

ENTERPRISE PROGRAM & PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES
RFQ# ED-08-R-0014
RESPONSES TO CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS

General		
#	Question	Response
1.	Are there any size restriction on subcontractors?	No.
2.	Will FSA allow for teaming at the proposal submission stage or will you be looking for independent responses with the expectation that teaming will be done after the award?	Yes, offerors should submit any teaming arrangements/subcontractors information in their proposal prior to the award.
3.	If a small business contractor decides to team with a partner for work under the EDSS PMO effort, must the teams be developed prior to award of the contract? Or, rather, may a contractor team with a company upon award of the contract for individual task orders only?	The government is not precluding possible additions and/or substitutions to these teaming arrangements/subcontractors in the future.
4.	When priming for EDSS Enterprise Program Project Management Support Services RFP, can Prime contractor seek teaming partner specializing in one or more of the following areas? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent Verification & Validation (IV&V) ▪ Program Quality Assurance and Enterprise Quality management ▪ Program and Project Management ▪ Acquisition Management. ▪ Investment Management 	There is no constraint on such a teaming arrangement. As stated in Amendment 1 posted on 1/29/08, offerors are reminded of the requirements of FAR 52.219-14, which states that "At least 50 percent of the cost of contract performance incurred for personnel shall be expended for employees of the concern".
5.	Can a small business use a large business subcontractor? Reading 52.219-6 (Notice of Small Business Set Aside) we see the following statement: <i>(c) Agreement. A small business concern submitting an offer in its own name shall furnish, in performing the contract, only end items manufactured or produced by small business concerns in the United States or its outlying areas.</i> Also, what percentage of the work can be subcontracted to a large business?	As previously stated in RFP Amendment 1 the requirements of FAR 52.219-14, states that "At least 50 percent of the cost of contract performance incurred for personnel shall be expended for employees of the concern".
6.	FSA intends to award EPPMSS as MAC/IDIQ. Will any consideration be given to Alaskan Native, SDVOSB, 8(a), WOSB, etc.?	No.
7.	On a task by task level, what are the conflict of interest rules between tasks under this IDIQ, and tasks under the other EDSS Functional Area IDIQs? ----- How will COI be managed across the other service area contracts? Will the conflict of interest apply to an FSA small business IDIQ award recipient doing work on discrete tasks as a full and open subcontractor awardee on the development services contract?	Any restrictions applicable to a particular task order will be communicated by the Task Order Contracting Officer. ----- As stated in Section II, Item 16 of the RFP, the IDIQ contractor will be required to submit a "comprehensive and accurate report listing all active contracts/task orders that it currently has within the Department of Education and/or Federal Student Aid regardless of against which vehicle it was awarded." The information from these reports may be used to identify and manage potential conflicts of interest. Also, contractor shall state if it believes there may be a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in its performance of a particular TO RFQ.

General		
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8.	If a BPA awardee receives a task order award for any Service Area...for Program ABC, is (that) awardee or their subcontractors prohibited from receiving an award as a prime or a subcontractor under the other EDSS Service Areas (for the same program)?	See response to question#7 above.
9.	Task Order Constraints indicate that there may exist OCI issues within specific programs under EPPMSS. Will the IV&V or Program/Project Management portion of this program create OCI issues with other (current or planned) DoEd programs (outside of EPPMSS) and if so, which ones? ----- Will work under this IDIQ contract preclude contractor/team members from fulfilling future hardware/services procurements within DOED? What constraints, if any, does DOED anticipate for offerors under future solicitations? Per Section R.14, Task Order Constraints, will the Offeror be given the opportunity to submit an OCI mitigation plan prior to being excluded from a particular task order opportunity?	See response to question # 7 above. ----- See Conflict of Interest Clause ED 307-17 and Organizational Conflicts of Interest FAR Subpart 9.5. Contractor may submit a OCI mitigation plan.
10.	What would be considered OCI activities that would preclude a company from working on other parts of the delivery of a given component or FSA system? Please address this both in terms of prime contractor on the EPPMSS IDIQ and as a subcontractor. If a teaming partner's staff is working on an EPPMSS task, for instance, but a company's staff is not, is said company allowed to work on area 2 services for that task?	See response to questions #7 and 9 above.
11.	1) What is the total ceiling amount per award? 2) How many awards are expected? 3) Is there an incumbent company performing the work now? 4) This solicitation is considered total small business set-aside. Does this preclude large businesses from being subcontractors? 5) Page 67 of the RFP references the FSA Quality Assurance Handbook v3. Is a copy of this Handbook available for review?	1) Refer back to Section II, Paragraph C. 2) Undetermined. 3) No incumbent performing all scope of services currently. 4) No. a) Correction. The title is <i>Independent Verification & Validation Handbook</i> which is included in the Work Products Guide zip file (WPG 4.0 Final.zip).
12.	Has FSA identified a ceiling amount for the IDIQ? If so, what is it? Will there be a separate evaluation team for the Sample Task Order and the Technical Proposal? Does FSA anticipate awarding the sample task order as the first order under the IDIQ or is the sample task order for technical evaluation only?	Refer back to Section II, Paragraph C. There is a single evaluation team. The sample task order is not an actual requirement.

