

Questions and Answers
Request for Proposals: The Strategic Planning Process for the Research
Competitiveness and Educational Enhancement Program (RC/EEP)
And a Statewide Initiative

NOTE: The questions and answers are presented sequentially, in the order received and answered by the Board of Regents and Louisiana Recovery Authority. All questions posed by potential applicants are included in this document.

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| 1. | Q: When will the successful vendor be authorized to begin work on the project?
A: The contract will be negotiated on December 20, and the successful vendor can begin work immediately thereafter. |
| 2. | Q: Will the Board of Regents consider alternate project timetables that postpone the draft report, public hearings, and final Phase I report by several weeks?
A: The extreme urgency of distributing funds to campuses in the severely impacted areas makes it necessary to maintain as much as possible the abbreviated timeframe for Phase I. At this time, we do not anticipate any changes to the timeline through the submission of the draft report on January 19. There may be some flexibility in the scheduling of the public hearing and completion of the final document. |
| 3. | Q: How many public hearings does the BoR anticipate? How many work days will be devoted to the public hearings phase of activity? In what location(s) will public hearing(s) be held?
A: The BoR anticipates holding one public hearing, probably in New Orleans. In terms of attendance at the hearings, two days onsite will be required. The amount of preparation for the public hearing will be determined by the Contractor in consultation with the staffs of the LRA and BoR. |
| 4. | Q: To which federal agencies does Louisiana submit EPSCoR proposals? Could the Contractor have access to all proposals and decision memoranda to those agencies for the past seven (7) years? Could a list of funded proposals also be provided? What is the composition of the LA EPSCoR selection panel?
A: Louisiana is eligible to submit EPSCoR proposals to NSF, NASA, EPA, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense. Louisiana researchers also participate in the NIH IDeA program. All EPSCoR proposals, as well as lists of funded projects, can be made available to the Contractor. LA EPSCoR does not have a selection panel in-state; it instead uses external reviewers to develop funding recommendations. The EPSCoR Committee guides implementation of the program and is comprised of representatives from research institutions across the State, business and industry, and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development. |
| 5. | Q: What is envisioned as “comprehensive assessment”? Has the BoR already |

identified the private sector organizations in each parish that are to be included in the assessment?

A: The “comprehensive assessment” will identify Louisiana’s best opportunities for advancing its scientific and technological economy by assessing the strengths and links, existing and prospective, among private industry, ongoing and prospective university research, educational opportunities, and workforce training initiatives. The BoR, LRA, and private-sector partners are in the process of identifying private-sector representatives in the parishes to be included.

6. Q: Do any of the Louisiana universities currently have research foundations? Does Louisiana currently have a State Science & Technology Authority or similar entity? If so, what is its composition and purpose? Could a copy of its charter be provided to the Contractor? Does it deal with both science and educational issues? What is the source and level of its budget? If it provides funding to universities based on oil royalties, will the recent Energy Policy Act of 2005 affect those revenues and how? When will the new revenue distribution to Louisiana take effect? Are those new revenues restricted or legislatively designated at this point? What is the estimated level of those new revenues?

A: Some Louisiana universities have research foundations, and more information about these can be made available to the Contractor. The State does not, however, have a Science & Technology Authority or similar entity. The statewide initiative for which strategic planning is requested in this RFP is related to this need. At this point, additional oil revenues to be derived from the Energy Policy Act of 2005 are legislatively designated and have not been specifically channeled to higher education research and/or technology development.

7. Q: What types of information will be contained in the white papers? What other documentation does the BoR expect to provide to the consultant? Does the BoR expect the consultant to engage in original data collection from the constituents in addition to the review of the material provided?

A: The white papers will provide background on the submitting institutions, their priorities for future investments, plans for commercialization and research directions, related educational advancements, and assessment of the CDBG action plan in relation to institutional activities. In addition, campus representatives and selected individuals from the governmental and private sectors will be invited to participate in interviews with the Contractor during January 8-10. Upon selection, the Contractor will interact with BoR and LRA staffs to help identify additional needed information to be gathered. For Phase I, given the short timeframe, the BoR and LRA will not expect the Contractor to undertake significant original data collection, though this will be expected for Phase II.

8. Q: How are the “regions” envisioned by BoR and LRA for which strategic

plans should be developed? How does the term “region” relate to the GO Zone and non-GO-Zone parishes?

A: For Phase I, the “region” for consideration includes only the eight most severely impacted parishes as designated by HUD: Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Jefferson, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Vermilion. The GO Zone designation is used to delineate those parishes for which CDBG will fund strategic planning. Though it is inclusive of the eight parishes included in Phase I, the GO Zone designation is not otherwise related to the development of the Phase I plan.

