

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
for
**Virtual Assistant Administrative Support and Services
(VAASS)**



ISSUE DATE: February 12, 2021

RESPONSES DUE: March 12, 2021

AWARD NOTIFICATION: March 31, 2021

City of Detroit

Michael E. Duggan, Mayor

Nicole A. Sherard-Freeman, Executive Director, Workforce Development

Mayor's Workforce Development Board

Cynthia J. Pasky, Co-Chairperson

David E. Meador, Co-Chairperson

Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation

Calvin C. Sharr, Chairman



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| BIDDING INFORMATION | |
|---|---|
| Questions Deadline: | <p>February 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM (EST)</p> <p>All questions should be received in writing via email to procurement@detempsol.org.</p> <p>To be properly received, <u>Email Subject line must include:</u> Questions for VAASS RFP</p> <p>DESC will provide a response to all companies/individuals that requested an RFP via email upon completion of responses.</p> |
| Response to Questions: | <p>February 26, 2021 at 5:00 PM (EST)</p> <p>Responses to questions will be available at this link: https://www.descmiworks.com/opportunities/rfps-and-rfqs/</p> |
| Proposal Due Date: | <p>March 12, 2021 at 5:00 PM (EST)</p> <p>Responses must be received electronically by email to: procurement@detempsol.org.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Files submitted via email must not exceed 25 MB. • Do not include embedded links to external information in proposal submissions. Links provided in response to this RFP will not be evaluated. • To be properly received, <u>Email Subject line must include:</u> • Response to VAASS RFP • Proposal email submissions that include DESC staff will not be accepted. • Confirmations of proposals received will be provided within 24 hours of receipt. <p>Please note: Allow ample time for submitting your proposal. DESC strongly encourages submitting at least one business day prior to due date above. DESC will not extend the submission deadline due to technical issues or outages. Proposal email submissions that include DESC staff will not be accepted. Confirmations of proposals received will be provided within 24 hours of receipt.</p> <p>DESC WILL NOT ACCEPT PAPER/HARD-COPY OR LATE PROPOSALS.</p> |
| Award Notice: | <p>The award notification is planned to be provided by March 31, 2021</p> |
| Oral Presentation / Site Visit: (optional) | <p>March 22, 2021, March 23, 2021 & March 24, 2021</p> <p>DESC will host Oral Presentations on an INVITE ONLY basis with those organizations selected as finalists during the review process, as required. All prospective responders should HOLD these dates. Finalists will be notified by email upon completion of written proposal evaluations regarding presentations (length, location, materials) etc.</p> |
| Contract Start Date: | <p>The contract period is scheduled to begin April 12, 2021</p> |



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I. INTRODUCTION

The Mayor’s Workforce Development Board (MWDB) is directly responsible and accountable to the State of Michigan, Labor and Economic Development, Workforce Development (LEO/WD) for the planning and oversight of talent development programs in the City of Detroit. Designated by the MWDB, Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC) serves as the fiscal and administrative entity that provides workforce services to job seekers and employers. DESC’s primary funding streams include Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) that funds Michigan’s PATH (Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope.) employment program, Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAE&T), Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES), and other public and private funding.

DESC oversees eight (8) Detroit Michigan Works! One-Stop Service Centers and contracts with qualified entities to provide workforce development services to job seekers and employers. Locally, the Michigan Works! One-Stop Service Centers are branded as Detroit at Work Career Centers. DESC is also a proud member of the American Job Center network.

In February 2017, the Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development and DESC launched Detroit at Work to build Detroit’s talent pool, create an opportunity for Detroiters, and give employers access to a demand-driven talent pipeline. Detroit at Work offers residents and employers a simplified brand to serve as the umbrella for all City of Detroit workforce development efforts. This includes the employment and training programs administered by DESC.

DESC is seeking proposals from qualified individuals and/or firms to provide as needed, Virtual Assistant Administrative Support and Services for the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC).

DESC plans to award **one (1) contract** for requested services as detailed in this RFP.