General		
#	Question	Response
13.	Does FSA have an anticipated contract value for this procurement?	Refer back to Section II, Item C.
14.	Has there been a budget range for this project or is it open? ----- Old contract amount and/or price? ----- Are these new requirements or a re-competition? ----- Bidders list?	Minimum guaranteed amount for the contract term is \$1,000. ----- No previous contract amount. ----- New requirements. ----- No list.
15.	If it is a re-competition, who is the incumbent? Person (incumbent) or entity currently performing the contract/project? Are there any incumbents or existing contactors performing a similar line of work for the FSA? If yes, who are these contractors?	No incumbent for the entire scope of services.
16.	(V)erify whether this is a small set-aside and if there's an estimated award \$ amount?	Refer back to Section IV, Paragraph A, and Section II, Paragraph C.
17.	Some Federal, and specifically intelligence community, clients are not willing to complete D&B reports for contractors. Is there an alternate approach that can be used for submission?	No. D&B Open Rating's report is being used to evaluate Past Performance/Past Experience.
18.	Will the successful bidders be allowed to add additional labor categories following award? ----- Are we required to develop labor categories and rates for service items that we may not bid on such as Acquisition Management?	If it is in the best interest of the government. ----- All offers must demonstrate capability to perform all 5 scope of services outlined in the solicitation.
19.	Page 2 of Schedule 1449, the unit reference is "SE". Please provide clarification of what SE refers to.	Service.
20.	For the D&B OpenRatings, they require an average time of 35 days. Is it possible to extend the date for this proposal from early March to the end of March? ----- D&B Open Ratings process estimates between 20 – 35 days for typical completion of Past Performance Evaluations...(a)re we to assume that Past performance Evaluations still in process on the due date are considered acceptable or is an extension of the offer date anticipated? ----- The requirements in the proposal (Open Ratings report, 15 past performances across the five functional areas) make the RFP response elaborate. Please consider extending the response deadline from Mar 07, 2008 to Mar 15, 2008? ----- Are past performance evaluations (from Dun & Bradstreet) due at or prior to the proposal due date?	If orders are placed online, this lead time is reduced to 20 days. As stated in Amendment 2 posted on 2/1/08, "offeror shall include hard copies of their Confirmation Email from Dun & Bradstreet and their Past Performance Evaluation Report in their proposal submission." D&B Report is due at the amended proposal submission date of 3/17/08.

General		
#	Question	Response
21.	Attachment D, Use and Non-Disclosure Agreement, is it required...submit with the business proposal? If so, would FSA like an executed copy for each subcontractor as well?	Executed NDA is not required in the proposal submission, but may be required in subsequent task order if applicable.
22.	Will the government provide the template in Attachment A in its original format?	See embedded document below.  "Attachment A_Client Reference F"
23.	The Work Products Guide indicates that a Template for the Risk Management Plan is in development. Is there a draft plan that we can use for our estimation?	There is no draft available.
Pricing Schedule/Labor Categories		
#	Question	Response
24.	There is typically high risk when you have a fixed price proposal with the incorporation of EVM. Is there a risk mitigation in place on the government side or should the contractor account for this?	The overall purpose of these IDIQ contracts as they relate to EVM is as support to analyze vendor-delivered EV data for application development projects.
25.	The government has provided the pricing tables (pages 51-53 of 77) in PDF format. However, the government requires them (IV. Addendum to FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation – Commercial) back in MS Excel 2000 format. Will the government provide Attachment C in its original format to vendors?	Embedded below is the workbook amended 2/13/08.  "Attachment C_Level of Effort Workbook T"
26.	Required Labor Categories and Descriptions, may additional experience be substituted for educational requirements? May additional education be substituted for experience requirements?	No, to both questions.
27.	(Page 5)... 1. GS-11: where can we find a description of the standard skills and qualifications for this GS level? 2. With regards to the Risk Analyst (both Jr. and Sr.) Labor Category, can the Government provide clarification on the types of analysis anticipated by this labor category, i.e., Security Risk, Financial Risk, Programmatic Risk, etc.? 3. Investment Analyst: Familiar with standard federal investment management concepts, practices, and procedures...where can we get details on these?	1-3. This information is readily available on the Internet at websites like www.opm.gov.
28.	Page 5,...shouldn't the qualifications for EDSS Project Managers, including Service Areas 5 & 6, be comparable across all service areas...(w)ould Federal Student Aid consider standardizing the EDSS SA-2 RFP Attachment J-6A "Project Manager" labor category description and use it for this EDSS Service Area also?	No. Standardization of labor categories across EDSS Service Areas is not in the best interest of the government.
29.	Section C. Pricing, are on-site and off-site rates required?	Yes. The pricing template has been amended as such. Refer back to question #25.

Pricing Schedule/Labor Categories		
#	Question	Response
30.	Page 6, (t)he Burdened Hourly Rate columns below should reflect the same amounts indicated in the Discount Rate columns under Level of Effort Workbook Template...(if) this is the case...(d)oes this mean that the Department will never ask for discounts off the Pricing Schedule as a discount has already been applied?	Burdened Hourly Rate should reflect the Discount Rate from the workbook template. The government will not waive its right to negotiate additional discounts and/or labor categories in the future.
31.	Pricing schedule doesn't track one for one with labor categories.	Refer back to question #25.
32.	There seems to be some slight discrepancies between labor categories under C, Pricing Schedule and Attachment C, Level of Effort Workbook Template (e.g., 0002E Project Manager missing from Attachment C, etc.). Which should take precedence?	Pricing Schedule (Section C).
33.	The instructions on Page 6 state that offerors must provide pricing for the labor categories listed in the table on Pages 6 & 7. Page 33, however, instructs offerors to complete the Level of Effort Workbook Template with the resources required to complete the Sample Task Order and to transfer that information to the Pricing Schedule. These instructions appear to be in conflict. In addition, a number of labor categories included in the Pricing Schedule are not included in Attachment C. These are: 0002E – Project Manager 0003G – Investment Analyst 0003H – Program Manager/Director Please provide clarification.	Pricing Schedule (Section C) will be incorporated in the IDIQ contract. The Level of Effort Workbook (Attachment C) contain labor categories that may be relevant to the successful performance of the sample task order requirements.
34.	Would Federal Student Aid consider substituting or adding labor categories (examples are Configuration Management Specialist (Sr), IT Consultant, IT Security Specialist (Sr), Subject Matter Expert, Systems Engineer) which more precisely match the services being sought, particularly for CLINs 0001 and 0002, IV&V and Program Quality Assurance and Enterprise Quality Management? <i>[CO's Note: This offeror cited the appropriateness of labor categories such as risk analyst and journeyman level resources under IV&V scope of services.]</i>	As stated in Section C, the offeror may "include additional labor categories; however...must provide labor category description as well as fixed labor hour pricing for the labor categories listed below for contract price and evaluation purposes." No substitution will be considered.
35.	Pricing Schedule: (t)his states we must include labor category descriptions with the Pricing Schedule. Is the Department expecting different descriptions than those already provided on pages 3-6? Will the labor category descriptions be evaluated?	If additional labor categories are added, then a description of that labor category comparable to the existing labor category descriptions shall also be provided.

