

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Raleigh, North Carolina Request for Proposals (RFP)

#63-KGS1043027 - Executive Search Firm Services

For internal administrative processing, including tabulation of proposals for posting to the [Electronic Vendor Portal \(eVP\)](#), please provide your company's Federal Employer Identification Number or alternate identification number (e.g. Social Security Number). *We HIGHLY recommend you register with the new portal in order to see bid tabulations and award results. These results will also be posted on our e-procurement platform, [Bonfire](#).* Pursuant to G.S. 132-1.10(b) this identification number shall not be released to the public. **This page will be removed and shredded, or otherwise kept confidential**, before the procurement file is available for public inspection.

**THIS PAGE IS TO BE COMPLETED AND INCLUDED WITH
YOUR PROPOSAL. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY SUBJECT
YOUR PROPOSAL TO REJECTION.**

Federal ID Number or Social Security Number:	
SUPPLIER NAME:	
DATE:	

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RFP # 63-KGS1043027

TITLE: Executive Search Firm Services
USING DEPARTMENT: University Human Resources
ISSUE DATE: August 30, 2024
DUE DATE: 2:00 pm, Thursday, September 19, 2024
ISSUING AGENCY: NC State University
Procurement Services Department
Campus Box 7212
Raleigh, NC 27695

Proposals subject to the conditions made a part hereof will be accepted until **2:00 pm, Thursday, September 19, 2024** for furnishing services described herein.

Proposals must be submitted electronically at:

<https://ncsu.bonfirehub.com/opportunities/152312>

Upload scanned pages from this RFP document included with your proposal response where indicated on the Bonfire website.

Direct all inquiries (via email) concerning this RFP to: Kristen Shelton, CPPB
NC State University
Procurement Services Department
Email: kgshelto@ncsu.edu

NOTE: Questions concerning the RFP requirements must be submitted in writing via email to kgshelto@ncsu.edu , Subject Line: RFP #63-KGS1043027 - Questions , no later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, September 9, 2024 . Questions will be answered in the form of an addendum to this RFP. No other contact with university representatives regarding this RFP is allowed during the proposal process. Attempts to obtain information directly from university personnel, or by any other means, may subject your proposal response to rejection. Please use the following template to submit your questions:	
Reference	Vendor Question
RFP Section, Page Number	Vendor question ...?
	Insert rows as needed

1. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

NC State University (hereafter referred to as NC State) seeks proposals from highly qualified executive search firms with the capacity and experience to facilitate a national search to identify exemplary candidates for the next Chancellor of the University. Consultants should have in-depth experience in executive placement services in higher education, with preference for those that have significant work with high-research activity, and land-grant universities. The objective is to identify, select, and retain an individual with the qualifications, skills, and leadership to provide vision and strategic direction of the University. The awarded consulting firm shall work with a search advisory committee of various University stakeholders.

The search will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of [UNC Policy 200.8](#) and all applicable state and federal laws and university policies.

BACKGROUND

NC State is based in Raleigh, North Carolina. Since 1887, we've strived to offer world-class teaching and research. Today, we're ranked in the top 1% of universities on the planet.

NC State is a land-grant institution, which means we have a duty to open the doors of education for everyone. We're a Research 1 university, recognized worldwide for our big ideas and bigger impact. And we're a public university — one that believes in community, equity, sharing what we learn and serving the greater good.

As a Research I university, NC State is a key part of the Research Triangle region, which is home to industry leaders such as NC State partners SAS, Cisco, IBM, GlaxoSmithKline and Lenovo.

Raleigh and the surrounding area are consistently rated among the best places to live and work in the United States, and NC State is a driving force for the local, state and national economies.

- 37,800+ students, 2,400+ faculty and 7,100+ staff
- Educating more North Carolinians than any other university
- Student-faculty ratio 16:1
- 12 colleges representing all major academic fields
- More than 300 undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered through 68 departments
- NC State Extension serves citizens in all 100 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- \$2.03 billion endowment, among the top 90 largest higher-education endowments in the country
- \$2.035 billion budget for fiscal year 2023

More information about NC State, including our rankings, student and faculty success, commitment to partnerships and research, campus, economic impact, alumni, philanthropy and giving, and most recent accolades is available at <https://www.ncsu.edu/rankings/>.

2. CONTRACT PERIOD

The term of any resulting agreement shall be for a period of eighteen (18) months from date of award. The selected firm shall begin work under the Contract within ten (10) business days of the Effective Date. At the University's option, and under the same terms and conditions, the contract may be extended for up to one (1) additional term.

The University will give the selected firm written notice of its intent to exercise each option no later than ten (10) days before the end of the Contract's then-current term. In addition to any optional renewal terms, and with the Vendor's concurrence, NC State reserves the right to extend the Contract after the last active term.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 General

The selected firm shall engage and recruit qualified candidates for the position of the Chancellor at NC State. The selected firm shall provide comprehensive recruitment services that includes, but are not limited to, identifying, engaging, attracting, and referring viable highly-qualified candidates who can successfully fulfill the responsibilities of the chancellor role and align with the mission, values, culture, and strategic goals of NC State. NC State and the selected firm, in consultation with the UNC System, will mutually agree on the number of prospects NC State will review.