II. CONFIDENTIALITY

DESC will treat as confidential any non-public information that we receive from you in our discussions about the transaction contemplated by your RFP (other than information that we also receive from other, non-confidential sources, or that we independently develop ourselves).

III. ORGANIZATION QUALIFICATIONS

Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, private for-profit companies, units of local government including community colleges and universities, and faith-based and community organizations.

Small businesses, minority-owned firms, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are particularly encouraged to apply.

Organizations and individuals are ineligible if they are currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a federal department/agency, or if they are not in compliance with the State of Michigan



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Department of Revenue or Internal Revenue Service requirements.

Applicants must possess the following:

- All required licenses, bonding, equipment, and identified core personnel necessary to perform the work as required in the RFP;
- Documentation of the business structure (e.g. corporation., LLC, sole proprietor, partnership, etc.) you have registered to conduct business; and
- Personnel policies and procedures demonstrating compliance with Equal Employment Opportunities requirements, Americans with Disability Act, and Drug Free Workplace and Byrd Anti-Lobbying Act.

Applicants must assure the ability to comply with all applicable laws and regulations, as well as the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of 29 C.F.R. § 38.25, if awarded a contract and remain in compliance for the duration of the award.

Applicants must be financially and operationally stable and must possess sufficient scale in terms of staff and other resources to support DESC throughout the term of a contract, if awarded as a result of this RFP.

- a) If a contract is awarded as a result of this RFP, Applicants must be able to comply with insurance requirements, as necessary based on the nature of the particular contract. Required coverage may include: Commercial General Liability Policy (A \$3,000,000 per occurrence) with the following coverages:
 - Broad form property damage
 - Premises/Operations
 - Independent Contractors
 - (Blanket) Broad form Contractual
 - Personal Injury
- b) Workers' compensation insurance, as required by law,
- c) \$1,000,000 combined single limit automobile liability insurance, including hired and leased vehicles, owned and non-owned autos, and "no fault" coverage,
- d) Errors and omissions liability insurance with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$1,000,000 dollars aggregate,

To be considered for an award for this service, the proposing organization or individual must meet the following qualifications:

- **At least seven (7) years'** experience providing services to public agencies, non-profit organizations, federal grant recipients and organizations of similar scope and size.



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IV. SCOPE OF WORK

DESC is looking for a firm to provide, as needed **Virtual Assistant Administrative Support and Services** for our Headquarters. The preferred candidate will be expected to:

- Provide a wide-range of executive-level administrative support to executive leaders
- Manage projects effectively and efficiently
- Provide administrative support services, virtually
- Demonstrable ability to seamlessly provide a wide range of administrative support to executive leader

A. Work Required

- 1) Manage projects and perform administrative tasks such as responding to emails and phone calls, organizing calendars, scheduling appointments, arranging conference calls/meetings, preparing meeting materials, conducting research, preparing statistical reports, and handling information requests.
- 2) Train current administrative staff on administrative support skills
- 3) Contribute to relationship building on behalf of the executive leader and prepare correspondence for stakeholders (internal/external).
- 4) Coordination of matters on behalf of leadership, as well as assess situations and respond to / solve issues in a timely manner.

B. Knowledge / Skills / Abilities

- 1) Demonstrate excellent multitasking, time management and organizational skills.
- 2) Ability to work with minimal supervision.
- 3) High-level competency with current workplace software, including Microsoft Office Suite applications - Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, and SharePoint.

V. COOPERATIVE APPLICATIONS

If two or more organizations plan to share responsibility for carrying out the main work of the grant, then those organizations may partner as co-grantees with one organization being designated as the “lead”. However, each organization will be equally responsible for the performance and financial obligations. This relationship need not result in a new legal entity being formed, but some form of a contractual relationship must be documented and submitted that reflects the roles and responsibilities of the party.

If one organization will be responsible for the overall work of the grant, with other organizations performing separate and distinct functions to serve or aid that principal effort, then such other organizations must be procured by the prospective applicant as a subgrantee or subcontractor.