Pricing Schedule/Labor Categories		
#	Question	Response
36.	Page 6, please clarify why the Investment Management Category on the Pricing Schedule requires no manager; Program/Project Management Category requires a Program Manager irector with 15 years minimum experience and a Project Manager with 8 years minimum experience; and the remaining categories (IV&V, POA/EQM and Acquisition Management) require only a Project Manager with 8 years minimum experience.	An offeror is not precluded from adding labor categories in accordance with Section I, Paragraph C and employ those categories in response to the sample task if deemed necessary.
37.	"Page 6, It does not appear that the labor category descriptions, particularly type of experience, certifications (where applicable) and length of relevant experience contained in Section I.B "Require Labor Categories and Descriptions" correlate with the expected support described in Attachment F Enterprise Development Support Services Model, 2.C Service Areas on page 66 of the RFP. As an example, under IV&V there is no requirement for any of the labor categories to have performed independent assessments of LCM processes and products or security risk assessments." Please clarify.	This question is not clear. An offeror is not precluded from adding labor categories in accordance with Section I, Item C and employ those categories in response to the sample task if deemed necessary.
38.	We understand that we are required to provide level of effort information in Volume III; however, are we to provide it in the Level of Effort Workbook Template? If the answer is 'yes,': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Government indicates a two-page limit for Volume III; however, the Level of Effort Workbook Template seems to require three pages. Could the Government increase the page limit? ▪ In the Level of Effort Workbook to the Sample Task Order...are we to show all twenty of the labor categories regardless of utilization within the Base and Option Periods? 	The template should be used to propose labor rates and total cost for the sample task order. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page limit will remain unchanged. ▪ If an offeror determines that a particular labor category is not being proposed, it does not have to be cited in Attachment C. For example, if an offeror determines that Doc Specialist, Jr. category is necessary to perform CLIN0001 for the sample task requirement (base & option periods); then the offeror may decide not to provide hours & rates for Doc Specialist, Sr. category.
39.	At least six of the activities under the IV&V category in Attachment B (page 49) would typically...require, as a minimum that the task/activity lead hold CISSP certification...(d)oes FSA intend to have any certification requirements associated with specific labor categories except for the PMP certification...?	Refer to Section IV, Paragraph D, Factor 2.2 (Factor 2: Corporate Capability).

II: FAR 52.212-4 – Contract Terms and Conditions**III: FAR 52.212-5 - Contract Terms and Conditions Required to Implement Statutes or Executive Orders**

#	Question	Response
40.	Page 11, (t)his provision is contrary to law and regulation. (Will) the Government revise it to provide the Contractor the opportunity to object to the release of any information that would cause competitive harm?	This clause will not be modified.
41.	Page 12, (a) reasonableness standard in such agreements, especially in NDAs between contractors, is customary. We therefore request that language be added to the NDA (Attachment D) applying a reasonable standard of care.	This clause will not be modified.
42.	Page 14, (t)he Conflict of Interest requirements are different from the descriptions and examples set forth in FAR 9.5, and it is difficult to understand how a contractor submitting a proposal...please provide clarification and/or descriptions of specific types of situations that the Department of Education would consider as "impaired objectivity" so that bidders can respond with appropriate disclosures and mitigation plans.	The government contends that sufficient definition of impaired objectivity is provided in the clause. No further descriptions can be provided.
43.	Page 14, (d)oes FSA consider that the "impaired objectivity" (ED 307-17 Conflicts of Interest (AUG 2007)-(3) Impaired objectivity) prevents SA-5/SA-6 prime contractors from having small business and large business team members in this service area who are also primes or subs supporting the EDSS Development (SA-2) or Applications Operations and Maintenance (SA-4) support areas?	This will be determined by the Task Order Contracting Officer during the planning phase of a particular program/application/system.
44.	Page 16, R1: Fair Opportunity Process, (t)he last bullet item states "The Government reserves the right to compete any TO as a Small Business set-aside" is this applicable since this procurement is Small Business set-aside?	Refer to Amendment #3 with the updated solicitation document.
45.	Page 16, R5: Additional Terms and Conditions - Key Personnel, we are instructed that no key personnel resumes are required for the contract; however, the provision of resumes is mentioned in instructions for Factor 3A:Technical Capability and in the asterisked note below the table in section J. Volume Structure. Are we to provide key personnel resumes for the Sample Task Order? Please clarify.	Key personnel will not be designated under the IDIQ contracts. However in order for the government to evaluate technical capability, copies of key personnel proposed in the offeror's response to the sample task requirements should be provided in Volume II.B.2.
46.	Page 20, #11: Task Order (TO) Process, (t)he first sentence states "The contractor's services shall be obtained on an <u>as-needed</u> basis....." Is this a general statement or will task orders be awarded on as needed basis meaning the services are not continuous?	Task orders will clearly define the scope and period of performance for that particular requirement.

