UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHCAROLINA

AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO SOLICITATION

TO: ALL VENDORS

FROM: Charles Johnson, Procurement Manager

SUBJECT: SUBJECT: SOLICITATION NUMBER: USC-RFP-2238-CJ
                ==E-LEARNING COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT, TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE,
                AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES==

DATE: June 15, 2012

This Amendment ==No.1== modifies the Request for Proposals only in the manner and to the extent as stated herein.

BIDDER SHALL ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF AMENDMENT ==NO. 1== IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW AND RETURN IT WITH THEIR BID RESPONSE. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY SUBJECT BID TO REJECTION.

_____   _____
Authorized Signature   Name of Offeror

_____
Date

THE UNIVERSITY REQUIRES THAT EACH OFFEROR SUBMIT <u>WITH ITS PROPOSAL</u> A COPY OF A DRAFT CONTRACT (CLEARLY LABELLED "SAMPLE" ON EACH PAGE) THAT THEY WOULD PROPOSE THE UNIVERSITY ENTER.

THE LEGAL AGREEMENTS INCLUDED WITH PROPOSALS MUST BE APPROVED CLAUSE HAS BEEN DELETED FROM SECTION II, INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERRORS – B. SPECIAL OF THE SOLICITATION.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR A REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1: Please comment on USC's desire to develop and create fully online programs for the degrees listed on page 13 of the RFP. Which of these online programs will have required residency components?

ANSWER: As I understand the question, we are not requiring any students to be residential or on-campus students at any particular campus. All programs will be fully on-line (above 60 hours for Palmetto College degrees).

QUESTION 2: On what timeline does USC envision each of the degree programs listed on page 13 of the RFP rolling-out into the marketplace? In what term will the first student intake occur for online students in each of the listed programs?

ANSWER: USC expects the Palmetto College (with two or three additional programs) to start classes in Fall 2013, and hence expects recruiting/enrollment will begin during 2012-13 academic year. Two or three of the planned Master's degree programs should open in Fall 2013 as well, with recruiting and enrollment also in the coming academic year.

QUESTION 3: Is USC able to offer these programs at market driven pricing? Is USC limited to using either their In-state or Out-of-State tuition rates for their online programs?

ANSWER: We are planning to use the USC-Aiken rate, currently $367 per credit hour, as the in-state rate for Palmetto College. The out-of-state rate is double the in-state rate for tuition. The graduate programs will use the same rate as their on-campus, traditional delivery equivalents for in-state and out-of-state rates.

QUESTION 4: Please clarify what is meant by the following language included on page 14 of the RFP: *"For Undergraduate programs, the University's goal is to make available the final sixty (60) hours of six (6) undergraduate majors in fully on-line fashion over a two year period with at least two of these majors having been developed during the first two years of the contract term."* Does this mean the vendor will be required to develop 120 hours of undergraduate courses for 2 degree programs in the first year of our contract, and then develop 240 hours of undergraduate courses in the second year for 4 additional degree programs?

ANSWER: Yes, the contractor would be expected to assist with the development of up to 60 hours of course work per degree program. In practice, it may be somewhat less than that since in some programs we may have a few courses that will need only modest reworking, but 60 credit hours per program is a good estimate.

QUESTION 5: How many courses will be represented in the 6 undergraduate majors of 60 hours mentioned above? Should the vendor assume 20 courses (3 credits each) that need to be developed on each of the 6 degrees being developed (Total of 120 Courses)?

ANSWER: Yes, approximately 20 courses per major.

QUESTION 6: Please clarify what is meant in section 2.2.5 "Making payments to the institution." Does this mean that USC would like the vendor to collect tuition payments for the university? Or, is the vendor required to have knowledge of USC's payment processes and describe how its systems and operations would integrate with the established USC processes?

ANSWER: USC will collect the tuition.

QUESTION 7: Referencing section 2.6 in the RFP, would the vendor be able to utilize USC's existing online graduate application software package for use on the proposed online programs?