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Subcontractors and subgrantees cannot be identified in a bid proposal response or bid proposal budget unless they were competitively procured for the intended purpose prior to the submission of the bid/proposal. The prospective applicant must ensure that the identified parties were properly procured, or the proposal must be rejected.

All professional qualifications required of the primary provider must also be met by any subcontractors, and these qualifications must be described in the proposal.

DEFINITIONS

[Grantees] Grantees are defined as “a recipient of funds under a grant or grant agreement. Synonymous with ‘Recipient’.

[Sub-grantees] Sub-grantee is synonymous with sub-recipient which means a non-Federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a Federal program.

[Sub-contractors] A sub-contractor is a vendor that provides goods or services to the contractor.

(Please note: DESC’s procurement policy follows the guidelines set forth in the Workforce Development Agency, PI 19-30. Please see https://www.michigan.gov/documents/leo/PI-19-30_Procurement_669923_7.pdf for more information.

VI. AWARD, TERM AND RENEWAL INFORMATION

If a contract is awarded as a result of this RFP, it will be a **one (1)-year service-based Contract**. **The period of performance will be for a minimum of twelve (12) months and will not be earlier than April 12, 2021 or later than April 11, 2022.**

Award amounts will be determined solely at DESC’s discretion after review and evaluation of the proposals. If more than one contract is awarded pursuant to this RFP, the applicant acknowledges and understands that contract award amounts may differ between vendors and that the determination is made at DESC’s sole discretion.

Based on performance during the initial contract period and contingent upon availability of funds, contracts may be extended for service and eligible for two (2) one (1)-year renewal option(s). Any renewal option exercised under this contract is effective only after approval by the DESC Board of Directors and/or the President/CEO, as required.

In the event that additional funds become available, DESC reserves the right to use such funds to select additional providers from proposal applications received in response to this RFP. If no funds or insufficient funds are appropriated to DESC, or if funding is otherwise unavailable during the period of payment due under the contract, then DESC, upon written notice to the vendor, shall have the right to amend or terminate the contract without any penalty or expense to DESC.

VII. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Accuracy and Completeness of Information: All information pertaining to the prospective applicant’s approach in meeting the requirements of the RFP shall be organized and presented in the prospective applicant’s proposal. The instructions contained in this RFP must be strictly followed.



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Accuracy and completeness are essential. Omissions and ambiguous or equivocal statements will be viewed unfavorably and may be considered in the evaluation. Since all or a portion of the successful proposal may be incorporated into any ensuing contract, all applicants are further cautioned not to make any claims or statements that cannot be subsequently included in a legally binding agreement.

Ambiguous or inaccurate budget information is a basis for proposal disqualification.

VIII. RFP PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

A. Questions, Question Deadline and Responses to Questions

Should a vendor have any questions about this RFP or be in doubt as to the true meaning of any portion of this RFP or find any patent ambiguity, inconsistency, or omission herein, the prospective vendor must make a written request for an official interpretation or correction.

Prospective vendors are advised that no oral interpretation, information, or instructions provided by an officer or employee of DESC shall be binding upon DESC. DESC will only honor questions submitted in writing.

All questions regarding the RFP shall be received by email no later than **February 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM (EST)** to procurement@detempsol.org.

To be properly received, Email Subject line must include: **Questions for VAASS RFP**

Responses to questions will be available at this link by **February 26, 2021 at 5:00 PM (EST)**:
<https://www.descmiworks.com/opportunities/rfps-and-rfqs/>

DESC does not guarantee a response to questions received after the question deadline. NO TELEPHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

ALL INQUIRIES MUST BE VIA EMAIL at procurement@detempsol.org .

B. Preparation of Proposals

The RFP response must be composed in a single document. Acceptable document formats are: MS Word and PDF. Each page should be numbered in this format '*n of N*'. Proposal response should be composed as follows:

- Table of Contents
- Summary
- Qualifications
- Administrative Capacity
- Performance History
- Service Delivery Description

Page limits for the RFP response:

- Single applicant proposals are limited to fifteen (15)-pages; double-spaced using a 12-point font unless stated otherwise in the preparation directions.
- Two (2) or more Co-applicants are limited to twenty (20)-pages; double-spaced using a 12-



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point font unless stated otherwise in the preparation directions.