II: FAR 52.212-4 – Contract Terms and Conditions

III: FAR 52.212-5 - Contract Terms and Conditions Required to Implement Statutes or Executive Orders

#	Question	Response
47.	<p>Page 21, #14: Task Order Constraints, (i)tems a) and b) statement are too general, please clarify.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>#14. Item a...scope of the sample task order appears to be in conflict with the constraint. We request that the Task Order Constraint be rephrased to preclude contractors providing IV&V support from also providing development support on the same program as opposed to precluding contractors providing IV&V support from also providing investment management, program and project management, acquisition management or program quality assurance.</p>	<p>The government reserves the right to determine possible constraints based on the particulars of a specific TO requirement.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Sample task order is for evaluation purposes only. If this had been an actual requirement, the government may have determined to preclude contractors or separate the scope of services.</p>
48.	<p>(Page 22, Item #17: ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY) where does the offeror specify the handling fee for these purchases?</p>	<p>The government assumes that the handling fee would be incorporated into the offeror's proposed price in subsequent task orders.</p>

II: FAR 52.212-4 – Contract Terms and Conditions

III: FAR 52.212-5 - Contract Terms and Conditions Required to Implement Statutes or Executive Orders

#	Question	Response
49.	<p>Page 25, paragraph 25(f)...requires contractors to identify in their proposals, the names and citizenship of all non-U.S. citizens proposed to work under the contract. Is it correct to assume that this requirement will be applied at the Task Order level?</p>	<p>This will apply to both.</p>

IV: FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation

#	Question	Response
50.	<p>Can we send in our quotation either by Email or Fax?</p>	<p>Refer to Section IV, Paragraphs F and H.</p>
51.	<p>In Section IV. Addendum to FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instructions to Offerors and Evaluation – Commercial Items (SEPT 2006)...(d)oes the statement 100% Small Business set-aside also apply to sub-contractors? Will sub-contractors also have to qualify as small businesses under NAICS 541519 or can large businesses participate as sub-contractors?</p>	<p>Set-aside does not apply to sub-contractors. There is no prohibition on using Other than Small Businesses as sub-contractors, so long as the limitations of FAR 52.219-14 are adhered to.</p>
52.	<p>On page 31, Evaluation Factors-1) Factor 1: Past Performance/Past Experience..(i)s the Offeror required to submit <u>three</u> past performance citations per functional area, or will the government accept <u>up to three</u> for each of the five scope of service areas?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Is it your intent to <i>require</i> 3 references in each of the five areas with 15 references total <i>required</i>?</p>	<p>The government requires 3 client references for each of the 5 scope of services with maximum 15.</p> <p>However, there is no restriction to an offeror utilizing a single reference to demonstrate successful performance for more than one scope of services.</p>

IV: FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation

#	Question	Response
53.	Page 31, paragraph E (Evaluation Factors)...(m)ay the same client reference be used to demonstrate experience in more than one scope area?	Yes.
54.	Page 31 IV E 2) "Open Ratings" report for past performance assessment on behalf of the Prime. When referencing a subcontractors' performance, DNB forwards the survey but only references the Prime. This is very confusing to the recipient of the survey as they know only the subcontractor and may never have heard of the Prime and therefore decline to respond. Please consider waiving this requirement.	Prior to the initiation of D&B process, it is the responsibility of the prime/sub contractors to notify prospective client references that their assessment should be of the applicable entity. No waiver will be granted.
55.	Page 31 of 77 Section IV E 2) requires 15 references within the past 3 years. Many small businesses may not be able to provide such a large number of references. Will the Government waive the requirement as the proposal already calls for 3 references per service area?	15 is the maximum number that the government will accept.
56.	On Page 32 of 77, the RFP states: "1. Offeror shall describe its management plan in sufficient detail. This plan should include, at a minimum the following:", followed by seven bulleted items. Does the term "Offeror" in the above statement refer to the collective capabilities, accreditations and certifications of the "prime contractor and its subcontractors"?	Yes, if applicable.
57.	(Page 31) Section E Factor 11, Item 2, (i)f subcontractors are being used as part of the past performance submission, are Open Ratings reports required for the sub(s)? Does the Open Ratings report for subs count towards the page limit?	Only if the offeror is using the sub-contractor's past performance to demonstrate capability to perform all scope of services. Refer to Amendment #3 in which the D&B Evaluation Report is excluded from the page limit for Volume I.
58.	Page 32 (i)n addressing the Sample Task Instructions and developing our response it was noted that Attachment B "Some Functions Within the Scope of Services" breakdown of services...does not directly correlate with the page 66 Attachment F Sample Task Section 2.C Service Areas...(t)he same types of differences were noted in the other service areas as well...(f)or purposes of responding to the sample task, please indicate which specific services should be addressed in responding to Factor 3A Technical Capability as well as for Factor 3B level of effort estimating/resource allocation.	Refer to Attachment F, Paragraph 4, Performance Work Statement, 4.A. Objectives.
59.	What is the impact on your evaluation of our Past Performance if we use the same reference for multiple Service Areas (e.g., the same reference for both IV&V and Project Management)?	There is no restriction to an offeror utilizing a single reference to demonstrate successful performance for more than one scope of services.