Expected services include:

1. Development of Search Timeline
 - a. Develop and describe a proposed search timeline with clear objectives and milestones including stakeholder feedback process, finalizing a leadership profile, advertising plan, committee meetings, interviews, etc. The goal is to name a new chancellor in the Spring of 2025.
 - b. Timelines and milestones will be reviewed and revised as needed by the UNC System president and search advisory committee chair.
2. Development of Leadership Statement and Search Strategy
 - a. Host and manage listening sessions with various campus constituencies or constituent groups (in-person, virtual, or both) to inform creation of the leadership profile and/or to solicit feedback on the search process (if requested). Describe how you would structure these sessions and provide best practices to facilitate stakeholder feedback during this process.
 - b. Provide guidance and implementation support to gather and analyze stakeholder input from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members. Consult and facilitate stakeholder input process, including compilation and analysis of stakeholder input received through a survey instrument. Demonstrate and describe how you would support us in this process.
 - c. Assist in the creation of a detailed leadership statement document for the committee's review, to include key information about NC State, the position, and instructions on how to apply.
 - i. Collaborate and consult with University Communications and Marketing to create layouts, graphics along with the development of chancellor search website.
 - ii. Provide evidence of understanding and implementation of NC State brand standards. NC State brand information can be found at brand.ncsu.edu.
 - d. Identify relevant higher education and industry sources intended to attract highly qualified, diverse applications for the position.
 - i. A copy of the advertisements must be approved in advance by the chair of the search advisory committee.
 - e. Develop and describe a customized search strategy that identifies potential sources for qualified candidates, both within and outside the higher education sector.
3. Candidate Sourcing and Outreach
 - a. Contact sources and prospects to encourage interest in the position and identify individuals who meet the position specifications and who will uphold and execute NC State's mission, values, and culture.
 - b. The Contractor shall report the progress of this process to the search advisory committee by the agreed upon timeline.
4. Candidate Screening and Evaluation
 - a. Conduct preliminary screenings and interviews to evaluate candidates' qualifications, experience, and overall suitability including an evaluation of each prospect's management ability, technical competency, experience, alignment with NC State's values and culture, and other desired leadership characteristics. The Contractor will report the results of its preliminary evaluation of prospects to the search advisory

- committee by the agreed upon timeline.
 - b. Perform necessary checks (such as background and reference checks), and verify credentials and employment history.
 - c. Report the results of the sourcing efforts to the search advisory committee.
5. Candidate Presentation and Selection Support
- a. Provide candidate application, CVs and other materials to the search advisory committee for review. Assist committee members with candidate screening tools and methods. Demonstrate and describe how you would support us in this process.
 - b. Provide support to the search advisory committee in managing the candidate interview process including candidate evaluations tools, scheduling logistics, etc.; and coordinate interviews and travel as appropriate.
 - c. Assist in the development of interview questions and evaluation criteria.
 - d. Provide a secure portal or file sharing platform to ensure the search committee has access to confidential candidate materials and files. Provide information related to a secure portal or describe the methods you will use to meet these requirements.
6. Interview and Selection Process Management
- a. In partnership with UNC System and NC State resources, facilitate the interview process, including preparing candidates, coordinating travel, and providing logistical support.
 - b. Schedule with the search advisory committee first-round interviews with prospects selected by the search advisory committee. Following these first-round interviews, schedule second-round interviews with prospects selected by the search advisory committee from the first-round interviews.
 - c. Conduct reference and background checks on the final candidates, including telephone reference checks and requesting and receiving written letters of reference. The Contractor must contact individuals who can provide insights about the finalists' qualifications. The search advisory committee may also do this.
 - d. Conduct debriefing sessions with the selection committee to discuss candidate evaluations and feedback.
7. Offer Management and Negotiation
- a. Assist in developing a competitive offer package, including salary, benefits, and other terms of employment as requested.

3.2 Additional Requirements

The selected firm shall serve as a communication channel to candidates, keeping them abreast of the process and potential next steps, so as to encourage availability of viable candidates throughout the process.

The selected firm may be required to make presentations to university parties of interest as appropriate or assist with communication.

The selected firm shall engage various stakeholders in the UNC System and NC State to fully understand the role so as to accurately represent the position and opportunity to potential candidates.

In addition, the selected firm shall partner with UNC System and NC State functions throughout the process in order to provide a seamless, high-quality candidate experience and ensure compliance with NC State, UNC System, State of NC, and federal obligations.

The selected firm must collect, maintain and share records and/or information from candidates necessary to assess candidate viability and to comply with reporting requirements. Information provided by the vendor is expected to be accurate and complete.

The selected firm must promote the UNC System and NC State to candidates in a positive manner and promote the opportunity in order to attract a sufficient pool of well-qualified candidates for consideration.

The selected firm must promptly update the search advisory committee on changes in a candidate's

status, interests, and (to the extent possible) competing opportunities that may affect candidate viability.

At the direction of the Chair, schedule and lead periodic update meetings with the Chair and core team to provide status updates on the search work plan.

Provide other assistance to the search advisory committee as requested by the chair of the committee.

4. SUPPLIER QUALIFICATION/EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Qualification/Experience

The information provided is intended to assist firms/individuals to respond completely to this Request for Proposal. It is not intended to limit a proposal's content or to exclude any relevant or essential data. Firms/individuals are expected to include information that will substantiate their quality and service capabilities.