9. Q: Do the BoR and LRA expect budget categories that are more detailed than the typical categories of professional fees, project-related travel, communications expense, and printing to be described in the proposed budget? Do the BoR and LRA have a preference for a fixed payment versus a time and materials type of contract? Are the separate budget presentations for the 37 GO-Zone parishes and the 27 non-GO-Zone parishes to be presented as the sums for the two groups of parishes, or individually for each of the 64 parishes?

A: While the budget can contain only typical categories, the justification should indicate what expenses accrue to each category and why these expenses are at the level(s) indicated. The BoR prefers a fixed payment contract, but at the least will establish a ceiling for payment if a time and materials contract is required. The budget presentations should indicate the sums for the two groups of parishes, not individually by parish.

10. Q: Do you have a sense of the budget and/or estimated level of effort for this RFP and also the subdivision of that effort between the two phases of the RFP?

A: We anticipate a high level of effort from the Contractor. The applicant should consider what effort will be required to efficiently provide the BoR and LRA with the deliverables as described. These insights should guide the design of a proposed budget. Given the extremely short timeframe, we anticipate limited primary data collection for Phase I. Nevertheless, intensive analysis is expected during the two trips to Louisiana to interview stakeholders and attend the public hearing. More effort, particularly in data gathering, research, interaction with stakeholders, etc., will be required for the more lengthy Phase II plan.

11. Q: The first phase refers to two activities: 1) develop a strategic plan to spend the Block Grants money, and 2) define areas that may serve as technology niches. Ideally, one would like to finish extensive empirical analysis across the entire state before making recommendations but it does not seem like that option would be open here. Would it be acceptable for the first phase of the project for the consultant to focus only on the 37 GO-Zone parishes and do the remainder later?

A: Phase I requires the Contractor to focus only on the eight most severely

impacted parishes designated by HUD as eligible to receive CDBG funds: Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Jefferson, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Vermilion. This analysis, we expect, will include some preliminary definition of niches of expertise that might be applicable statewide. The statewide plan, to be completed during Phase II, will include all parishes, and will further investigate, refine, and even redefine these identified research niches according to the data collected during the additional months of work.

12. Q: Is there any way to extend the Phase I deadline a bit or for LRA/BoR to facilitate connections with institutions during holiday time? If not, one possibility would be to make the first phase of the study more conceptual, and less empirical, to be supplemented with more empirical analysis during the second phase. Do you agree?
- A: The extreme urgency of distributing funds to campuses in the severely impacted areas makes it necessary to maintain as much as possible the abbreviated timeframe for Phase I. BoR and LRA staffs have already scheduled interviews for the Contractor with key stakeholders for January 8-10 and will assist in other ways to gather information during the holiday season. The statewide plan will supplement the conclusions and recommendations reached in the earlier phase.
13. Q: Does the entire portion of the project related to GO Zone parishes need to be finished during Phase I, or can Phase II also involve work on both GO Zone and other parishes?
- A: As indicated above, Phase I includes only the eight most severely impacted parishes. The interconnected second phase will include all parishes in Louisiana, including assessment of Phase I parishes within the context of statewide planning.
14. Q: The proposal timeline suggests that the award would be made on December 19 while the proposals are due on December 18. This does not seem to be consistent with details in Section X about Proposal Evaluation. Is this the correct timeline?
- A: The timeline is correct. While the selection committee may request written clarification, this may be done via e-mail, and the selection committee has the discretion to deviate from the timeline if necessary. The abbreviated nature of the timeline makes it essential that we select a Contractor as soon as possible.
15. Q: I am assuming that organizing the stakeholder meeting/process at the end of January is the responsibility of the BoR/LRA, and not the proposer. Is this correct?
- A: Yes.
16. Q: One of the supporting documents refers to a “nationally renowned firm”

doing the strategic plan. Can you please explain what that means? Are there any restrictions on who can or should apply?

A: There are no restrictions on who can or should apply. The reference to a “nationally renowned firm” is simply to indicate that the LRA and BoR are seeking a group of consultants or firm with experience in undertaking activities similar to those described in the RFP. This is detailed in the RFP in Section X.B.3 (Evaluation Criteria: Qualifications of the Proposer).

17. Q: Given the holidays and potential scheduling issues the selected firm may face in setting meetings with key leadership, how firm is the timeline presented within the RFP for Deliverables 1 and 2?

A: The extreme urgency of distributing funds to campuses in the severely impacted areas makes it necessary to maintain as much as possible the abbreviated timeframe for Phase I. The Board of Regents and Louisiana Recovery Authority staffs have already scheduled interviews for the Contractor with key stakeholders for January 8-10 and will assist in other ways to gather information during the holiday season.

