completed based on instruction included within the pricing sheet.

Q48 7 TORFP ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES

Can a clarification be made on what form is to be submitted before proposal submission?

A49. Please refer to Section 7

Q49 Is it the expectation that pricing excel will be submitted prior to full submission?

A48.

***END OF ADDENDUM NO. 2

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MSDE

RFP NO. R00B0600011

MARS MDCS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

The undersigned acknowledges that <u>Addendum No. 2</u> dated February 24, 2021 to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Specifications for RFP No. R00B0600011 has been received by the undersigned and will be incorporated into all copies of said specifications in the possession of the undersigned.

It is understood that all bids submitted in response to RFP No. R00B0600011 will be presumed to be based upon full knowledge of the contents of <u>Addendum No. 2</u>

-	(Signature-Authorized Official)	
	(Title)	
	(Date)	

NOTE:

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MSDE

TORFP# R00B0600011

MARS MDCS O&M

March 1, 2021

TO ALL POTENTIAL BIDDERS OF THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS:

Addendum No.3

RE: TORFP R00B0600011 MARS MDCS O&M

To Whom It May Concern:

It is important that you acknowledge receipt of this Addendum no. 3 on the referenced contract regardless of whether you will be bidding or not bidding

TORFP has been extended until March 11,2021 5:00 PM Local Time. mailbox: <u>Robin.harding1@maryland.gov</u>

Very truly Yours

Robin Harding

Robin Harding Procurement Officer

> THIS AMENDMENT IS ISSUED TO CLARIFY, ADD TO, DELETE, FROM, CORRECT AND/OR CHANGE TE BID DOCUMENTS TO THE EXTENT INDICATED AND HEREBY MADE A PART OF THE SAID BID DOCUMENTS ON WHICH THE PACKAGE AND MUST BE ATTACHED TO THE OUTSIDE COVER OF THE PROPOSAL FORM. FAILURE TO DO SAY MAY RESULTIN THE REJECTION OF YOUR BID. COMAR 21.05.02.08 REQUIRES THAT ALL AMENDMENTS ISSUED BE ACKNOWLEDGED; THEFORE THE ATTACHED RECEIPT MUST BE RETURNED TO THIS

OFFICE. FAILURE TO RETURN THE RECIEPT ACKNOWLEDGING THE AMENDMENT MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF YOUR BID.

***END OF ADDENDUM NO. 3

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MSDE

TORFP NO. R00B0600011

MARS MDCS O&M

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

The undersigned acknowledges that <u>Addendum No. 3</u> dated March 1, 2021, to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Specifications for TORFP No. R00B0600011 has been received by the undersigned and will be incorporated into all copies of said specifications in the possession of the undersigned.

It is understood that all bids submitted in response to TORFP No. R00B0600011 will be presumed to be based upon full knowledge of the contents of <u>Addendum No. 3</u>

	(Company Name)	
	By:	
	(Signature-Authorized Official)	
	(Title)	
	(Date)	
NOTE:	PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THE "ACKNOWLEDGEMENT O	F RECEIPT