As a result, the firm or individual must introduce us to your organization and demonstrate the following attributes at a minimum:

- Describe your organizational structure (i.e. publicly held corporation, partnership, etc.).
- Briefly describe your organization's philosophy, and management. Provide a brief organization history. Describe existing contractual relationships, if any, with other organizations that would be necessary in implementing the proposal. The selected firm shall act as a single point-of-contact for the University, employees and service providers.
- Provide a listing of all related searches over the last (5) years in which your firm has participated, with references provided for at least three (3) searches (outlined in 4.2).
- Describe your experience with searches for university chancellors/presidents, including senior level searches you have recently led in North Carolina and within the United States at higher education institutions comparable to NC State.
- Describe your experience with challenges in an academic search of this level and how your team plans to overcome them.
- Please provide a list of any other current searches that could be seen as competing with the NC State Chancellor search.
- Provide a staffing plan that specifies the roles and locations of the individuals or team that will provide the services. At minimum, include a bio of the lead consultant.
- We require a commitment that the lead consultant will actively manage and participate in this search. Please provide a list of current senior executive searches in which the lead consultant is or was involved.
- Identify, if any, relevant entities where you have an "off-limits" or "hands off agreement" that would prevent your company from recruiting.

4.2 References

Proposing firms must supply at least three (3) references demonstrating experience similar in nature and scope to the services required in the past five (5) years, with at least one (1) being in higher education designated as R1 (Doctoral Universities – Very high research activity), that you have completed similar executive level search(es).

It is the proposing firm's responsibility to provide valid reference information and NC State reserves

the right to use reference check responses in its evaluation of proposals. References not responding to our request for information will be scored as if not provided. NC State will not accept references that must be coordinated by the proposing firm. We must be able to contact references directly. Preference may be given to proposing firms demonstrating these services having been provided for higher education customers.

5. SUPPLIER PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

The following information is required in response to this RFP. Failure to adequately provide specific information that can be effectively evaluated by NC State may disqualify a proposal from consideration.

At minimum, the proposal response package shall include the following and must be uploaded in the corresponding location on Bonfire:

1. Completed NC State University RFP
 - o Cover Page with Firm Name and Tax ID#
 - o Reference page
 - o Signed Execution of Proposal page
2. A detailed proposal shall include, in narrative, outline, and/or graph form the proposing firm's approach to accomplishing the tasks outlined in Section 3 & 4 of this RFP. Responses must be numbered corresponding to the numbered items in this RFP. Proposers should restate each of the items listed and provide their acknowledgment agreement or response to that item immediately thereafter. All information should be presented in the listed order.
3. Cost Proposal - Section 7
4. Sample Certificate of Insurance (outlined in the general terms and conditions, Item #19)
5. Any applicable RFP addenda subsequent to this RFP that is required for return by statement on the addendum.

Incomplete proposals will not be considered for award.

6. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION AND AWARD

All proposals will be evaluated according to the following:

SCREENING CRITERIA: Complete proposal response (as outlined in Section 5). All items requested are included in the response package and submitted as instructed. All files are transmitted to the Bonfire site without password or other lockdown requirements and proof of insurance demonstrates existing coverage meeting required minimum limits. Incomplete responses will not be considered further.

Proposals meeting the screening criteria will then be further evaluated by the following weighted criteria outlined in Phase 1 in order to select the firm providing the best overall value to the department requesting these services:

1. **Phase 1: Response Evaluations** – An evaluation team comprised of representatives from NC State and the University of North Carolina System Office shall evaluate vendor responses. This shall include cost and reference information.

Based on the information presented by the firm the method of evaluation shall be based on narrative and by consensus of the evaluation team, in its sole discretion, whether to recommend an award at this Phase or to advance selected top ranked firms to Phase 2, explaining the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal and why the recommended awardee(s) provide the

best value to the State.

All qualified proposals will be evaluated, and award made based on considering the following criteria listed in descending order of importance, to result in an award most advantageous to the State:

1. Vendor Background and Qualifications (including references) - 50%
2. Vendor Methodology - 30%
3. Costs - 20%

2. Phase 2: Bidder Interviews/Presentations – The evaluation team *may* invite and conduct interviews/presentations with top ranked firms. These interviews may be in person or virtual. Firms invited will be contacted and provided with information. The firm must be available to interview/present within five business days from notification from NC State. From this Phase, the evaluation team shall submit a recommendation of a firm for award. An award announcement is made after any additional RFP requirements are met (e.g., state approval (if required)).

3. Phase 3: Contract Completion – This phase may include additional negotiation (if required). The State reserves the right to negotiate with one or more vendors, or to reject all original offers and negotiate with one or more sources of supply that may be capable of satisfying the requirement, and in either case to require Vendor to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) based on discussions and negotiations with the State.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, the NC State will make an award based on the evaluation and post the award to Bonfire and the State's eVP website under the RFP number for this solicitation. Award of a contract to one firm does not mean that the other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal was deemed most advantageous and represented the best value to the State.

7. COST PROPOSAL

7.1 Costs

- A. The proposer shall provide a flat fixed fee for the professional search services provided. This fee shall include all costs or expenses necessary to provide the services outlined in this Request for Proposal including travel. A description of all key components of the fee must be outlined including travel. Candidate travel and other out of pocket, direct expenses such as meeting expenses are to comply with university travel policy including per diem meal limits. The University travel policy can be found at the link below.