18. Q: With regard to the question on page 9, item IX, section B, for a firm with multiple business units and multiple diverse service lines, would it be adequate to identify clients of the service line proposing this work?

A: Yes.

19. Q: How detailed a budget is expected for the 37 GO Zone parishes and the 27 other parishes? Is it expected that each parish will have to be met with individually? If so, to what extent?

A: The budget should be sufficiently detailed to allow the BoR, LRA, and other reviewers to assess how the expenses are related to the work proposed. The justification should indicate what expenses accrue to each budget category and why these expenses are at the level(s) indicated. The budget presentations should indicate the sums for the two groups of parishes, not individually by parish. We do not expect the Contractor to budget for each parish or plan to meet with representatives from all 64 parishes individually.

20. Q: What would be the expected level of involvement of research leadership at the various universities?

A: We anticipate that the research leadership at most universities will be significantly involved in all stages of this planning process.

21. Q: Could you share with us the names of the organizations/groups that have submitted letters of intent to develop proposals?

A: Letters of intent have been submitted from the following individuals/organizations: Arthur V. Jack, Collegiate Project Services, SSA Consultants, and Kyle Salyers. Letters of intent are non-binding and not required to submit a full proposal.

22. Q: Do you have a recommended formula for calculating the cost of the project separately for the 37 GO Zone and 27 non-GO-Zone parishes? For example, based on population, extent of damage, money allocated to the parish, etc.?
- A: We have no recommended formula. The statewide initiative is linked but not dependent on hurricane damage or hurricane-related funding allocations, so such an approach is not necessarily useful. Because the initiative is linked to higher education research and training, some consideration in devising the budgets might reasonably be given to the types and number of higher education institutions in each parish.
23. Q: To whom would the Contractor report during the course of the project in order to provide project updates as well as deliverables? Would it be one individual such as yourself, or a larger committee?
- A: The Contractor would correspond primarily with Dr. Kerry Davidson, Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs, Louisiana Board of Regents. The Contractor would also work collaboratively with the staff of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, as well as selected individuals from the private sector. Deliverables would be provided to Dr. Davidson.
24. Q: If you can tell us, what is the history of the two phases of the project? Were they originally conceived as a joint project or were they linked more recently?
- A: The principal catalyst for Phase I is that Congress, Post-Katrina, appropriated \$10.4 billion in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies through HUD to address a variety of recovery and rebuilding issues. A modest amount of the overall funds, \$28.5 million, was set aside to address matters relating to recovery and advancement of scientific research and education; these dollars, including costs of administration, can only be spent in severely impacted parishes as designated by HUD. The regional CDBG effort, through the acquisition of additional State and private resources, will become a pilot for Phase II: development of a much-needed statewide plan which helps chart directions for university research leading to the commercialization of technology and/or other products.
25. Q: Can you tell us the reason for the very short timetable for the execution of Phase I, particularly when compared to that for Phase II?
- A: Due to the desperate need for funds at the storm-affected campuses, it is essential to speedily formulate goals for a program, develop a follow-up RFP, manage a competitive review process, make funding decisions, and distribute CDBG monies as soon as possible. We hope to accomplish all of this by June 2007. Since the statewide initiative is not similarly urgent, a longer process should yield a more thoughtful and comprehensive strategic plan.
26. Q: Has the parish level and institutional data for Phase I already been collected? And if so, will it be made available to the Contractor?
- A: Campuses statewide are submitting white papers, due November 22, based on the same documents you have been provided. These white papers will be

available to the Contractor upon selection. The BoR and LRA staffs will interact with the Contractor to provide other relevant data.

27. Q: If possible can you provide any information as to the funds available for executing this project? Are specific funds set aside for each individual phase, or is it a set pool?

A: The funds to be made available will depend on the Contractor selected following the review of competitive applications. We expect that a single Contractor, through a single contract, will formulate both phases of the strategic plan. This expectation could change based on the applications submitted.

28. Q: In addition to the public hearings for Phase I, what other direct interactions with local stakeholders are required or expected?

A: The BoR staff will interact with the Contractor to arrange interviews with personnel representing campuses, government, and the private sector. During Phase I, for example, prior to the drafting of the strategic plan, the BoR will invite representatives of all affected post-secondary campuses to an interview with the Contractor.

29. Q: What were the criteria for the selection of the specific college campuses in Phase I? Since not all colleges and universities in the affected parishes were included, were the criteria based on levels of hurricane damage?

A: The campuses included for participation in Phase I are all in the eight (8) most severely impacted parishes - Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Jefferson, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Vermilion. HUD requires that CDBG funding for higher education be used only in these parishes.

