



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

BID SOLICITATION DOCUMENT

SOLICITATION INFORMATION			
Solicitation Number:	UAPB A209	Solicitation Issued:	January 12, 2026
Description:	Gap Analysis Consultant	Type of Contract:	Term
Agency:	The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff		

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR RESPONSE			
Bid Opening Date:	February 12, 2026	Bid Opening Time:	11:00 a.m., CST
Deliver proposal submissions for this Request for Proposal to UAPB Procurement Office on or before the designated bid opening date and time. In accordance with Arkansas Procurement Law and Rules, it is the responsibility of Prospective Contractors to submit proposals at the designated location on or before the proposal opening date and time. Proposals received after the designated bid opening date and time may be considered late and may be returned to the Prospective Contractor without further review. It is not necessary to return "no bids" to UAPB.			

DELIVERY OF RESPONSE DOCUMENTS			
Submit To:	UAPB Procurement Department P.O. Box 4979 Pine Bluff, AR 71601	F.O.B.	UAPB Warehouse 1200 North University Drive Hazzard Gym/Annex Building Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601
Messenger:	1200 N. University Drive Office of Procurement Administration Bldg., Room 102 Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601		
Delivery providers, USPS, UPS, and FedEx deliver mail to UAPB street address on a schedule determined by each individual provider. These providers will deliver to UAPB based solely on the street address. Prospective Contractors assume all risk for timely, properly submitted deliveries. Late bids- bids enroute, bids left at locations other than the Office of Procurement by special carrier or other will not be considered if they are not in the Office of Procurement by or before the time as indicated on this IFB document as “Bid Opening Date and Time.”			
Proposal’s Outer Packaging:	Seal outer packaging and properly mark with the following information. If outer packaging of bid submission is not properly marked, the package may be opened for bid identification purposes. • Solicitation number • Date and time of bid opening • Prospective Contractor's name and return address		

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF PROCUREMENT CONTACT INFORMATION			
UAPB Official:	Patricia Cole	Official Phone Number:	(870) 575-8736
Email Address:	colep@uapb.edu	Official Fax Number:	(870) 575-4647
UAPB Website:	http://www.uapb.edu/administration/finance_administration/purchasing/bids.aspx		

SECTION 1 - GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

- **Do not provide responses to items in this section unless specifically and expressly required.**

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff has partnered with the National Science Foundation to BUILD research capacity through the EPIIC: Bolstering University Infrastructure for Leading Development (BUILD@UAPB) in collaboration with Arkansas Tech University. The principal goals of this project will be to:

Enhance Infrastructure for Research: Focusing on personnel, policies, and procedures, and developing an internal system of accountability to empower staff of the research development enterprise to help faculty seek competitive funding and develop research with societal and economic impact.

Building partnerships between academia, industry, and others: Alongside the goals of enhancing infrastructure, the research development enterprise will also be empowered to help faculty and internal and external partners to collaborate in a meaningful sustainable way.

This project will include a gap analysis of UAPB's research enterprise based on the project team's initial landscape analysis which includes: (1) initial metrics for the Evaluation Plan; (2) alignment across stakeholders on key knowledge and information gaps; (3) planning for a tour of state core lab facilities and plan for participating in strategic state-level research association meetings.

This project will also include external evaluation services that will aid the team in capturing and interpreting the data generated throughout the lifetime of the project and reporting the results to the funder via annual reports and highlights as needed.

1.2 TYPE OF CONTRACT

- A. As a result of this RFP, this contract is a term contract that will be awarded to a **Single** Contractor.
- B. The anticipated starting date for any resulting contract is **March 1, 2026**, except that the actual contract start date may be adjusted unilaterally by the State for up to three calendar months. By submitting a signed proposal in response to the RFP, the Prospective Contractor represents and warrants that it will honor its proposal as being held open as irrevocable for this period.
- C. The initial term of a resulting contract will be for one (1) year. Upon mutual agreement by the Contractor and Department, the contract may be renewed by UAPB for up to **three (3)** additional one-year terms or portions thereof, not to exceed six (6) additional one-year terms or portions thereof, not to exceed a total aggregate contract term of seven (7) consecutive years.

1.3 **SOLICITATION SCHEDULE**

For informational purposes, a Solicitation Schedule is provided below; however, dates listed and noted with an asterisk (*) are anticipated dates only and are subject to change at the discretion of the University.