Page limits do not apply to financial documents, price proposal, subgrantee and/or subcontractor agreement documents or required attachments (resumes, organizational charts, etc.).

Financial Fit and Capacity section of the proposal response must be composed in a separate file. Acceptable file formats are MS Word, MS Excel and PDF. Each page must be numbered in this format '*n of N*'.

Price Proposal section of the proposal response must be composed in a separate document. Acceptable file formats are MS Word and PDF file. Each page must be numbered in this format '*n of N*'.

Subgrantee and/or subcontractor agreements section (if applicable) of the proposal response must be composed in a separate document. Acceptable file formats are MS Word and PDF. Each page should be numbered in this format '*n of N*'. For each subgrantee or subcontractor identified (as applicable), the proposal response should include:

- RFP/Q Title, Issue Date and Response Due Date,
- Bid list or copy of the advertisement,
- Selected Applicant's response and,
- The summary document listing all respondents and scores/rankings.

DESC Cover Sheet (Form A) should be included with the RFP response and is available for download, as described below. Form A must detail the full legal name and business address of the prospective vendor, including a street address if different from the mailing address, and must be signed and dated by the person or persons authorized to bind the prospective vendor.

Representations and Certifications response should be included with the RFP response and is available for download, as described below.

- Do not include embedded links to external information in proposal submissions. Links provided in response to this RFP will not be evaluated.

DESC reserves the right to reject proposals that do not meet these requirements and they may not be evaluated.

Applicants must provide written notice in the proposal of intent to take exception to any requirements of the RFP. Such exceptions may reflect negatively on the evaluation of the proposal.

C. Changes in Proposal Requirements

DESC may make changes to the requirements of this RFP as it deems necessary. Such changes will be in writing, issued by DESC and will be sent to each vendor who has formally identified themselves as a potential responder. If changes are made, DESC may, at its discretion, extend the time allowed for submission of proposals.



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D. Submittal Information

Prospective vendors shall submit their proposals in the following order and must contain the elements listed below, including all applicable attachments:

1. General RFP Application Information

- a) DESC Cover Sheet (Form A) – available for download from DESC’s website: <https://www.descmiworks.com/wp-content/uploads/DESC-FORM-A-Cover-Sheet-042420-General.pdf> . This document must be submitted as a separate attachment with RFP proposal response.
- b) Representations and Certifications - available for download from DESC’s website: <https://www.descmiworks.com/wp-content/uploads/DESC-Representations-and-Certifications-for-RFP-Offerrors-042420.pdf> . Provide as applicable below. This document must be submitted as a separate attachment with RFP proposal response.
 - i. If registered with www.SAM.gov, provide Representations and Certifications Report; otherwise;
 - ii. If not registered with SAM.gov, complete and provide DESC Representations and Certifications for RFP Offerors as provided in this RFP.

2. Table of Contents

3. Summary

Provide a one (1) to two (2)-page summary of your company’s background/history and number of years providing Virtual Assistant Administrative Support and Services, previous clients and experience working with non-profits of a similar size/nature to DESC.

4. Qualifications

The applicant shall provide the following information that describes qualifications to successfully carry out activities described in the RFP.

- a) Clearly describe and provide examples of the Scope of Work elements and cover additional elements that may be beneficial for DESC.
- b) Provide a separate portfolio with examples and descriptions of completed projects for organizations with similar size and needs as DESC.
- c) Documentation of the business structure (e.g., corporation., LLC, sole proprietor, partnership, etc.) you have registered to conduct business. Include 501 (c) 3 papers (if applicable)

5. Financial Fit/Capacity

Applicants shall provide one of the following to determine financial fit and capacity necessary to support DESC throughout the term of a contract, if awarded as a result of this RFP. An aggregate of three (3) years of financial documentation is requested.

