



Midwestern Higher Education Compact
Data Analytics for Student Success, Institutional Efficiencies, and Integration
MHEC-RFP-08152022
Pre-Proposal Questions and Answers
September 1, 2022

Vendor A

Q1. Through this RFP, is MHEC looking for an Off the shelf Product that can be plug-in or integrated with the existing School Infrastructure to generate Student Success like analytical insights or a Custom built application or service, that caters the needs of the multiple educational institutes?

A1. MHEC is looking to enter into a master agreement with one or more vendors to provide data analytic solutions. Individual institutions will then have the ability to utilize the master agreement to procure from the products and services awarded. It is unknown at this time how the individual institutions will utilize the master agreement. It is dependent on the institution's preferences.

Q2. The three references, is it limited to only current higher education accounts or similar service from other industries too can be considered?

A2. Please see Section B.19 References – "List other related references if higher education references are not available. The Offeror shall indicate how long the Offeror has had a contractual relationship with the client and the types of products and services provided to the client."

Q3. We have registered office in USA and have offshore development centers in India. We have sales and account managers in the USA to manage the offshore team & deliver the project. Please confirm can we bid for this RFP?

A3. Yes.

Q4. There is no specific budget provided in the RFP document. Is there any budget allocated for this RFP? Please provide approximate budget cap for the project.

A4. MHEC contracts are indefinite quantity master agreements. Aggregate sales nationally, across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. Note: Past sales are not indicative or a guarantee of future sales.

Vendor B

Q5. How many institutions across the MHEC territory are taking advantage of the current SAS contract?

A5. Aggregate sales nationally, across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. For FY 2022 \$401 million of aggregate sales in the MHEC region.

Q6. How many institutions across the NEBHE territory are taking advantage of the current SAS contract?

A6. Aggregate sales nationally, across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. For FY 2022 \$7 million of aggregate sales in the NEBHE region.

Q7. How many institutions across the SREB territory are taking advantage of the current SAS contract?

A7. Aggregate sales nationally, across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. For FY 2022 \$140 million of aggregate sales in the SREB region.

Q8. How many institutions across the WICHE territory are taking advantage of the current SAS contract?

A8. Aggregate sales nationally, across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. For FY 2022 \$90 million of aggregate sales in the WICHE region.

Q9. Will vendors with similar or competing capabilities be selected with this solicitation or will it be limited to a single vendor which supports each specific need, requirement?

A.9 MHEC is seeking a recommendation to award one or more data analytic providers for various products and services with a range of options to entities in the MHEC region and nationally.

Q10. What is the anticipated term for the selected solutions?

A10. See Section C.5 Master Agreement Term. The seven-year term will be for an initial three years, with an option to renew for an additional four years.

Vendor C

Q11. The RFP addresses the use of subcontractors (section C.36) upon award of the work, is MHEC open to teamed responses and/or responses where there is a prime/sub?

A11. Please follow Section A – Proposal Requirements, when considering a joint response.

Q12. Is MHEC looking for a software platform to conduct its own analysis, an algorithmic solution, or either?

A12. Unknown. MHEC is looking to enter into a master agreement with one or more vendors to provide data analytic solutions. Individual institutions will then have the ability to utilize the master agreement to procure from the products and services awarded. It is unknown at this time how the individual institutions will utilize the master agreement. It is dependent on the institution's preferences.

Q13. Is MHEC looking for off-the-shelf solutions, solutions that can be customized to specific clients, or both?

A13. Both.

Q14. Is there a preferred template MHEC would like to see rates submitted for this proposal?

A14. See Section B.9 Pricing. Products and services with associated price list or hourly rates can be submitted.

Vendor D

Q15. How many of the institutions within MHEC contracted with SAS to acquire the services desired within the RFP?

A15. Aggregate sales nationally, across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. Note: Past sales are not indicative or a guarantee of future sales.

Q16. Which of the requirements from the previously awarded contract go unfulfilled?

A16. It is unknown at this time how the individual institutions will utilize the master agreement. It is dependent on the institution's preferences.

Q17. Which requirements have been updated and/or added from the previously awarded contract?

A17. The products and services offered are reviewed annually, with an option to update products and services that are in scope of the original solicitation.

Q18. Is the winner the only endorsed partner in the specific category?

A18. MHEC is seeking a recommendation to award one or more data analytic providers for various products and services with a range of options to entities in the MHEC region and nationally.

Q19. Are there any institutions ready to commit currently using the existing solution?

A19. MHEC contracts are indefinite quantity master agreements. Aggregate sales across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. Note: Past sales are not indicative or a guarantee of future sales.

Vendor E

Q20. Will this be a sole source award, or will there be multiple vendors awarded?

A20. MHEC is seeking a recommendation to award one or more data analytic providers for various products and services with a range of options to entities in the MHEC region and nationally.

Vendor F

Q21. Section B.2(A) states that MHEC is seeking providers to propose data analytic solutions for Student Success, Institutional Efficiencies, and Integration. Will you consider proposals that only address Predictive/Prescriptive analytics for Student Success?

A21. Alternative and partial solutions can be proposed, if accompanied by an explanation of how the solutions offered are within scope as referenced in Section B Solution Proposal.

Q22. Section B1 describes a desire to modernize data architecture and integrate with other systems and services within private and public cloud networks to create reliable data streams from student information systems (SIS), learning management systems (LMS), other enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, and from the ecosystem of partners to capture, maintain, and make accessible through easier data exploration. What are the predominant systems (SIS, LMS, ERP) currently being used at MHEC schools?