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Release to Prospective Contractors	January 12, 2026
Deadline for Prospective Contractor Questions	January 23, 2026, 12:00 P.M. CST
Deadline for UAPB to respond to questions	January 28, 2025, 4:00 P.M. CST
Proposal Due Date	February 12, 2026, 11:00 A.M.
Evaluation Period*	February 13 – 19, 2025*
Interview Topmost Qualified Firms*	February 23, 2026*
ALC Review prior to Award*	TBD
Award Contract*	March 1, 2026*

1.4 **ACCEPTANCE OF REQUIREMENTS**

- A. A Prospective Contractor **must** unconditionally accept all requirements in the Requirements Section(s) of the RFP to be considered a responsive Prospective Contractor.
- B. A Prospective Contractor's bid will be rejected if a Prospective Contractor takes exceptions to any Requirements in the Requirements Section(s) of this RFP.

1.5 **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- A. The UAPB Procurement Official has made every effort to use industry-accepted terminology in this *Bid Solicitation* and will attempt to further clarify any point of an item in question as indicated in *Clarification of Bid Solicitation*.
- B. Unless otherwise defined herein, all terms defined in Arkansas Procurement Law and used herein have the same definitions herein as specified therein.
- C. "Prospective Contractor" means a responsible offeror who submits a proposal in response to this Solicitation.
- D. "Contractor" means a person who sells or contracts to sell commodities and/or services.
- E. The terms "Request for Proposal", "RFP," "Bid Solicitation," and "Solicitation" are used synonymously in this document.
- F. "Responsive proposal" means a proposal submitted in response to this solicitation that conforms in all material respects to this RFP.
- G. "Proposal Submission Requirement" means a task a Prospective Contractor **must** complete when submitting a proposal response. These requirements will be distinguished by using the term "**shall**" or "**must**" in the requirement.

- H. "Requirement" means a specification that a contractor's product and/or service **must** perform during the term of the contract. These specifications will be distinguished by using the term "shall" or "must" in the requirement.
- I. "UAPB" means the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. When the term "UAPB" is used herein to reference any obligation of the university under a contract that results from this solicitation, that obligation is limited to UAPB agency using such a contract.
- J. "University" or "Owner" Shall be interpreted to mean **University of Arkansas Board of Trustees acting for and on behalf of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.**

1.6 **RESPONSE DOCUMENTS**

A. Original Technical Proposal Packet

1. The following items are Proposal Submission Requirements and **must** be submitted in the original Technical Proposal Packet.
 - a. Original signed *Proposal Signature Page*. (See Technical Proposal Packet.)
 - b. *One (1) original hard copy of the proposal response package which includes:*
 - i. Technical Proposal response to the information for Evaluation section included in the Technical Proposal Packet. **Proposal response must be in the English language.**
 - ii. Response to the Official Bid Price Sheet which is the cost section. Pricing **must** be proposed in U.S. dollars and cents

B. Additional Copies and Redacted Copy of the Technical Proposal Packet and Official Bid Price Sheet

In addition to the original Technical Proposal Packet and the Response Package, the following items should be submitted.

1. Additional Copies of the Technical Proposal Packet
 - a. Five (3) soft copies (marked "COPY") of the Technical Proposal Response Packet.
 - b. One (1) electronic copy of the Technical Proposal with the Technical Response Packet, preferably on flash drives and in PDF format. Do not send electronic copies via email or fax.
 - c. All additional hard copies and electronic copies **must** be identical to the original hard copy. In case of a discrepancy, the original hard copy governs.
 - d. If UAPB requests additional copies of the proposal, the copies **must** be delivered within twenty-four (24) hours of request.

1.7 **ORGANIZATION OF RESPONSE DOCUMENTS**

- A. It is strongly recommended that Prospective Contractors adhere to the following format and suggestions when preparing their Technical Proposal response.
- B. The original Technical Proposal Packet and all copies should be arranged in the following order.
 - Proposal Signature Page.
 - Proposed Subcontractor Form
 - Signed Addenda, if applicable.
 - E.O. 98-04 – Contract Grant and Disclosure Form.
 - Equal Opportunity Policy.
 - W-9 Form
 - Combined form for Boycotts and Illegal Immigrant Certification

- Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT), if applicable
- Technical Proposal response to the information for Evaluation section of the Technical Proposal Packet.
- **DO NOT** include any other documents or ancillary information, such as a cover letter or promotional/marketing information.