ANSWER: The Graduate School uses a 3rd party product named CollegeNET. USC does not control interface capabilities to this product.

QUESTION 8: On page 18, under section 5.1, "additional graduate courses" are referenced. Are these thought to be part of an online degree program? Or, will the vendor be required to build and provide other forms of support for stand-alone courses that are not a part of the referenced online programs?

ANSWER: We are talking only abut fully on-line graduate degree programs here.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR B REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1: Please confirm that USC intends their selected partner to assist in building/growing all of the programs listed in the solicitation. If not, please specify which specific programs USC intends to initially partner on.

ANSWER: We expect our partner (contractor) to assist in the development all courses for all programs discussed in the solicitation.

QUESTION 2: Please provide the target enrollments that USC desires for each of the partner programs for Years 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

ANSWER: Such projections are difficult at best. In Palmetto College as a whole, USC believes enrollment can increase from the current level of 300 in synchronous Distance learning formats to close to 900 in 2-3 years and eventually 1200-1500. The graduate programs need enrollment cohorts of 25 to 30 per year in most cases.

QUESTION 3: Please clarify question 2.2 - does USC intend to use their partner's enrollment & financial aid counselors to act on behalf of Palmetto College for enrollment and financial aid support requests, or will USC utilize their campus counselors for enrollment & financial aid support for Palmetto College?

ANSWER: USC will provide the above-mentioned functions for Palmetto College. We are seeking only course design and development assistance for Palmetto College programs.

QUESTION 4: Please clarify the following statement used throughout the RFP:

- *For Undergraduate programs, the University's goal is to make available the final sixty (60) hours of six (6) undergraduate majors in fully on-line fashion over a two year period with at least two of these majors having been developed during the first two years of the contract term.* It appears to be clarified in Requirement 5.2, as follows but we would still like to confirm. *5.2 For the process of making existing undergraduate degree programs from the USC system available fully online under the administrative umbrella of the Palmetto College, the University of South Carolina requests offerors to submit with their proposals a pricing structure sufficient to provide the course design and development services needed to make available the final sixty hours of as many as six (6) undergraduate majors in fully on-line fashion within the two year period described over a two (2) year period, with at least two (2) of these majors having been developed in the first year (i.e., 2012-2013). A fee for*

service model must be offered as the pricing option for these undergraduate programs by offerors in their proposals.

ANSWER: It is clarified in Requirement 5.2.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR C REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1: Please provide a schedule of tuition, including cost per credit hour currently and anticipated through the term of the contract

ANSWER: We are planning to use the USC-Aiken rate, currently $367 per credit hour, as the in-state rate for Palmetto College. The out-of-state rate is double the in-state rate for tuition. The graduate programs will use the same rate as their on-campus, traditional delivery equivalents for in-state and out-of-state rates. Projecting any possible annual tuition increases is difficult. In recent years, such increases have been small, c. 3%, and we expect them to remain small.

QUESTION 2: List of all other fees incurred by students taking online courses

ANSWER: Appropriate fees for these programs have yet to be set by our Board of Trustees, and all USC fees are dedicated revenue for specific services offered and debt retirement.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR D REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1: What are current and projected online enrollments for both the graduate and undergraduate programs identified in the RFP?

ANSWER: Such projections are difficult at best. In Palmetto College as a whole, USC believes enrollment can increase from the current level of 300 in synchronous Distance learning formats to close to 900 in 2-3 years and eventually 1200-1500. The graduate programs need enrollment cohorts of 25 to 30 per year in most cases.

QUESTION 2: Will the Palmetto-administered undergraduate online courses be delivered via the University of South Carolina's existing Blackboard delivery system or (is USC open to the

possibility of utilizing another delivery system) does USC anticipate Palmetto will use another delivery system?

ANSWER: Yes, they will be delivered through Blackboard.