IV: FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation

#	Question	Response
60.	Factor 2 – Corporate capability (Staffing Plan): CSPM usually stands for Certified Security Project Manager or Certified Software Project Manager, What is the proper certification referenced?	Refer to Amendment #3 in which the CSPM is defined as Certified Software Project Manager.
61.	<p>Factor 2 – Corporate capability: “The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s current quality business processes/certifications to be used in performing the functions outlined in the scope of services.”</p> <p>Is industry to describe our approach and capabilities for each service area – if so which decomposition reference do we follow?</p> <p>Or, do we outline our high-level qualifications in the 6 service areas, only providing detail performance capabilities for Service areas 5 and 6 (as outlined in Amendment #1) – if so, which decomposition reference do we follow?</p>	This solicitation is only for service areas 5 & 6, which includes all 5 scope of services. Corporate capability and other evaluation factors should address this fact.
62.	<p>Factor 2 – “Description of its business continuity plan”, (w)ill the government consider clarifying the desired content of the business continuity plan?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>(W)hat information is required to be included in business continuity plan? For example does this refer to Disaster Preparedness or Financial contingency or something else?</p>	It is the offeror’s responsibility to describe their business continuity plan and the elements incorporated therein.
63.	Page 32 Factor 2 requires proof of organizational-level accreditation. We are assuming formal SEI CMM Level 3 certification is accepted as "other similar industry-recognized accreditation". Please confirm.	Confirmed.
64.	Page 32, (i)s factor 3A Technical Capability “program management approach” to be based on the bidder’s response to the page 72 Attachment F Section 4 Performance Work Statement? If so, The Performance Work Statement does not cover all of the five service areas for which deliverables are identified on pages 72-73.	Incorrect...the sample task order includes all 5 scope of services under Service Areas 5 & 6.
65.	Paragraph E (3) Factor 3A: Technical Capability, Page 32, (i)s the sample task intended to be awarded as an actual task?	No. It is only for evaluation purposes.
66.	Instructions 3) Factor 3A: Technical Capability It is stated that “The Government will evaluate the offeror’s overall program management approach to assess its understanding of the scope and support required.” Please clarify that the program management approach sought is for the sample task and not for the overall contract program management approach to include all five (5) areas.	As stated in that section, “(t)he Government will evaluate the Offeror’s technical capability and approach in response to the requirements outlined in the sample task order.”

IV: FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation

#	Question	Response
67.	What is the level of importance (e.g., mandatory, critical, important, nice-to-have) for the management plan requirement to provide proof of organizational-level accreditation or certification such as ISO 9000 maintained by the International Organization for Standardization (IS), Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI), or other similar industry-recognized accreditation or certification?	Under Factor 2, Corporate Capability: it is required that the Staffing Plan include, at minimum, the Percentage of staff that have third-party certification and Statement of Assurance that said percentage will be maintained throughout the contract term.
68.	Page 32, IV Instructions Item 2 Staffing Plan. ...please clarify whether the population being addressed as far as the percentage of employees holding a specific certification is the proposed prime contractor's total number of employees, staff assigned to FSA EDSS projects, number of employees assigned to the bidder's business unit supporting FSA, or the entire company and designated subcontractors.	This applies to the prime contractor and subcontractors, if proposed.
69.	Page 33, Open Rating...(a)s teaming partners and their past performances are still being evaluated, may we cite projects in the proposal submission that were not identified in time to meet the Open Ratings timeline?	Client reference form is where this type of information may be cited.
70.	(Page 33, Factor 3B)...states that the "offeror shall complete the Level of Effort Workbook Template provided by the Government (Attachment C) and transfer this information into the Price Schedule under Section C of the Solicitation."...please clarify where in the proposal the Level of Effort Workbook Template should be submitted. If this assumption is not correct, please clarify the instructions.	Offeror should submit their Level of Effort Workbook Template (Attachment C) in Volume III with a page limit of 2. However, completed the Pricing Schedule (Section C), signed SF1449, and the Representations and Certifications should be submitted in Volume IV.A.
71.	(Section IV.E.3) state "resources for key personnel, if applicable". The Volume Structure table at IV.J excludes resumes of key personnel from the page limitations. The RFP at II.R.5 states "There is no need to identify Key Personnel for the contract." Does the government wish to see resumes as part of the proposal submission?	Yes, if key personnel are identified in the Volume II.B.2.
72.	F. Submission of Proposals, Paragraph 1, Page 33, (t)he Government has indicated that a cover letter should accompany the proposal submission. Are we to provide one cover letter for the entire submission, and should the letter be unbound from the volumes? Or, can we provide a bound cover page in each volume, outside of page constraints?	Single cover letter unbound from the volumes.

IV: FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation

#	Question	Response
73.	On page 34, IV. Addendum to FAR 52.212-1(b), FSA stated that offeror shall include its two most recently audited annual financial statements. Being a small business, audited statements are extremely expensive and very time consuming. The SBA requires Fully Compiled and Reviewed Financial Statements that are certified by an outside accountant for our annual SBA certification. This includes the review of our indirect rate structure. Would this be sufficient for this requirement?	Yes, the government will accept a copy of the most recent SBA certification document.
74.	Page 34 of 77 IV b) requires audited financial statements. Is such information limited to the Prime or must this info also be provided for each Subcontractor(s)?	Prime contractor only.
	Section H(b)...(i)f an offeror's fiscal year just ended on 12/31/2007 and the 2007 financials are currently being audited, may the offeror provide Reviewed Financial Statements for 2005 and 2006, signed by an outside auditing firm, and Interim Financial Statements consisting of a detailed Balance Sheet and a detailed Income Statement for 2007?	Yes, as long as the final 2007 statement is submitted when available.
75.	H. Proposal Instruction and Format, Paragraph 5, Page 34, (m)ay we use 10-point font on tables and graphics? The government requires Hard copies must be single-spaced on 8½ x 11-inch pages of 12-point font. Will the government consider 10pt font or less for table, exhibits, and graphics?	Yes for tables, exhibits and graphs, so long as the text is legible.
76.	Section J...(d)oes the Open Ratings report count towards the page limit?	Yes, the copy of the offeror's Past Performance Evaluation Report from D&B does count towards the page limit along with the completed Attachment A: Client Reference Form. However, the copy of the Order Confirmation Email does not.
77.	Pages 34-35, (u)nder 1V 3 Volume Structure in Section 1B please clarify "(for those identified in Vol. 1, Sec. B)". What do "those" mean? Please refer to the note at bottom of the page, how are the audited financials to be packaged, if not in Business Proposal?	Correction...that phrase should have read "(for those identified in Vol. 1, Sec. A). That is, from those client references identified by the offeror in Attachment A. The note at the bottom of the page is to indicate that the copies of the audited financial statements will not be included in the overall page count of that volume. But the financial-related and contract-related documents should be included in Volume IV.