1.8 CLARIFICATION OF BID SOLICITATION

- A. Submit any questions requesting clarification of information contained in this *Bid Solicitation* in writing via email by 12:00 p.m., Central Time on or before **01/23/2026** to the UAPB official as shown on the front cover of this *Proposal Solicitation* (**Note the Schedule of Events**).
 - For each question submitted, Prospective Contractor should reference the specific solicitation item number to which the question refers.
 - Prospective Contractors' written questions will be consolidated and responded to by UAPB. If Prospective Contractor questions are unclear or non-substantive in nature, UAPB may request clarification of a question(s) or reserves the right not to respond to that question(s).
- B. The Prospective Contractor should notify the UAPB official of any term, condition, etc., that precludes the Prospective Contractor from submitting a compliant, responsive proposal. Prospective Contractors should note that it is the responsibility of the Prospective Contractor to seek resolution of all such issues, including those relating to the terms and conditions of the contract, prior to the submission of a proposal.
- C. Prospective Contractors may contact the UAPB official with non-substantive questions at any time prior to the proposal opening.
- D. An oral statement by UAPB will not be part of any contract resulting from this solicitation and may not reasonably be relied on by any Prospective Contractor as an aid to interpretation unless it is reduced to writing and expressly adopted by UAPB.
- E. Prospective Contractors entering into a contract with UAPB **shall** comply with all the terms and conditions contained herein.

1.9 PROPOSAL SIGNATURE PAGE

- A. An official authorized to bind the Prospective Contractor(s) to a resultant contract **must** sign the Proposal Signature Page included in the Technical Proposal Packet.
- B. Prospective Contractor's signature on this page signifies Prospective Contractor's agreement to and compliance with all Requirements of this RFP, and that any exception that conflicts with a Requirement or Proposal Submission Requirement of this Bid Solicitation will cause the Prospective Contractor's proposal to be rejected.

1.10 PRIME CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITY

1. Single and joint vendor proposals and multiple proposals by vendors are acceptable. However, a single vendor must be identified as the prime contractor in each proposal. The prime contractor will be responsible for the contract and will be the sole point of contact with regard to the software and services described herein.
2. The Vendor shall not assign the contract in whole or in part or any payment arising there from without the prior written consent of UAPB.
3. The contractor shall give UAPB immediate notice, in writing, by certified mail of any action which, in the opinion of the Contractor, may result in litigation related in any way to the contract of UAPB. Contractor.

1.11 INDEPENDENT PRICE DETERMINATION

- A. By submission of this proposal, the Prospective Contractor certifies, and in the case of a joint response, each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, that in connection with this proposal:
 - The prices in the proposal have been arrived at independently, without collusion.
 - No prior information concerning these prices has been received from, or given to, a competitive company.
- B. Evidence of collusion warrants consideration of this bid by the Office of the Attorney General. All Prospective Contractors **shall** understand that this paragraph may be used as a basis for litigation.

1.12 RESERVATION

This proposal does not commit **UAPB** to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of proposals. Further, **UAPB** reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or any part of a proposal in the best interest of the University. Proposals which fail to comply fully with any provisions of the specifications and proposal documents will be considered invalid and will not receive consideration.

1.13 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

- A. Submission documents pertaining to this *Proposal Solicitation* become the property of UAPB and are subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- B. In accordance with FOIA and to promote maximum competition in UAPB competitive bidding process, UAPB may maintain the confidentiality of certain types of information described in FOIA. Such information may include trade secrets defined by FOIA and other information exempted from the Public Records Act pursuant to FOIA.
- C. Prospective Contractor may designate appropriate portions of its response as confidential, consistent with and to the extent permitted under the Statutes and Rules set forth above, by submitting a redacted copy of the response.
- D. By so redacting any information contained in the response, the Prospective Contractor warrants that it has formed a good faith opinion having received such necessary or proper review by counsel and other knowledgeable advisors that the portions redacted meet the requirements of the Rules and Statutes set forth above.
- E. Under no circumstances will pricing information be designated as confidential.
- F. One (1) complete copy of the submission documents from which any proprietary information has been redacted should be submitted on a flash drive in the *Technical Proposal Packet*. A CD is also acceptable. Do not submit documents via email or fax.
- G. Except for the redacted information, the redacted copy **must** be identical to the original hard copy, reflecting the same pagination as the original and showing the space from which information was redacted.
- H. The Prospective Contractor is responsible for identifying all proprietary information and for ensuring the electronic copy is protected against restoration of redacted data.
- I. The redacted copy will be open to public inspection under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) without further notice to the Prospective Contractor.