- a) Balance Sheet and Income Statement for the most recent year completed and prior two (2) years; **or**



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- b) Tax Returns for the most recent year completed and prior two (2) years; **or**
- c) Audited financial statement for the most recent year completed and prior two (2) years; **or** if not available
- d) Provide a summary explanation if financial information cannot be provided. Please note that an evaluation of this criteria will not be possible without information requested (a-c above).

Embedded links to external information will not be evaluated.

6. **Administrative Capacity**

Applicants shall provide the following information to determine operational capacity necessary to support DESC throughout the term of a contract, if awarded as a result of this RFP.

- A. Provide Organizational Chart
- B. Describe current software systems and technology used to perform, manage, and monitor funding and programmatic data.

7. **Performance History**

The applicant shall provide the following information that demonstrates a proven track record:

- A. Describe your experience working with organizations the size of DESC.
- B. List at least three (3) customer references, including names, mailing addresses, email addresses, and contact numbers, that can attest to the qualifications presented in this bid.
- C. Provide information on any projects in which the bidder's contract was terminated for any reason.
- D. Identify any claims or lawsuits that have been brought against the individual or organization proposing service within the last five (5) years.

8. **Service Delivery Description**

The applicant shall provide the following information that describes a customer-focused service delivery model.

- A. Describe virtual assistant services your company provides.
- B. Describe how project(s) are managed to ensure the timely delivery of services.
- C. Describe how executive support needs will be formally assessed using a defined process.
- D. Describe your methodology for training administrative staff on administrative support skills.



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9. **Price Proposal**

Bidders are requested to make a firm cost proposal to DESC.

Price proposal should include the following:

- Hourly rate for services requested.

If rates differ according to skillset, provide hour rates as follows:

| Skillset or Title | Hourly Rate |
|-------------------|-------------|
|-------------------|-------------|

If a contract is entered into as a result of this RFP, DESC will not provide reimbursement for any activities outside of the agreed to terms and conditions.

DESC reserves the right to select proposals from the most responsible vendors with the most reasonable costs. DESC reserves the right to select multiple firms to perform all or separate parts of this function.

10. **Subgrantee and/or subcontractor Agreements (if applicable)**

Subgrantee and/or subcontractors that will receive funds as a result of activities completed for this RFP must be procured. For subgrantee or subcontractors identified in the RFP response, please provide the following documentation:

- A. RFP/Q Title, Issue Date and Response Due Date,
- B. Bid list or copy of the advertisement,
- C. Selected Applicant’s response and,
- D. The summary document listing all respondents and scores/rankings.

E. Submittal Instructions

1. Proposals must be received electronically on or prior to the exact date and time detailed herein.
2. Attachments should be of good copy, quality, and legible.
3. Do not include embedded links to external information in proposal submissions. Links to external information provided in response to this RFP will not be evaluated.
4. Responses must be received no later than **March 12, 2021 at 5:00 PM EST by Email to: Procurement@detempsol.org. Files submitted via email must not exceed 25 MB.**
5. To be properly received, Email Subject line must include:

Response to VAASS RFP

6. **Important Note:** Allow ample time for submitting your proposal. DESC strongly encourages submitting at least one business day prior to due date above. DESC will not extend the



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submission deadline due to technical issues or outages.

Due to the nature of this solicitation, proposal email submissions that include DESC staff will not be accepted. Confirmations of proposals received will be provided within 24 hours of receipt.

DESC WILL NOT ACCEPT PAPER / HARD-COPY OR LATE PROPOSALS.

F. Changes in Facts

Applicants shall advise DESC during the time the proposal is open for consideration of any changes in the principal officers, organization, the financial ability of, or any other facts presented in the proposal with respect to the applicant or the proposal immediately upon occurrence.

G. Evaluation Procedures, Oral Presentations, and Site Inspections

Following the receipt of the applicant’s proposal, a DESC designated evaluation committee will evaluate each response. All proposals which meet the required format of this RFP will be evaluated. Any proposal determined to be non-responsive to the specifications or other requirements of the RFP, including instructions governing submission and format, will be disqualified unless DESC determines, at its sole discretion, that noncompliance is not substantial or that an alternative proposal by the prospective vendor is acceptable.