<https://policies.ncsu.edu/category/finance-operations-auxiliary-services/travel/>

These direct expenses are to be itemized and billed at actual cost. Any direct expense in excess of \$1000 must be approved in advance by the Search Advisory Committee Chair.

- B. Advise if the firm is willing to accept 1/3 of the fee at start-up, 1/3 after presentation of prospects to the university and 1/3 after the finalist is elected.

7.2 Warranties or guarantees

- A. Discuss any warranty or guarantee of your services in the unlikely event of a failed search or in the event that the candidate does not remain in the position for a reasonable period or that the position is not filled (provision for failed search).
- B. If employment for a hired candidate should be terminated within one year from the start date of the hired candidate, will your firm guarantee to conduct a new search for no further professional fee? Include restrictions to this guarantee, if any.

Proposers Name: _____

REFERENCES

OFFERORS MUST PROVIDE THREE (3) REFERENCES FOR CLIENTS WHO HAVE PERFORMED SIMILAR WORK IN THE PAST FIVE (5) YEARS.

#1	Company Name:	
	Company Full Address:	
	Contact Name:	
	Email Address:	
	Phone Number:	

#2	Company Name:	
	Company Full Address:	
	Contact Name:	
	Email Address:	
	Phone Number:	

#3	Company Name:	
	Company Full Address:	
	Contact Name:	
	Email Address:	
	Phone Number:	

THIS PAGE MUST BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED AS A PART OF YOUR PROPOSAL.

EXECUTION OF PROPOSAL

RFP #63-KGS1043027

The potential Contractor certifies the following by placing an "X" in all blank spaces:

- That this proposal was signed by an authorized representative of the firm.
- That the potential Contractor has determined the cost and availability of all materials and supplies associated with performing the services outlined herein.
- That all labor costs associated with this project have been determined, including all direct and indirect costs.
- ~~That the potential Contractor has attended the pre proposal conference and is aware of the prevailing conditions associated with performing these services.~~
- That the potential Contractor agrees to the conditions as set forth in this Request for Proposals with no exceptions.
- That the potential Contractor carries the appropriate insurance and will perform background checks on employees as required herein. See items 19 & 31 of General Contract Terms and Conditions attached.
- That no employee or agent has offered, and no State employee has accepted, any gift or gratuity in connection this contract, in violation of N.C.G.S. § 133-32; and
- That it, and each of its sub-contractors under this contract, complies with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the NC General Statutes, including the requirement for each employer with more than 25 employees in North Carolina to verify the work authorization of its employees through the federal E-Verify system, as required by G.S. §143-48.5.
- That this proposal is submitted competitively and without collusion. That none of our officers, directors, or owners of an unincorporated business entity has been convicted of any violations of Chapter 78A of the General Statutes, the Securities Act of 1933, or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (G.S. 143-59.2), and that we are not an ineligible supplier as set forth in G.S. 143-59.1. False certification is a Class I Felony.

Therefore, in compliance with the foregoing Request for Proposal, and subject to all terms and conditions thereof, the undersigned offers and agrees, if this proposal is accepted within forty-five (45) days from the date of the opening, to furnish the services for the prices quoted during any resulting contract period.

Contractor Name:			
Street Address:			
City and State:		Zip Code:	
Representative's Name:			
Representative's Title:			
Representative's Email:		Phone #:	
Representative's Signature:		Date:	

THIS PAGE MUST BE COMPLETED AND INCLUDED IN YOUR PROPOSAL RESPONSE

GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

1. **EXCEPTIONS:** All proposals are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. All responses shall be controlled by such terms and conditions and the submission of other terms and conditions, price lists, catalogs, and/or other documents as part of an offeror's response will be waived and have no effect either on this Request for Proposals or on any contract that may be awarded resulting from this solicitation. Offeror specifically agrees to the conditions set forth in the above paragraph by signature to the proposal.
2. **PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL:** All proposals must be received by the issuing agency not later than the date and time listed on the cover sheet of this proposal. Proposals shall be uploaded to:
<https://ncsu.bonfirehub.com/opportunities/152312>.

Request for Proposals (RFP) directions are advertised at The State of North Carolina Electronic Vendor Portal System ([eVP](#)). An addendum to this RFP may be issued. If required, any subsequent addenda must be signed and submitted with the proposal upload. It is the **vendor's responsibility** to verify that all applicable addenda are submitted as required.

3. **ORAL PRESENTATIONS:** During the evaluation and at their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations from any or all offerors for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in any part of the proposal. However, offerors are cautioned that the evaluators are not required to request clarification; therefore, all proposals should be complete and reflect the most favorable terms available from the offeror.
4. **PROPOSAL EVALUATION:** Proposals will be evaluated as outlined herein. The award of a contract to one offeror does not mean that the other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal was deemed to provide the best value to the University, and/or the State.
5. **COMMENCEMENT OF SERVICES:** After proposals are evaluated, and offer is made, accepted and approved by appropriate authorities, the University will issue a purchase order, a contract or a letter of agreement as an indicator to commence services.
6. **REQUEST FOR OFFERS:** Offerors are cautioned that this is a request for offers, not a request to contract and the University/State reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all offers when such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the University or State.
7. **ORAL EXPLANATIONS:** The University shall not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive process or after award.
8. **REFERENCE TO OTHER DATA:** Only information which is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted shall not be evaluated.
9. **ELABORATE PROPOSALS:** Elaborate proposals in the form of brochures or other presentations beyond that necessary to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired.