- J. If a redacted copy of the submission documents is not provided with Prospective Contractor's *response packet*, a copy of the non-redacted documents, with the exception of financial data (other than pricing), will be released in response to any request made under the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- K. If UAPB deems redacted information to be subject to FOIA, the Prospective Contractor will be contacted prior to release of the documents.
- L. UAPB has no liability to a Prospective Contractor with respect to the disclosure of Prospective Contractor's confidential information ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to FOIA or other applicable law.

1.14 **CAUTION TO PROSPECTIVE CONTRACTORS**

- 1. Prior to any contract award, address all communication concerning this *Proposal Solicitation* through UAPB official.
- 2. Do not alter any language in any solicitation document provided by UAPB.
- 3. Do not alter the Official Proposal Price Sheet.
- 4. All official documents and correspondence related to this solicitation become part of the resultant contract.
- 5. UAPB has the right to award or not award a contract, if it is in the best interest of the University to do so. **Failure to provide performance security shall result in a proposal rejection.**
- 6. As requested, provide clarification regarding Prospective Contractor's bid response to UAPB.
- 7. Qualifications and proposed services **must** meet or exceed the required specifications as set forth in this *Proposal Solicitation*.

1.15 **REQUIREMENT OF ADDENDUM**

- 1. Only an addendum written and authorized by UAPB will modify this *Proposal Solicitation*.
- 2. An addendum posted within three (3) calendar days prior to the proposal opening may extend the opening and may or may not include changes to the Proposal Solicitation.
- 3. The Prospective Contractor is expected to check the UAPB website, http://www.uapb.edu/administration/finance_administration/purchasing/bids.aspx, for any and all addenda up to proposal opening.

1.16 **AWARD PROCESS**

A. Successful Contractor Selection

- 1. The Grand Total Score for each Prospective Contractor, which is the sum of the Technical Score and Cost Score, will be used to determine the ranking of proposals. UAPB may move forward to negotiations with those responsible Prospective Contractors determined, based on the ranking of the proposals, to be reasonably susceptible or being selected for award.

B. Negotiations

1. If UAPB chooses, negotiations may be conducted with the highest-ranking Prospective Contractor. Negotiations are conducted at the sole discretion of UAPB.
2. If negotiations fail to result in a contract, UAPB may begin the negotiation process with the next highest ranking Prospective Contractor. The negotiation process may be repeated until the anticipated successful Contractor has been determined, or until such time UAPB decides not to move forward with an award.

C. Anticipation to Award

1. Once the anticipated successful Contractor has been determined, the anticipated award will be posted on UAPB website at http://www.uapb.edu/administration/finance_administration/purchasing/bids.aspx.
2. The anticipated award **will be posted for a period of fourteen (14) days** prior to the issuance of a contract. Prospective Contractors and agencies are cautioned that these are preliminary results only, and **a contract will not be issued prior to the end of the fourteen-day posting period.**
3. UAPB may waive the policy of Anticipation to Award when it is in the best interest of the University.
4. It is the Prospective Contractor's responsibility to check the UAPB website for the posting of an anticipated award.

D. ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITY

1. Any resultant contract of this *Proposal Solicitation* is subject to UAPB approval processes which may include Legislative review.
2. The UAPB Procurement Official will be responsible for award of any resulting contract, and the **Research Assistant Professor or designee** will be responsible for administration and contract compliance.

1.17 BID PROTEST

In the case of protest associated with this IFB, the protest will be resolved by the Vice Chancellor for Finance and/or the Office of State Procurement.

1.18 INTERGOVERNMENTAL/COOPERATIVE USE OF COMPETITIVELY BID PROPOSALS AND CONTRACTS

In accordance with Arkansas Code Annotated § 19-11-249, any State public procurement unit may participate in any contract resulting from this solicitation with a participating addendum signed by the Contractor and approved by the chief procurement officer of the procurement agency issuing this solicitation.

1.19 DISCLOSURE OF CONTRACTS OVER \$25,000-GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER 98-04

- No contract for commodities or services greater than \$25,000 and no discretionary grant greater than \$25,000 shall be awarded, extended, amended, or renewed by any agency to any bidder who has not disclosed as required in this proposal with the exception of bidders in Section 3D (emergencies) for goods and services for which disclosure may be obtained after purchase or service.
- Failure to make any disclosure required by Governor's Executive Order 98-04, or any violation of any rule, regulation, or policy adopted pursuant to that order, shall be a material breach of the terms of this contract. Any bidder, whether an individual or entity, who fails to make the required disclosure or who violates any rule, regulation, or policy shall be subject to all legal remedies available to the agency.