DESC reserves the right to request additional information to amplify, clarify, or support proposals. DESC also reserves the right, at its own discretion, to request oral presentations regarding proposals received in response to the RFP. Failure to make an oral presentation after one is requested by DESC will be grounds for rejection of your proposal.

Prospective applicants will be notified by DESC of the date, time and location for any pre-award survey, site inspection, or oral presentation, if one is requested. A final determination will be made by DESC after any pre-award survey, site inspection, or oral presentations are completed.

The proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria listed below. Please note, only finalists will be invited for an oral presentation. DESC reserves the right to award or reject funding for a proposal.

| CATEGORY | | MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE |
|----------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| A. | Summary | 10 |
| B. | Qualifications | 20 |
| C. | Financial Fit/Capacity | 10 |
| D. | Administrative Capacity | 10 |
| E. | Performance History | 15 |
| F. | Service Delivery Description | 20 |
| G. | Price Proposal | 15 |



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| TOTAL MAXIMUM POINTS – WRITTEN PROPOSAL | 100 |
| Interview/Site Visit | 25 |
| TOTAL Maximum Points – Written Proposal and Interview | 125 |

H. Pre-Award Termination of RFP process

DESC in conjunction with the MWDB reserves the right to cancel this RFP in part or in its entirety, to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to waive any non-conformity, to re-advertise for proposals, or withhold the award for any reason DESC determines, and to take any other appropriate action regarding this RFP that is in the best interest of DESC.

DESC reserves the right to negotiate with all qualified entities. This RFP does not commit the MWDB or DESC to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services.

I. Contract Negotiations/Stipulations

The RFP is competitive. Each proposal should be submitted in the most favorable terms that the prospective vendor can submit from a technical and price standpoint. The offer is subject to negotiation, but costs cannot increase during contract negotiation unless required by DESC.

All contracts with DESC in excess of \$10,000 are subject to termination for cause, and for convenience by DESC. DESC will not enter into a contract with any person or entity that has been debarred or suspended from contracting with any Federal or State governmental unit. All prospective vendors must accept DESC's contract boilerplate language or have a negotiated revision to said language on file with the DESC. DESC's standard contract provisions can be provided upon request.

DESC has the right to terminate the negotiation process, at any time for default, or for convenience, at the sole discretion of DESC.

J. Contract Approval

Upon award of a contract, pursuant to this RFP, DESC and the applicant shall execute a contract that shall contain all contractual terms and conditions in a form provided by DESC. No contract shall become effective until the contract has been approved and executed by DESC. Prior to the completion of this approval process, the vendor shall have no authority to begin work under the contract. The Chief Financial Officer of DESC shall not authorize any payments to the vendor prior to such approvals; nor shall DESC incur any liability to reimburse the vendor regarding any expenditure for the purchase of materials or the payment of services.

K. DESC Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures



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DESC may conduct periodic monitoring and evaluation of all vendors to determine contractual compliance relative to funding requirements and guidelines, performance outcomes, quality of operation, and/or customer service. Based on the results of the evaluation or monitoring efforts, DESC may request performance improvement plans. In instances of significant performance or compliance deficiencies, DESC may place the contractor on a corrective action plan.

L. Modification of Services and Funding

DESC reserves the right to modify the services provided by vendors awarded a contract during the contract period. Any modification and resulting changes in pricing shall be made by amendment to the contract and the vendor and DESC.

DESC also reserves the right to decrease or increase contract amounts during the life of the contract, based on the utilization of funds, vendor performance, and the availability of funds, or as further described in the contract.

Any individual/organization applying under this RFP must be willing to adapt its proposal to specific funding guidelines or changes in DESC's, state, or federal regulations or policies.

Prospective vendors may be required to submit cost, technical, or other revisions of their proposal that may result from negotiations.

M. Terms and Conditions

The successful applicant will be expected to enter into a contract with DESC which will contain the Terms and Conditions outlined in a separate document that can be found on DESC's website at <https://www.descmiworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2018-06-22-DESC-General-Contract-Terms-and-Conditions.pdf>.