In an effort to support the sustainability efforts of the State of North Carolina we are receiving proposals via electronic submission. Please visit <https://ncsu.bonfirehub.com/opportunities/152312> for specific submission instructions.

10. **COST FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION:** Any costs incurred by offerors in preparing or submitting offers are the offerors' sole responsibility; the University will not reimburse any offeror for any costs incurred prior to award.
11. **TIME FOR ACCEPTANCE:** Each proposal shall state that it is a firm offer which may be accepted within a period of forty-five (45) days from the proposal opening. Although the contract is expected to be awarded prior to that time, the 45-day period is requested to allow for unforeseen delays.
12. **TITLES:** Titles and headings in this RFP and any subsequent contract are for convenience only and

shall have no binding force or effect.

13. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROPOSALS:** In submitting its proposal the offeror agrees not to discuss or otherwise reveal the contents of the proposal to any source outside of the using or issuing agency, government or private, until after the award of the contract. Offerors not in compliance with this provision may be disqualified, at the option of the State, from contract award. Only discussions authorized by the University are exempt from this provision.
14. **RIGHT TO SUBMITTED MATERIAL:** All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFP, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the offerors shall become the property of the State when received.
15. **OFFEROR'S REPRESENTATIVE:** Each offeror shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm's proposal.
16. **PROPRIETARY INFORMATION:** To the extent permitted by N.C.G.S. §132-1.3 trade secrets which the Contractor does not wish disclosed other than to personnel involved in the evaluation or contract administration will be kept confidential identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL". Any section of the proposal which is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in boldface on the title page of that section. Cost information is not confidential. In spite of what is labeled as confidential, the determination as to whether or not it is shall be determined by North Carolina law.
17. **HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES:** Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-48 and Executive Order #150, the University invites and encourages participation in this procurement process by businesses owned by minorities, women, disabled, disabled business enterprises and non-profit work centers for the blind and severely disabled.
18. **PROTEST PROCEDURES:** A party wanting to protest a contract award pursuant to this solicitation must submit a written request to the Director of Purchasing, North Carolina State University, Purchasing Department, Campus Box 7212, Raleigh, NC 27695-7212. This request must be received in the University Purchasing Department within thirty (30) consecutive calendar days from the date of the contract award, and must contain specific sound reasons and any supporting documentation for the protest. NOTE: Contract award notices are sent **only** to those actually awarded contracts, and not to every person or firm responding to this solicitation. Offerors may call the purchaser listed on the first page of this document to obtain a verbal status of contract award. All protests will be handled pursuant to the North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 1, Department of Administration, Chapter 5, Purchase and Contract, Section 5B.1519.
19. **CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION AND SOLICITATION NOTIFICATION SYSTEM:** Contractor Link NC allows Contractors to electronically register free with the State to receive electronic notification of current procurement opportunities for goods and services available on the Electronic Vendor Portal System. Online registration and other purchasing information are available on the web site: <http://www.state.nc.us/pandc/>.
20. **RECIPROCAL PREFERENCE:** N.C.G.S. §143-59 establishes a reciprocal preference law to discourage other states from applying in-state preferences against North Carolina's resident offerors. The "Principal Place of Business" is defined as the principal place from which the trade or business of the offeror is directed or managed.
21. **ENTERPRISE-LEVEL IT SYSTEMS OR TECHNOLOGIES:** The University is committed to promote and integrate universal IT accessibility in the delivery of its resources and to develop innovative solutions to accessibility challenges for students, faculty and staff. Contractors shall:
 - a. Assure all features, components and subsystems of the software or IT System contained on this RFP **fully comply** with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C.794d), (<http://www.section508.gov>);

OR

Detail why any feature, component or sub-system contained in this RFQ does not **fully comply** with Section 508, and the way in which the proposed product is out of compliance;

- b. If the Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPAT) (<http://www.access-star.org/ITI-VPAT-v1.2.html>) are used, they must include compliance checklists for:
 - 1. Technical Standards;
 - 2. Function and Performance Criteria; and
 - 3. Documentation and Support
- c. The product offered in response to this RFP is subject to an accessibility evaluation by the University.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY GENERAL CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS
(Contractual and Consultant Services)

1. **GOVERNING LAW:** This contract is made under and shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina.
2. **SITUS:** The place of this contract, its situs and forum, shall be Wake County, North Carolina, where all matters, whether sounding in contract or tort, relating to its validity, construction, interpretation and enforcement shall be determined.
3. **INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR:** The Contractor shall be considered to be an independent contractor and as such shall be wholly responsible for the work to be performed and for the supervision of its employees. The Contractor represents that it has, or will secure at its own expense, all personnel required in performing the services under this agreement. Such employees shall not be employees of, or have any individual contractual relationship with the University.
4. **KEY PERSONNEL:** The Contractor shall not substitute key personnel assigned to the performance of this contract without prior written approval by the University's Contract Administrator. The individuals designated as key personnel for purposes of this contract are those specified in the Contractor's proposal.
5. **SUBCONTRACTING:** Work proposed to be performed under this contract by the Contractor or its employees shall not be subcontracted without prior written approval of the University's Contract Administrator. Acceptance of an offeror's proposal shall include any subcontractor(s) specified therein.
6. **INSPECTION AT CONTRACTOR'S SITE:** The University reserves the right to inspect, at a reasonable time, the equipment/item, plant or other facilities of a prospective contractor prior to contract award, and during the contract term as necessary for the University's determination that such equipment/item, plant or other facilities conform with the specifications/requirements and are adequate and suitable for the proper and effective performance of the contract.
7. **PERFORMANCE AND DEFAULT:** If, through any cause, the Contractor shall fail to fulfill in timely and proper manner the obligations under this agreement, the University shall thereupon have the right to terminate this contract by giving written notice to the Contractor and specifying the effective date thereof. In that event, all finished or unfinished deliverable items under this contract prepared by the Contractor shall, at the option of the University, become its property, and the Contractor shall be entitled to receive just and equitable compensation for any satisfactory work completed on such materials.