30. Q: For Phase II, are all universities, both public and private, to be considered?

A: Yes.

31. Q: Are you planning on talking to the various applicants in advance of the final decision, either by phone or in person, or will the entire selection process be based upon an evaluation of the submitted written materials?

A: The decision will be made based on written materials. At this time, the selection committee has no plans to schedule interviews with applicants. If the committee decides otherwise, all applicants will be notified.

32. Q: Before addressing the broad objective for establishing guidelines, I would like to know is the BoR as "mission accomplished" in both high-level terms and quantifiable metrics (if known)?

A: This question is unclear. The Board of Regents is a State agency created in the 1974 Louisiana Constitution and charged with coordinating all public higher education in Louisiana with some responsibilities related to independent campuses. For additional information on the BoR, see

<http://www.regents.state.la.us>.

33. Q: CLARIFICATION OF QUESTION 32: What quantifiable metrics will the BoR and LRA use for evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of guidelines once established?

A: The metrics for determining efficiency and effectiveness will depend upon the contents of the guidelines. The ability of the BoR and LRA to use guidelines to develop an RFP, solicit proposals, and generate funding recommendations by June 2007 is essential. Other metrics will be identified as guidelines are drafted.

34. Q: Will the guidelines established for the RC/EEP be considered autonomous? If not, what pre-established BoR guideline(s) must be followed?

A: The guidelines proposed by the Contractor, when approved and adopted by the BoR and LRA, will be subject to some State regulations and pre-existing guidelines. These will be explained to the Contractor during the development of the strategic plan.

35. Q: In the timeline, I see the first CDBG draft completion date is January 19, 2007 with public hearings and revisions to be completed by January 26, 2007. What is a typical public hearing cadence throughout during the week of 01/22/07 - 01/26/07? My concern is making sure there is continuity in reviewing the input with adequate debate between hearings.

A: The BoR and LRA anticipate holding one two-day public hearing session, at which the Contractor's draft report for Phase I will be considered. The Contractor will be given time following the public hearing to consider comments and revise the document for final presentation.

36. Q: CLARIFICATION OF QUESTION 35: I am uncertain of what is meant by "one two-day" public hearing. I assume a one-day hearing, but 2 separate meetings.

A: The single public hearing will take place over two days, and be divided into three- to four-hour morning and afternoon sessions on each day.

37. Q: Provide-- in ranking order -- the areas that are considered by the BoR core research areas? In the 10/13/06 memorandum, there was a request for colleges and universities to submit a white paper by 11/22/06. I assume insight can be extracted for a preliminary conclusion given that this question has probably been discussed and revisited during ongoing BoR strategic planning discussions.

A: It will be the job of the Contractor to assess Louisiana's capabilities and recommend research areas for focus. The white papers submitted by the campuses will be a starting place for this investigation. Initial discussions focused on the biological sciences, materials science, and information technology, without ranking, as priorities for both the RC/EEP and another BoR program known as the Post-Katrina Support Fund Initiative (P-KSFI). (see <http://laregents.org> for information on this program.) The BoR and LRA

decided to specify no disciplinary priorities for the RC/EEP, though these disciplinary priorities remain for the P-KSFI.

38. Q: What are research areas of mutual interest between the BoR and State of Louisiana, specifically businesses with operations/facilities in the State?
A: Since 1986, the State has operated through the Louisiana Education Quality Support Fund (LEQSF), a program specifically designed to foster university/industry partnerships in Louisiana. The Industrial Ties Research Subprogram (ITRS) expends approximately \$2 million annually to fund projects with strong near-term economic development potential. A majority of the projects funded during the lifespan of the subprogram have been in the general areas of materials science, oil and gas, and biotechnology. Detailed information relative to the projects funded through this subprogram will be provided to the successful Contractor.
39. Q: Services was not mentioned as an area of research potential in Section III-B of the Context For Strategic Planning Section. Only products and processes were captured. Do the BoR and the State consider it a potential research area? If so, I recommend adding it as we are truly in a global market where the reality is that low-cost labor is moving off-shore.
A: The Contractor may recommend the inclusion of categories of research and production as part of its assessment of Louisiana's strengths and possible future directions.
40. Q: It is inferred that commercializing research technology directly translates to more jobs, specifically high-paying jobs. There is more of an indirect correlation to job creation by a business, which may take time before the profits translate to hiring. Comment--I believe it should be noted that the priority is job creation.
A: The BoR and LRA are interested in all aspects of economic development as it relates to development and commercialization of university research.
41. Q: In IV. Scope of the Strategic Plan, Section C, the RFP indicates that the Contractor will recommend an annual amount of investment. Please explain why annual? Also, what is the outlook (3yrs, 5yrs, etc)? Is there a minimum return on investment?
A: The BoR and LRA seek recommendations for annual investment because this is how monies are dedicated at the State level. The Contractor should, as part of the contracted analysis, indicate an outlook for investment over the short and long terms. There is no minimum return on investment required.
42. Q: Assess research assets at the universities--what are the categories that BoR consider assets?
A: The State has made targeted investments over the past several years designed to strengthen research assets, specifically in three broad areas: biotechnology, information technology, and materials science. Within biotechnology, the