PART B OF QUESTION 2: Is it the intention or desire of USC to have the graduate and undergraduate fully online offerings operate on the same learning technology platform?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION 3: Re: verification of digital origin/receipt of communications with students referenced in section 2.4. As some of this communication occurs via the LMS, if USC retains the self-hosted Blackboard system, will this obligation rest with Blackboard?

ANSWER: USC is not utilizing Blackboard to perform this function. We are open to

Vendor solutions.

QUESTION 4: Can USC provide the full list of undergraduate majors that you are seeking to have the final 60 hours of course development work on?

ANSWER: That list is still tentative at this time. The leading candidates are Criminal Justice, Business, Elementary Education, Nursing, and Human Services (HR).

QUESTION 5: Please describe the institutions enrollment/student growth goals for this fully online initiative… 2000, 4000, 5000 students?

ANSWER: See answer to Question #1.

QUESTION 6: Please detail USCs current marketing/recruiting strategy… is it centralized across the university, or segmented and dedicated to individual colleges/programs within the university?

ANSWER: For undergraduates, USC runs a centralized marketing/recruiting strategy coordinated by the Admissions Office in Student Affairs. For specific graduate programs, specific colleges and units handle marketing/ recruiting and even admissions decisions using The Graduate School as a clearinghouse and data processing entity.

QUESTION 7: In which states (other than SC) is your institution currently authorized or has applications in process to conduct marketing activities and provide higher education opportunities?

ANSWER: USC currently has or is seeking authorization in all pertinent states.

QUESTION 8: Please provide the undergraduate and graduate tuition costs per credit hour; additionally can USC provide these tuition rates over the past 4 years?

ANSWER: We are planning to use the USC-Aiken rate, currently $367 per credit hour, as the in-state rate for Palmetto College. The out-of-state rate is double the in-state rate for tuition. The graduate programs will use the same rate as their on-campus, traditional delivery equivalents for in-state and out-of-state rates. Projecting any possible annual tuition increases is difficult. In recent years, such increases have been small, c. 3%, and we expect them to remain small.

QUESTION 9: Is there currently an enrollment cap on online courses?

ANSWER: The caps are set at the unit level and vary from course to course.

QUESTION 10: How many online sessions are run annually today

ANSWER: USC is currently running very few on-line asynchronous courses and only one or two degree programs of that description.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR E REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1: Is USC providing a stipend or release time to the SME's for undergraduate course development?

ANSWER: USC is planning to use course development grants to incentivize faculty who will serve as instructors of the undergraduate courses.

QUESTION 2: Regarding the development of the undergraduate programs:

Part a: Is there an instructional design team that will assist with this process or do you expect the entire project to be managed by the proposer?

ANSWER: **We expect the offeror to manage all the instructional design required by its proposal.**

Part b: What other software/resources does the school utilize that may be utilized in course design? (lecture capture, video streaming, stock images, or other)

ANSWER: Lecture Capture (No Standard)
Video Streaming via (Adobe Connect) and (Web Streaming)
Stock Images(No Standard)
Some use of Camtasia Studio

Part c: Will the undergraduate faculty be trained on Blackboard at the school or does the proposer also need to provide training for these faculty?

ANSWER: Most should already be trained in Blackboard. If not, this training might be shared with partner (contractor).

Part d: Does the institution offer help desk services on Blackboard to faculty and students? What are the hours?

ANSWER: Yes. 8am – 6pm Mon – Fri.

QUESTION 3: Required Deliverables #2 reads that the contractor should implement a complete system that meets the technology system, however, in 2.1 says that Blackboard that is implemented and hosted by USC should be used. Is USC considering utilizing another learning management system for this RFP?

ANSWER: No. USC will use Blackboard.

QUESTION 4: If Blackboard is used, does USC license the Blackboard Community, Content, and Analytics solutions? Will USC take advantage of the Blackboard Drive that is scheduled to launch in the next few months?

ANSWER: BB Community = Yes
BB Content = Yes
BB Analytics = No
BB Drive = In planning process.