Notwithstanding, the Contractor shall not be relieved of liability to the University for damages sustained by the University by virtue of any breach of this agreement, and the University may withhold any payment due the Contractor for the purpose of setoff until such time as the exact amount of damages due the University from such breach can be determined.

In case of default by the Contractor, the University may procure the services from other sources and hold the Contractor responsible for any excess cost occasioned thereby. The University reserves the right to require performance bond or other acceptable alternative guarantees from successful offeror without expense to the University.

In addition, in the event of default by the Contractor under this contract, the State may immediately cease doing business with the Contractor, immediately terminate for cause all existing contracts the State has with the Contractor, and de-bar the Contractor from doing future business with the State

Upon the Contractor filing a petition for bankruptcy or the entering of a judgment of bankruptcy by or against the Contractor, the University may immediately terminate, for cause, this contract and all other existing contracts the Contractor has with the University.

8. **GOVERNMENTAL RESTRICTIONS:** In the event any Governmental restrictions are imposed which necessitate alteration of the material, quality, workmanship or performance of the items offered prior to their delivery, it shall be the responsibility of the contractor to notify, in writing, the issuing purchasing office at once, indicating the specific regulation which required such alterations. The University reserves the right to accept any such alterations, including any price adjustments occasioned thereby, or to cancel the contract.
9. **FORCE MAJEURE:** Neither party shall be deemed to be in default of its obligations hereunder if and so long as it is prevented from performing such obligations by an act of war, hostile foreign action, nuclear explosion, earthquake, hurricane, tornado, or other catastrophic natural event or act of God.
10. **TERMINATION:** The University may terminate this agreement at any time by providing written notice to the contractor at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the termination. In that event, all finished or unfinished deliverable items prepared by the Contractor under this contract shall, at the option of the University, become its property. If the contract is terminated by the University as provided herein, the Contractor shall be paid for services satisfactorily completed, less payment or compensation previously made. All promises, requirements, terms, conditions, provisions, representations, guarantees, and warranties contained herein shall survive the contract expiration or termination date unless specifically provided otherwise herein, or unless superseded by applicable Federal or State statutes of limitations. The Contractor may terminate at the beginning of any contract year, only by notification provided in writing to the University a minimum of four (4) months prior to the applicable contract year expiration.
11. **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:** Any and all payments to the Contractor are dependent upon and subject to the availability of funds to the University for the purpose set forth in this agreement. The university pays Net 30 days from receipt of a proper invoice.
12. **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Any information, data, instruments, documents, studies or reports given to or prepared or assembled by the Contractor under this agreement shall be kept as confidential and not divulged or made available to any individual or organization without the prior written approval of the University.
13. **CARE OF PROPERTY:** The Contractor agrees that it shall be responsible for the proper custody and care of any property furnished it for use in connection with the performance of this contract or purchased by it for this contract and will reimburse the State for loss of damage of such property.
14. **COPYRIGHT:** No deliverable items produced in whole or in part under this agreement shall be the subject of an application for copyright by or on behalf of the Contractor. In addition, all inventions and the copyright in and to any copyrightable work, including, but not limited to, copy, art, negatives, photographs, designs, text, software, or documentation created as part of the Contractor's performance of this project shall vest in the University, and the Contractor agrees to assign all rights therein to the University. Contractor further agrees to provide University with any and all reasonable assistance which University may require to file patent applications, to obtain copyright registrations, or to perfect its title in any such inventions or works, including the execution of any documents submitted by the University.
15. **ASSIGNMENT:** No assignment of the Contractor's obligations or the Contractor's right to receive payment hereunder shall be permitted. However, upon written request approved by the issuing purchasing authority, the University may:
 1. Forward the contractor's payment check(s) directly to any person or entity designated by the Contractor, or
 2. Include any person or entity designated by Contractor as a joint payee on the Contractor's payment check(s).

In no event shall such approval and action obligate the University to anyone other than the Contractor and the Contractor shall remain responsible for fulfillment of all contract obligations.

16. **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS:** The Contractor shall comply with all laws, ordinances, codes, rules, regulations, and licensing requirements that are applicable to the conduct of its business, including

those of federal, state, and local agencies having jurisdiction and/or authority.

17. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:** The Contractor shall take affirmative action in complying with all Federal and State requirements concerning fair employment and employment of people with disabilities, and concerning the treatment of all employees without regard to discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability.
18. **SAFETY STANDARDS:** All manufactured items and/or fabricated assemblies subject to operation under pressure, operation by connection to an electric source, or operation involving a connection to a manufactured, natural, or LP gas source shall be constructed and approved in a manner acceptable to the appropriate state inspector which customarily requires the label or re-examination listing or identification marking of the appropriate safety standard organization; such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for pressure vessels; the Underwriters Laboratories and /or National Electrical Manufacturers' Association for electrically operated assemblies; or the American Gas Association for gas operated assemblies, where such approvals of listings have been established for the type of device offered and furnished. Further, all items furnished shall meet all requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and state and federal requirements relating to clean air and water pollution.
19. **INSURANCE:** During the term of the contract, the contractor at its sole cost and expense shall provide commercial insurance of such type and with such terms and limits as may be reasonably associated with the contract. As a minimum, the contractor shall provide and maintain the following coverage and limits:
 1. Worker's Compensation - The contractor shall provide and maintain Worker's Compensation Insurance, as required by the laws of North Carolina, as well as employer's liability coverage with minimum limits of \$500,000.00, covering all of Contractor's employees who are engaged in any work under the contract. If any work is subcontracted, the contractor shall require the subcontractor to provide the same coverage for any of its employees engaged in any work under the contract.
 2. Commercial General Liability - General Liability Coverage on a Comprehensive Broad Form on an occurrence basis in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.00 Combined Single Limit. (Defense cost shall be in excess of the limit of liability).
 3. Automobile - Automobile Liability Insurance, to include liability coverage, covering all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles, used in connection with the contract. The minimum combined single limit shall be \$1,000,000.00 bodily injury and property damage; \$1,000,000.00 uninsured/under insured motorist; and \$1,000.00 medical payment.

Providing and maintaining adequate insurance coverage is a material obligation of the contractor and is of the essence of this contract. All such insurance shall meet all laws of the State of North Carolina. Such insurance coverage shall be obtained from companies that are authorized to provide such coverage and that are authorized by the Commissioner of Insurance to do business in North Carolina. The contractor shall at all times comply with the terms of such insurance policies, and all requirements of the insurer under any such insurance policies, except as they may conflict with existing North Carolina laws or this contract. The limits of coverage under each insurance policy maintained by the contractor shall not be interpreted as limiting the contractor's liability and obligations under the contract.

20. **ADVERTISING:** Contractor shall not use the existence of this contract or the name of the State of North Carolina or North Carolina State University as part of any advertising without prior written approval from the University.
21. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT:** This contract and any documents incorporated specifically by reference represent the entire agreement between the parties and supersede all prior oral or written statements or agreements. This Request for Proposal, any addenda thereto, and the offeror's response are incorporated herein by reference as though set forth verbatim.

All promises, requirements, terms, conditions, provisions, representations, guarantees, and warranties contained herein shall survive the contract expiration or termination date unless specifically provided otherwise herein, or unless superseded by applicable Federal or State statutes of limitation.

22. **AMENDMENTS:** This contract may be amended only by written amendment duly executed by authorized representatives of both the University and the Contractor.
23. **TAXES:** N.C.G.S. §143-59.1 bars the Secretary of Administration from entering into contracts with Contractors if it or its affiliates meet one of the conditions of N.C.G. S. §105-164.8(b) and refuse to collect use tax on sales of tangible personal property to purchasers in North Carolina. Conditions under G. S. 105-164.8(b) include: (1) Maintenance of a retail establishment or office, (2) Presence of representatives in the State that solicit sales or transact business on behalf of the Contractor and (3) Systematic exploitation of the market by media-assisted, media-facilitated, or media-solicited means. By execution of the bid document the Contractor certifies that it and all of its affiliates, (if it has affiliates), collect(s) the appropriate taxes.
24. **GENERAL INDEMNITY:** The Contractor shall hold and save the University, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from liability of any kind, including all claims and losses accruing or resulting to any other person, firm, or corporation furnishing or supplying work, services, materials, or supplies in connection with the performance of this contract, and from any and all claims and losses accruing or resulting to any person, firm, or corporation that may be injured or damaged by the Contractor in the performance of this contract and that are attributable to the negligence or intentionally tortious acts of the Contractor provided that the Contractor is notified in writing within 30 days that the State has knowledge of such claims. The Contractor represents and warrants that it shall make no claim of any kind or nature against the University's agents who are involved in the delivery or processing of Contractor goods to the University. The representation and warranty in the preceding sentence shall survive the termination or expiration of this contract.
25. **OUTSOURCING:** Any Contractor or subcontractor providing call or contact center services to the University or State of North Carolina shall disclose to inbound callers the location from which the call or contact center services are being provided.

If, after award of a contract, the Contractor wishes to outsource any portion of the work to a location outside the United States, prior written approval must be obtained from the University agent responsible for the contract.

Contractor must give notice to the University of any relocation of the Contractor, employees of the Contractor, subcontractors of the Contractor, or other persons performing services under a state contract outside of the United States.