1.20 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

- A. In compliance with Arkansas Code Annotated § 19-11-104, UAPB must have a copy of the anticipated Contractor's *Equal Opportunity (EO) Policy* prior to issuing a contract award.
- B. *EO Policies* should be included as a hard copy accompanying the solicitation response.
- C. Contractors are responsible for providing updates or changes to their respective policies, and for supplying *EO Policies* upon request to other State agencies that must also comply with this statute.
- D. Prospective Contractors who are not required by law to have an *EO Policy* **must** submit a written statement to that effect.

1.21 PROHIBITION OF EMPLOYMENT OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

- A. Pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 19-11-105, Contractor(s) providing services **shall** certify with UAPB that they do not employ or contract with illegal immigrants.
- B. By signing and submitting a response to this *Proposal Solicitation*, a Prospective Contractor agrees and certifies that they do not employ or contract with illegal immigrants. If selected, the Prospective Contractor certifies that they will not employ or contract with illegal immigrants during the aggregate term of a contract.

1.22 RESTRICTION OF BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL

- A. Pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-1-503, a public entity **shall not** enter into a contract with a company unless the contract includes a written certification that the person or company is not currently engaged in and agrees for the duration of the contract not to engage in, a boycott of Israel.
- B. This prohibition does not apply to a company which offers to provide goods or services for at least twenty percent (20%) less than the lowest certifying business.
- C. By checking the designated box on the Proposal Signature Page of the response packet, a Prospective Contractor agrees and certifies that they do not, and will not for the duration of the contract, boycott Israel.

1.23 PAST PERFORMANCE

In accordance with provisions of State Procurement Law, specifically UAPB Rule R5:19-11-230(b)(1), a Prospective Contractor's past performance with UAPB may be used to determine if the Prospective Contractor is "responsible". Proposals submitted by Prospective Contractors determined to be non-responsible will be rejected.

1.24 TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

- A. When procuring a technology product or when soliciting the development of such a product, the University is required to comply with the provisions of Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-26-201 et seq., as amended by Act 308 of 2013, which expresses the policy of the State to provide individuals who are blind or visually impaired with access to information technology purchased in whole or in part with state funds. The Prospective Contractor expressly acknowledges and agrees that state funds may not be expended in connection with the purchase of information technology unless that technology meets the statutory Requirements found in 36 C.F.R. § 1194.21, as it existed on January 1, 2013 (software applications and operating ICSs) and 36 C.F.R. § 1194.22, as it existed on January 1, 2013 (web-based intranet and internet

information and applications), in accordance with the State of Arkansas technology policy standards relating to accessibility by persons with visual impairments.

- B. Accordingly, the Prospective Contractor expressly represents and warrants to the State of Arkansas through the procurement process by submission of a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for 36 C.F.R. § 1194.21, as it existed on January 1, 2013 (software applications and operating ICSs) and 36 C.F.R. § 1194.22, that the technology provided to the University for purchase is capable, either by virtue of features included within the technology, or because it is readily adaptable by use with other technology, of:
 1. Providing, to the extent required by Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-26-201 et seq., as amended by Act 308 of 2013, equivalent access for effective use by both visual and non-visual means.
 2. Presenting information, including prompts used for interactive communications, in formats intended for non-visual use.
 3. After being made accessible, integrating into networks for obtaining, retrieving, and disseminating information used by individuals who are not blind or visually impaired.
 4. Providing effective, interactive control and use of the technology, including without limitation the operating system, software applications, and format of the data presented is readily achievable by nonvisual means.
 5. Being compatible with information technology used by other individuals with whom the blind or visually impaired individuals interact.
 6. Integrating into networks is used to share communications among employees, program participants, and the public.
 7. Providing the capability of equivalent access by nonvisual means to telecommunications or other interconnected network services used by people who are not blind or visually impaired.
- C. State agencies cannot claim a product as a whole is not reasonably available because no product in the marketplace meets all the standards. Agencies must evaluate products to determine which product best meets the standards. If an agency purchases a product that does not best meet the standards, the agency must provide written documentation supporting the selection of a different product, including any required reasonable accommodation.
- D. For purposes of this section, the phrase “equivalent access” means a substantially similar ability to communicate with, or make use of, the technology, either directly, by features incorporated within the technology, or by other reasonable means such as assistive devices or services which would constitute reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or similar state and federal laws. Examples of methods by which equivalent access may be provided include, but are not limited to, keyboard alternatives to mouse commands or other means of navigating graphical displays, and customizable display appearance. As provided in Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-26-201 et seq., as amended by Act 308 of 2013, if equivalent access is not reasonably available, then individuals who are blind or visually impaired **shall** be provided a reasonable accommodation as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12111(9), as it existed on January 1, 2013.
- E. If the information manipulated or presented by the product is inherently visual in nature, so that its meaning cannot be conveyed non-visually, these specifications do not prohibit the purchase or use of an information technology product that does not meet these standards.