Governor's Biotechnology Initiative, operational since 2002, provided \$5.7 million in one-time capital outlay funds and \$2.7 million in annually recurring funds to promote biotechnology research, especially through the hiring of new outstanding faculty. Similarly, the State has invested \$44 million during the past seven years to establish and further the work of the Louisiana Gene Therapy Research Consortium. Within the Information Technology area, the Governor's office established a five-year, \$100 million fund to develop faculty expertise on primarily research campuses within the general area of IT. In 2004, the current Governor further demonstrated the State's interest in developing IT infrastructure by committing \$40 million over ten years to build a high-speed optical network, the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI). Within the area of materials science, the State's chief assets include: the Center for Advanced Microstructures and Devices (CAMD) at LSU-Baton Rouge. CAMD was built with a U.S. Department of Energy grant and operates with an annual State-provided budget of \$4 million. The Institute for Micromanufacturing, housed at Louisiana Tech University in north-central Louisiana, was established with the aid of a \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. The Advanced Materials Research Institute (AMRI), housed at the University of New Orleans, is focused on the development, fabrication, characterization, and testing of advanced materials for semiconducting, energy, and biomedical applications with a nanophase materials specialization. More detailed information about these and other assets will be provided to the successful Contractor.

43. Q: Louisiana-based entities with experience in technology transfer processes-- Why limited to Louisiana only?
A: The LRA and BoR are interested in investing in the State and promoting relationships between higher education institutions and the private sector within Louisiana.
44. Q: Niche technology areas with long-term potential -- What is the time-frame assumed as long-term?
A: "Long-term" indicates a timeframe of more than three to five years.
45. Q: Interact as necessary with key stakeholders--Does this simply mean "teamwork"? Please explain.
A: The Contractor will be expected to conduct interviews, request information and data, discuss issues, and otherwise engage stakeholders from across the State.
46. Q: Identify Operating mechanisms to implement the plan--Provide examples of operating mechanisms?
A: The BoR and LRA ask that the Contractor provide recommendations of mechanisms to promote commercialization of university research. These may take many forms, including non-profit corporations, patent application assistance, private-/public-sector partnership assistance, task forces and

standing committees, and many others.

47. Q: Estimated cost for on-going program operation--Please attach a sample template capturing financial projections.
A: We do not have such a template, and look to the Contractor to estimate costs based on recommended programmatic directions.
48. Q: Complete Documents according to timeline--Are the dates firm?
A: The extreme urgency of distributing funds to campuses in the severely impacted areas makes it necessary to maintain as much as possible the abbreviated timeframe for Phase I. At this time, we do not anticipate any changes to the timeline through the submission of the draft report on January 19. There may be some flexibility in the scheduling of the public hearing and completion of the final Phase I document. The timeline for development of the statewide plan is firm.
49. Q: Public hearing? Typically, how long are the public hearings and what areas of competence are represented?
A: The BoR and LRA anticipate holding one two-day public hearing session, probably in New Orleans. Representatives from State and local governments, higher education institutions, and the private sector will be invited to attend. The meeting will be open to the general public as well.
50. Q: Collaborate with BoR and LRA to respond to concerns--Please provide a potential team organization hierarchy chart identifying the Proposer.
A: The Contractor would correspond primarily with Dr. Kerry Davidson, Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs, Louisiana Board of Regents. The Contractor will also work collaboratively with the staffs of the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Recovery Authority as well as selected individuals from the private sector. Deliverables would be provided to Dr. Davidson.
51. Q: Are the reports from both AAAS teams available for review? If so, please post it.
A: The AAAS reports are available on the BoR's website at <http://laregents.org>.
52. Q: What was the update presented regarding the \$28.5M in CDBG monies?
A: The update to the BoR was a status report on HUD approval of CDBG funds for the RC/EEP.
53. Q: CLARIFICATION OF QUESTION 52: How much did HUD approve?
A: As noted in the RFP and Action Plan, HUD has approved \$28.5 million in CDBG funds for the implementation of the RC/EEP.