26. **PRICING:** All prices offered herein shall be firm against any increases. Requests by the Contractor for a cost increase relevant to any contract extension shall be submitted in writing one hundred and eighty (180) days prior to each contract renewal. The University reserves the option of accepting a Contractor's proposed cost increase or canceling the service and seeking proposals from other Contractors. Requests for cost increases will be indexed to the same percent as any change in the Consumer Price Index/All Urban Consumers for the previous twelve month period of the request. Invoices are paid Net 30 days from receipt of an accurate invoice.
27. **DEBARMENT CERTIFICATION:** Offeror certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it nor any of its principals a) are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible for the award of contract by any Federal agency; b) have not within a three year period preceding this award been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for: commission of a fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, state or local) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or state antitrust statutes relating to this submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsifications or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property; and c) are not presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity with, commission of any of these offenses enumerated herein. The offer certifies that they have not, within a three year period preceding this offer, had one or more contracts terminated for default

by any federal agency.

“Principals” for the purpose of this certification, means officers; directors; owners; partners; and persons having primary management or supervisory responsibilities within a business entity (e.g., general manager; plant manager; head of a subsidiary, division, or business segments, and similar positions.)

This certification concerns a matter within the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States and the making of a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to prosecution. Certification of this provision is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when making an award. If it is later determined that the Offeror knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the University, the University may terminate this agreement for default.

Offeror hereby certifies these conditions and does so by signing the execution page of this RFP document.

28. PRIVACY:

1. **Personal Identifiers:** If University provides the Contractor with personal identifiers as listed in N.C.G.S. §132-1.10 and in N.C.G.S. §14-133.20(b) or any other legally confidential information, Contractor hereby certifies that collection of this information from University is necessary for the performance of Contractor’s duties and responsibilities on behalf of University under this Contract. Contractor further certifies that it shall maintain the confidential and exempt status of any social security number information, as required by N.C.G.S. §132-1.10(c) (1), and that it shall not re-disclose personally identifiable information as directed by State and Federal laws. Failure to abide by legally applicable security measures and disclosure restrictions may result in the interruption, suspension and/or termination of the relationship with Contractor for a period of at least five (5) years from date of violation. If Contractor experiences a security breach, as defined in N.C.G.S. §75.61(14), relating to this information, in addition to the Contractor’s responsibilities under the NC Identity Theft Protection Act, Contractor shall immediately notify University with the information listed in N.C.G.S. §75-65(d)(1-4) and shall fully cooperate with University. Contractor shall indemnify University for any breach of confidentiality or failure of its responsibilities to protect confidential information. Specifically, these costs may include, but are not limited to, the cost of notification of affected persons as a result of its unauthorized release of University data provided to Contractor pursuant to the Contract.
2. **Education Records:** If the University provides the Contractor with “personally identifiable information” from a student’s education record as defined by FERPA, 34 CFR §99.3, Contractor hereby certifies that collection of this information from University is necessary for the performance of Contractor’s duties and responsibilities on behalf of University under this Contract. In this instance, University considers Contractor a school official with a legitimate interest under FERPA. Contractor further certifies that it shall maintain the confidential status of education records in their custody, and that it shall not re-disclose personally identifiable information as directed by FERPA. Failure to abide by legally applicable security measures and disclosure restrictions may result in the interruption, suspension and/or termination of the relationship with Contractor for a period of at least five (5) years from date of violation. If Contractor experiences a security breach relating to this information or if Contractor re-discloses the information, Contractor shall immediately notify University. Contractor shall indemnify University for any breach of confidentiality or failure of its responsibilities to protect the personally identifiable information. Specifically, these costs may include, but are not limited to, the cost of notification of affected persons as a result of its unauthorized release of University data provided to Contractor pursuant to the Contract.

29. **AUDITS:** The State or University auditor, or the Joint Commission on Governmental Operations and legislative employees whose primary responsibility is to provide professional or administrative services to the Commission, may audit the records of Contractor during and after the term of this Agreement to verify accounts and data affecting fees or performance in accordance with North

Carolina General Statutes §143-49(9) and §147-64.7 and Session Law 2023-134.

30. **PRESERVATION OF RECORDS:** If the University provides any data to Contractor pursuant to this Agreement then Contractor shall preserve and maintain the data for a period of three (3) years or as indicated in a litigation hold letter issued by University, to fulfill the University's obligations under the North Carolina Public Records Act and under the Federal and North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure. Contractor shall immediately preserve and maintain data (and any generated email correspondence) upon the University's request or upon notice of litigation or audit and further Contractor shall make available all Data University may specify with the time limits required.
31. **CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS:** The Contractor shall, at no additional cost to the University, secure appropriate background checks on all employees, independent contractors, or subcontractor employees to be assigned to any resulting contract. These background checks shall include, at a minimum, the following checks with consideration for current, past, alias and maiden names:
- Nationwide Federal Criminal search
 - National Sex Offender Registry search
 - North Carolina Statewide Criminal search
 - Criminal searches in all counties of residence outside the state of North Carolina in the past seven (7) years, except in cases when the individual has resided in the New York boroughs of Kings, Queens, New York, Nassau, Richmond, or Bronx, in which case a New York Statewide Criminal Search is required
 - Skip Trace, Residency history, or other Social Security Number-based search (to ensure validity and correct matching)

The Contractor shall align its hiring decisions to support the University's ongoing effort to maintain a safe, drug-free environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors.

These background checks shall be maintained by the Contractor and are subject to audit by appropriate University or state officials at any time during and for five (5) years after the contract end date. The University may withhold consent of any of Contractor's personnel to be placed on a University assignment at its sole discretion. The Contractor shall immediately (same day as notification) remove any employee or representative from University property if deemed by the University to be unfit for any reason.