A22. Unknown. MHEC is looking to enter into a master agreement with one or more vendors to provide data analytic solutions. Individual institutions will then have the ability to utilize the master agreement to procure from the products and services awarded. It is unknown at this time how the individual institutions will utilize the master agreement. It is dependent on the institution's preferences.

Q23. The intent of the solicitation will be to enter into a master agreement with a framework to allow providers to write orders which allows institutions to acquire products and services through a defined fulfillment channel, a negotiated enterprise license agreement, and a starting point for price. We have multiple solutions that meet various requirements as outlined in the RFP. Can we offer multiple solutions that may be applicable to various institutions based upon their specific needs?

A23. Yes. Individual institutions will then have the ability to utilize the master agreement to procure from the products and services awarded. It is unknown at this time what specific solutions each individual institution will be seeking. It is dependent upon each institution's preference.

Q24. MHEC's goal is to award competitive solicitations that integrate with the institutions' procurement process resulting in a negotiated Master Agreement terms and conditions, licensing, and pricing. Can you confirm that the intention is to make an award to multiple vendors who may provide the tools and services outlined?

A24. MHEC is seeking a recommendation to award one or more data analytic providers for various products and services with a range of options to entities in the MHEC region and nationally.

Q25. Our company offers a host of solutions appropriate for Higher Education. Is MHEC interested in receiving information and pricing regarding other value-added solutions such as CRM, Marketing Services, Search Services, etc.?

A25. See Section B.6 Product and Services Offering. Associated services can be proposed to guarantee a fully functional proposed solution.

Q26. You mentioned a contract cycle ending in 2022. Can you please provide a list of vendors that are currently included on that contract?

A26. The SAS Institute master agreement term ends in November 2022.

Q27. Many of our products and services (such as campaigns) require significant scoping and do not have a “list price.” Will you accept a discount offered without a “list price” attached?

A27. Yes.

Q28. Regarding B.10 - Volume Tier Discounts - Can you please define this in more detail? We would generally consider a volume discount based on the number of students at a particular institution. Are you looking for discounts based on the number of institutions who may participate?

A28. Primarily, asking if additional discounts are provided for large orders. Additional discounts based on the number of participating institutions can be proposed.

Q29. Can you please provide more guidance on how much information you would like regarding the various product functionality?

A29. High level overview of the proposed products and services and how these products and services are acquired through fulfillment.

Q30. Can you share, on average, how many purchases are being made off of the current contract annually?

A30. MHEC contracts are indefinite quantity master agreements. Aggregate sales across all MHEC Technology Contracts for FY 2022 exceeded \$638 million dollars with year-over-year growth of nine percent. Note: Past sales are not indicative or a guarantee of future sales.

Q31. The turnaround time from when you expect to deliver answer to questions is (Thursday, September 1st). Due to the Labor Day holiday, that leaves a turnaround time of five (5) business days to submit our final proposals inclusive of mail time. Would MHEC please kindly consider an extension of the due date?

A31. See Section A.11 Submission Requirements and Proposal Deadline. Any notification of changes will be posted at <http://www.mhec.org/news>.

Q32. What contract term is desired?

A32. See Section C.5 Master Agreement Term. The seven-year term will be for an initial three years, with an option to renew for an additional four years.

Q33. Can you please expound on how you’re defining “Innovation” as part of the scoring criteria?

A33. MHEC seeks proposals with new ideas on the packaging and presentation of data analytic products, the services offered, licensing, order writing and fulfillment, which benefit at least a significant portion of the wide variety of potential eligible organizations present in the MHEC region, as well as nationally. Innovation can conceivably range from marketing, pricing structure, channel promotion, and the range of services provided.

Vendor G

Q34. SECTION B: PROPOSED SOLUTION, B.2, C.1 - Please provide additional context to this requirement. Does this mean that a user needs to be able to access the proposed solution's analytics capabilities from within another application, such as the student information system? If yes, please also provide several examples of these applications that a user would access the proposed solution from within.

A34. Unknown. The proposed solution may meet all or a portion of the scope of solicitation. See Section B.2 "Proposed solution shall provide examples of higher education use of education use of advanced business intelligence, data analytics, predictive analytics, visual analytics, artificial intelligence, or other associated product capabilities."

Q35. SECTION C: MHEC REQUIREMENTS, C.42 - Will MHEC require a specific website on the selected vendor's external website? What is meant by full-service?

A35. Yes, MHEC will negotiate as part of the award, the development and implementation of appropriate marketing strategies. A full-service supporting website may provide contract level descriptions, product and service information, to promote eligible organizations awareness and utilization.

Vendor H

Q36. Are you willing to accept an electronic submission in lieu of the hard copies? If not, will MHEC accept responses only on a USB shipped to your location (no hard copies provided)?

A36. Yes, Electronic submission in acceptable for meeting the proposal deadline. Two hard copies can be delivered past the proposal deadline. Please follow section A.11 Submission Requirements and Proposal Deadline.

Q37. Are you willing to accept an electronic signature in lieu of a wet ink signature on all forms?

A37. Yes, electronic signature is acceptable.

Q38. Can MHEC please confirm RFP responses only require:

- Cover Letter (as described)
- Responses to Sections B2; B6-B19
- Response to Terms (Section C)

A38. Yes, follow Section A – Proposal Requirements and the guidance provided in Section A.12 Proposal Format for preparing the proposal, along with responses to Section B – Solution Proposal and Section C – MHEC Requirements.

Vendor I

Q39. Does a given solution need to cover all the requirements on pages 12 and 13, or can it cover a subset of the requirements?

A39. Alternative and partial solutions can be proposed, if accompanied by an explanation of how the solutions offered are within scope as referenced in Section B Solution Proposal.