IV: FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instruction to Offerors and Evaluation		
#	Question	Response
78.	<p>In Section IV. Addendum to FAR 52.212-1 and 52.212-2 – Instructions to Offerors and Evaluation – Commercial Items (SEPT 2006) , sub-section E. Evaluation Factors, section 2. Factor 2: Corporate Capability...(Item 1, bullet 7).....(w)ould the Department of Education competition committee consider restructuring this requirement?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Does the Government want examples of offeror's (including subcontractors) commitment to industry-recognized processes or must a prime and/or subcontractors possess either ISO 9000, CMM, or CMM-I accreditation or certification?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The government requires "proof of organizational accreditation or certification such as ISO 9000 maintained by the International Organization for Standardization (IS), Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI), or other similar industry-recognized accreditation or certification." The Government also understands that an "organizational certification" may apply to a team or unit within a company and not necessarily an entire company.</p>
79.	<p>Within the Instruction to Offerors, the Government asks directs offerors to "utilize Duns & Bradstreet's Open Rating (http://www.openratings.com/) to solicit past performance references from these clients." Given the context, it appears that the Government only wants prime and subcontractors to only submit citations to Dun and Bradstreet that have been included within the 15 citations of Volume I, Past Performance. Is that the Government's intent? Or does the Government want offerors to include the corporate Volume I citations with other past performance citations to provide a balanced look at capabilities?</p>	<p>Yes, client satisfaction surveys should be generated through D&B for those clients cited in Attachment A. Those references, whether from the prime or subcontractor should demonstrate past performance capability in all 5 scope of services.</p> <p>An offeror may submit other past performance as long as the maximum limit (15) or the page limit (30) for Voume I are not exceed.</p>
80.	<p>Page 33, Level of Effort/Resource Allocation: This states the level of effort and resource allocation for the sample task order will be evaluated. As the Pricing Schedule (Section C) is to be placed in the Business Proposal, is Pricing Schedule C going to be considered for evaluation purposes?</p> <p>If so, how will it be evaluated in comparison to the Offeror's Total Level of Effort for the sample task order?</p>	<p>Yes, the Pricing Schedule will be evaluated as part of the price analysis for the IDIQ contract. The Total Level of Effort for the sample task order will be evaluated by both the Technical and Price Evaluation Teams to verify the offeror's understanding of the task order requirements.</p>
81.	<p>H. Proposal Instruction and Format, Paragraph 7, Page 34, (m)ay we provide a (proposal submission) compliance matrix (that is, a master outline in which the volume/section/page number for each required documentation is indicated) outside of page constraint?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
V/VI: ADDENDUM TO FAR 52.212-3 – Offeror Representation and Certifications		
#	Question	Response
82.	<p>Will the prime Contractors and subcontractors both need to be registered on ORCA and CCR?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

V/VI: ADDENDUM TO FAR 52.212-3 – Offeror Representation and Certifications		
#	Question	Response
83.	<p>Would FSA like a copy of the Representation and Certifications by each subcontractor as well as Prime?</p> <p>----- --</p> <p>Is completion of the annual representations and certifications electronically at ORCA sufficient for this requirement?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>----- --</p> <p>Yes.</p>
Attachment A: Client Reference Form		
#	Question	Response
84.	<p>Attachment A-D&B Past Performance Client Reference requests "Descriptions of How This Past Performance Reference Relates To Each CLIN for...(s)ince there are five diverse categories (CLINs) and a wide range of activities under each category making it extremely doubtful a single reference is going to cover all activities within a CLIN much less all activities within all CLINs. Also, there is a two page limitation per reference questionnaire making it impossible to address all CLINS and all activities within a CLIN for a single reference.</p> <p>Please clarify.</p>	<p>Past performance information should reflect offeror's ability to successfully accomplish the requirements under each service area's scope of services.</p> <p>The 30-page limitation is applicable to all of Volume 1.</p>
85.	<p>What are the appropriate types you want us to select for entry in the "Type of Contract" field on the Client Reference Form?</p>	<p>There is no restriction of the contract type for past performance references.</p>
86.	<p>Are you requiring only our direct experience in Attachment A (Past Performance), or can our partnering company's experience be reflected here?</p>	<p>Either may be used.</p>
87.	<p>Are we required to submit 3 past performance references per functional area or not to exceed 15 maximum past performances.</p>	<p>There are five functional areas and there are to be three past performance references for each functional area; however, one past performance reference may provide information for multiple functional areas.</p>
88.	<p>Would Federal Student Aid consider using the Past Performance process developed for the EDSS SA-2 solicitation?</p>	<p>No.</p>
Attachment B: Scope of Services		
#	Question	Response
89.	<p>"The Offeror must be capable of performing ALL tasks/functions listed under the five (5) Scope of Services (Attachment B)". Does this mean that the bidder must bid on all five functional areas or that they can just bid on 1 or 2 functional areas but must be capable of performing the all duties under the functional areas they are bidding on?</p>	<p>In order to be awarded IDIQ, the offeror must sufficiently demonstrate ability to perform the entire scope of services listed in Attachment B. This may be accomplished within the prime contractor's organization or through sub-contractor teaming.</p>
90.	<p>Why is PRR analysis included under Quality Assurance rather than IV&V? The PRR analysis and recommendation is a key component of the IV&V lifecycle. In Attachment B, please clarify that the Indented Function Titles are sub-bullets to the Non-Indented Functions.</p>	<p>PRR is included under QA because it includes more than PRR analysis and recommendation for go/no go from the IV&V contractor. QA support will include updates to the PRR Process Guide and management assistance to the PRR Program. Your assumption regarding the indented material is correct.</p>