QUESTION 5: For the robust technology platform support – Are they staying on BB? If so, does this mean we take over Level 1 and Level 2 tech support? If so, we would need full administrator access to BB.

ANSWER: No.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR F REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1:   (2 .1.) A technology platform that allows the University to implement and conduct classes over the internet using the University's Learning Management System (Blackboard) including:
Will the provider use USC's Blackboard license or rely on their own partnership with Blackboard?

ANSWER: The programs will operate though USC's agreement with Blackboard.

QUESTION 2: (2.1.3.) Providing access to a library of digital textbooks from publishers that spans all academic disciplines;
For this section, is the provider responsible for making sure that the students can access the material only, or is the provider responsible for providing a system where the digital textbooks can be checked out and returned? If the checkout system is in place, what system is being used?

ANSWER: USC is looking for access only.

QUESTION 3: (2.2.) While the University will retain control over all of its enrollment services processes and decisions, offeror's proposal should include the provision of a system that provides a high touch concierge level of technology and service to the University's students in fully online graduate programs only for the following enrollment processes:
Can you please provide more of an explanation of what you are considering a "high touch concierge level of technology?" Please provide specific examples.

ANSWER: USC expects provider (contractor) to offer marketing, recruiting, enrollment, retention, and other student help services to students in the proposed graduate programs. The Palmetto College will offer those services for the undergraduate programs.

QUESTION 4: Are you asking to have an ERP system in place that registers students and performs actions described in 2.2.1 – 2.2.7?

ANSWER: No.

QUESTION 5: (2.3.) For the select graduate programs, in its proposal, the offeror should describe its ability to support student retention including helping students meet enrollment deadlines, monitor their own progress, and locate support services as needed.

ANSWER: See answer to Question. #3.

QUESTION 6: Will the ERP provide student registration? If not, give examples.

ANSWER: USC will handle registration.

QUESTION 7: (2.4.) In its proposal, the offeror should describe its method of asserting the digital origin and receipt of key data and communications between students and key University personnel. For example, the offeror should describe the technology that is in place to verify student receipt of key communications from instructors or enrollment personnel.
Are you running the key communications through Blackboard or do you want to use an outside system?

ANSWER: USC is not utilizing Blackboard to perform this function. We are open to Vendor solutions.

QUESTION 8: (2.7.) For the select graduate programs, the contractor must coordinate the implementation of a system and business processes that support all administrative tasks and obligations associated with the University's online education program including record keeping and filing of necessary reports.
Please give examples of all administrative tasks and obligations associated with the University's online education program including record keeping and filing of necessary reports.

ANSWER: See answer to Question # 3.

QUESTION 9: (5.3) Offeror must identify the financial investments that the University will be required to make if it pursues online education services using the offeror's services. These investments must be identified separately for the graduate online course services and the undergraduate online course services. In its proposal, offeror must address how its own financial status and condition makes it suitable to provide the financing solutions it proposes.
Please explain what is meant by "provide financing solutions". Please provide examples.

ANSWER: Offeror must show that it has staff and/or resources to provide services it plans to offer. It must also indicate any additional expenses it expects USC to incur relate to its activity beyond offerer's compensation.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR G REGARDING THE SOLICITATION:

QUESTION 1: Do you consider the initial term for this contract to be 3 years or 7 years?

ANSWER: The initial term of the contract is 3 years. See TERM OF CONTRACT-EFFECTIVE DATE/INITIAL CONTRACT PERIOD and TERM OF CONTRACT-OPTION TO RENEW clauses in Section VII. Terms and Conditions – B.Special on page 31of the solicitation.

QUESTION 2: What level of access does USC expect for online digital textbooks – do you expect the vendor to provide this solution directly?

ANSWER: USC would not expect contractor to provide this solution directly unless compelling advantages in doing so could be shown.

QUESTION 3: Do you intend to offer online courses at two tuition rates – in state and out of state – or at one rate?

ANSWER: We will offer an in-state and out-of-state initially per USC Board policy.