Attachment C: Level of Effort		
#	Question	Response
91.	The pricing in the schedule is for sample task order deliverables only; there are no areas where the actual project work is being performed (project management activities such as status reporting or EVM monitoring to name two). Where does the level of effort for the tasks (not the plans to perform the tasks) belong?	There is no level of effort required in the Pricing Schedule. It should be a master labor hour list from which the offeror will incorporate the applicable CLINs and labor categories into the Level of Effort Workbook Template under the Sample Task Order. The Pricing Schedule will be incorporated into the IDIQ contract with fixed price hour rates included as part of the successful offeror's offer.
92.	There is a requirement that the offerors must indicate whether the labor category specified will be provided by the prime or by a subcontractor. It can be anticipated that the prime and subs could provide individuals in the same labor category. Can the prime and subcontractors have different Hourly Rates or do you require a blended rate?	Single fixed labor rate per category is required.
93.	In computing the level of effort for the sample task order, we anticipate that not all of the labor categories under each of the CLINS will be utilized (i.e., some labor categories will show 0 hours). In cases where the labor category is not utilized, do hourly rates need to be provided?	No, but the offeror must provide this information in Section I, Paragraph C: Pricing Schedule.
94.	There appears to be a formula error in the Level of Effort Workbook Template (Attachment C) in Column F "Discounted Rate." It would appear that the formula that calculates the "Discounted Rate" should refer back to and discount from the "Rate" in Column D and not the "Hours" in Column C. The same formula anomaly repeats itself for each of the two options.	As stated in this template, it is the offeror's responsibility to ensure that the formulas and rates are accurate; however, the workbook was updated and embedded in response to question #25.

Attachment C: Level of Effort		
#	Question	Response
95.	Is the Attachment C level of effort requested suppose to include only the effort for producing the deliverables identified in the Deliverable Matrix?	Correct.
96.	The instructions indicate that the information should be transferred from Attachment C to Pricing Schedule C. Please confirm that in transferring information from Attachment C to Schedule C, only the Discounted Hourly Rates will be transferred.	Yes.

Attachment F: Acquisition Background & Sample task order Requirements		
#	Question	Response
97.	(I)s the sample task a real task that will be competed or awarded?	This sample task will not be awarded under this solicitation.
98.	Can the government provide an indication of the estimated FTEs or Labor Hours required?	No.
99.	(For the) sample task...(w)ho is the overall system integrator for this project and are they in place?	Not applicable, this is a sample task for evaluation purposes only.
100.	Sample Task 3 D. Scope, please describe the Campus Card and Campus Card contact chip. ----- (P)lease provide access to the FSA Quality Assurance Handbook Version 3, dated February 15, 2006	Correction...it should read "Employee or Contract ID Card" (reference amended RFP)

Attachment F: Acquisition Background & Sample task order Requirements		
#	Question	Response
101.	<p>Page 3 – How long is “ sometime” after the post implementation phase? Please clarify the length of the post-implementation phase.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Where should the Contractor conduct the “ sole” source of business?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Will the Contractor be expected to operate an office and/or conduct business in Washington? At the Client’ s site?</p>	<p>OPM guidelines states that post-implementation is conducted 6-18 months after an asset is placed into production.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Question is unclear. There is no sole source of business cited in the solicitation.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>It is the government’s expectation that its contractors have a presence in the Metropolitan Washington, DC area.</p>
102.	<p>For purposes of estimating the IV&V level of effort for deliverables 4.B and 4.C, which specific SA-2 and SA-3 contractor deliverables will the SA- 5/6 contractor be requested to review for the Sample Task?</p>	<p>Refer to Work Products Guide, IV&V Handbook for list of applicable deliverables.</p>
103.	<p>Page 71, Attachment F includes the general areas of support to be addressed by the Sample Task to include Program and Project Management, Investment Management, Acquisition Management, and IV&V. The activity Program Quality Assurance and Enterprise Quality Management is not included in the list of areas to address in the sample task order.</p> <p>Please clarify whether Quality Assurance should be addressed in the Sample task Order or not. Should the QA/EQM service area be included in the Sample Task?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Are all of the deliverables listed in the table required for the base and two option periods?</p>	<p>No, offerors should not address Program Quality Assurance or Enterprise Quality Management in their response to the Sample Task Order.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>If applicable to the services being provided in the base & option periods.</p>
104.	<p>(P)age 71 one of the bulleted requirements for the APPS system is to integrate the system with ED’s Asset Management Database. However, on page 72, item 4.A, it states that this will be done as an enhancement during the option periods. Is the integration a core requirement or an enhancement during which period will this be done?</p>	<p>Application developer will be required to establish this integration during the option periods.</p>
105.	<p>Deliverable 1.B is an independent cost estimate. What standard template does DoED prefer contractors to use?</p>	<p>There is no standard. Government expects offerors to apply their own business practices and expertise in the development of this deliverable.</p>
106.	<p>Page 72, (t)he base period is 12 months and there are 2 option periods of 24 months each...the scope of work for the option periods is not clearly defined. Further clarification of the scope of work to be performed during the option periods is required prior to providing level of effort estimates. For example, will work on the system be continuous or will it occur only with the Department is ready to begin the next enhancement?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>(4.A: Objectives)...Is the contractor referenced in the above Option Period work description the development contractor or the Offeror?</p>	<p>The government anticipates that the work will be continuous during each period.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>In Attachment F, the second paragraph of 4.A: Objectives, the contractor referenced is the development contractor.</p>

Attachment F: Acquisition Background & Sample task order Requirements

#	Question	Response
107.	Page 72, 4.A...reads that the <i>contractor</i> will provide system enhancements such as the audit trail and integration services and that the <i>contractor</i> may be required to incorporate the FlexiPlace Work Agreement into the APPS application. However, this IDIQ is for support services, not development and integration services. Please clarify.	This refers to the application developer, not the contractor for SA-5/SA-6 Support.
108.	Page 72, 4.A (i) if the option years are exercised, will the contractor be required to create the annual updates to the OMB 300?	Yes.
109.	Should support for incorporation of the FlexiPlace Work Agreement in the APPS be included in the TLOE estimates for Volume III?	Yes. But the actual development of this functionality will be the responsibility of the application developer.
110.	<p>Page 72, Deliverables....</p> <p>What is meant by deliverable 2.B "Acquisition and Source Selection Plan? Does this mean that the contractor is to develop a plan for acquiring services or does it mean that the contractor will develop a plan, then support acquisition through development of requirements, SOW, and evaluation methodologies?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>What is meant by deliverables 5.A and 5.B? Does the Department require only methodologies or does it also require the QA contractor to implement these processes for the APPS project?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>What is meant by "Enterprise-wide" in deliverables 5A and 5.B? Does this mean across the enterprise for the APPS project only or does it mean across the FSA enterprise?</p>	<p>Refer to FAR for definition of acquisition and source selection plan. The government expects the contractor to provide support services to its acquisitions group.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>- Offeror should articulate its methodologies only in these deliverables.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>FSA.</p>
	Performance of IV&V Services is dependent on a variety of factors i...(w)ill the Government provide details concerning the APPS development schedule and approach or should the offeror assume a development approach and bid a TLOE accordingly?	It is a waterfall.
111.	Page 72, Section 4. Performance Work Statement needs to clarify specific functions ...(c)urrently the 4.A Objectives Section contains very general objectives (e.g. "(1) to assist in the development of the FSA internal project management activities and resulting deliverables"...which are subject to misinterpretation and would seem too general to respond to and which will certainly result in a wide range of bidder responses in trying to determine the scope and depth of services sought for the Sample Task. Also it appears that the Sample Task EDSS SA-2 contractor's objectives...are included in this same section...(t)hat is confusing....(Please clarify)	The information references other service areas are provided as a reminder to any offeror that the EDSS model is iterative and highly integrated process in which contractors will be required to work collaboratively and concurrently on a program or application.

Attachment F: Acquisition Background & Sample task order Requirements

#	Question	Response
112.	<p>Page 72 Sample Task Performance Work Statement...(t)here are several cases where the use of the undefined term "contractor" is subject to multiple interpretations. For example, in Attachment F Section 4.A Objectives "The contractor's support to the FSA Project Manager will be (1) to assist in the development of the FSA internal project management activities and resulting deliverables..."</p> <p>That seems clear the reference is to the SA-5/ SA-6 contractor until the next line indicates; "During the Option Periods, the contractor will provide enhancements to Property Pass System such as....". That would seem to be referring to the SA-2 contractor.</p> <p>Would it be possible to delineate throughout the sample task which SA contractor is being referred to instead of using just the term "contractor"?</p>	<p>In Attachment F, the first paragraph under 4.A., contractor refers to the SA-5/SA-6 contractor.</p> <p>In Attachment F, the second paragraph of 4.A: Objectives, the contractor referenced is the development contractor.</p>
113.	<p>Attachment F "Sample Task Order", paragraph 3.E, states that certain activities can be performed at the contractor's site. The Level of Effort Workbook Template (Attachment C) and the Pricing Schedule (RFP Section C), however, allow offerors to insert only 1 hourly rate for each labor category. How should offerors address the possibility that both Government site and Contractor site rates could be utilized in task order execution?</p>	<p>Refer to Amended RFP in which the Pricing Schedule requires onsite & offsite rates but in Attachment C, the hourly rate should be onsite.</p>
114.	<p>Page 72, Deliverable Matrix, Item 3.C. Is this requesting that the SA-5/SA-6 contractor review the SA-2 and SA-3 contractors' project mangement plan?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>For purpose of estimating the IV&V Level (Deliverables 4.B & 4.C), which specific SA-2 and SA-3 contractor deliverables will the SA-5/SA-6 contractor be requested to review for the Sample Task?</p>	<p>Refer to the first paragraph of 4.A. Objectives in Attacment F.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Refer to the Work Product Guide, IV&V Handbook.</p>
115.	<p>(Page 73, 5.A & 5.B), (w)hat guidelines/templates/ samples/related information for deliverable 5A(Methodology for Establishing Enterprise Wide Quality Assurance Program Metrics) exist? Please provide appropriate examples.</p> <p>What guidelines/templates/samples/related information for deliverable 5B(Methodology for Establishing Enterprise Wide Quality Management Processes) exist? Please provide appropriate examples.</p>	<p>No examples available since the government is seeking best business practices and expertise from potential offerors.</p>

RFP Amendments		
#	Question	Response
116.	Amendment 2, Item #14, (w)ith the additional requirement to include hard copies of the confirmation email from Dun & Bradstreet Open Ratings, plus the Past Performance Evaluation, will the Government increase the page limit for Volume I?	No, but these are excluded from the 30-page limitation.
117.	In reference to Amendment 02, will the hard copy of the D&B Open Ratings Confirmation email need to be submitted for each subcontractor as well as the Prime?	Yes, if a D&B survey request is submitted by/for a subcontractor.