1.25 PUBLICITY

- A. Do not discuss the solicitation nor your proposal response, nor issue statements or comments, nor provide interviews to any public media during the solicitation and award process.
- B. Failure to comply with this Requirement may be cause for a Prospective Contractor's bid to be rejected.

1.26 RESTRICTION OF BOYCOTT OF ENERGY, FOSSIL FUEL, FIREARMS AND AMMUNITIONS INDUSTRIES

In accordance with Ark. Code Ann. § 25-1-1002, Respondent hereby certifies to UA that Respondent: (a) is not currently engaged in a boycott of the energy, fossil fuel, firearms, and ammunition industries; and (b) agrees for the duration of any Contract not to engage in any boycott of the energy, fossil fuel, firearms or ammunition industries. The preceding does not apply to: (i) a financial services provider as defined at Ark. Code Ann. § 25-1-1001(8)(A), (ii) an agreement with a total potential value of less than \$75,000, or (iii) a contract under which the Contractor's price for the goods or services is at least 20% less than the lowest certifying business.

1.27 CERTIFICATION OF NON-SCRUTINIZED COMPANY

The Respondent certifies that the government of the People's Republic of China ("PRC") does not wholly own the Respondent or hold a majority interest in the Respondent. Respondent further certifies that the PRC does not own or hold a majority interest in a for-profit parent company, subsidiary, or affiliate of Respondent, or in a subcontractor to be employed by Respondent.

1.28 TOBACCO FREE CAMPUS

Smoking and the use of tobacco products (including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, and other tobacco products), by students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors, are prohibited at all times on and within all property, including buildings, grounds, and facilities, owned or operated by UAPB, including all vehicles on UAPB property.

1.29 FUNDING OUT CLAUSE

If, in the sole discretion of UAPB, funds are not allocated to continue any resultant Contract, or any activities related herewith, in any future period, then UAPB will not be obligated to pay any further charges for services, beyond the end of the then current period. Contactor will be notified of such non-allocation at the earliest possible time. No penalty shall accrue in the event this section is exercised. This section shall not be construed so as to permit UAPB to terminate any Contract awarded in order to acquire similar service from a third party.

1.30 PERMITS/LICENSES AND COMPLIANCE

Contractor covenants and agrees that it shall, at its sole expense, procure and keep in effect all necessary permits and licenses required for its performance of obligations under this RFP, and shall post or display in a prominent place such permits and/or notices as required by law. Contractor is responsible for compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, OSHA requirements as well as any Fair Labor Standards Act requirements pertaining to compensation of Contractors employees or subcontractor (if any) working on the project; further, upon request, Contractors shall provide copies of all such permits or licenses to UAPB.

1.31 CAMPUS RESTRICTIONS

Contractor shall not permit tobacco, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, or illegal drugs to be used by any of its officers, agents' representatives, employees, subcontractors, licensees, partner organizations, guests or

invitees while on the campus of UAPB. Respondents further agree that it will not permit any of its officers, directors, agents, employees, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, partner organizations, guests or invitees to bring any explosives, firearms or other weapons onto the campus of UAPB, except to the extent expressly permitted by UAPB policies and the Arkansas enhanced concealed carry laws. Respondent shall not allow any of its officers, directors, agents, employees, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, partner organizations, guests or invitees that are registered sex offenders to enter the campus of the University. Respondent agrees that it will not permit any of its officers, directors, agents, employees, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, partner organizations, guests or invitees who have been convicted of a felony involving force, violence, or possession or use of illegal drugs to work on this campus. Respondent will fully comply with all applicable UAPB policies, and federal, state and local laws, ordinances, and regulations.

1.32 BACKGROUND CHECKS

Contractor shall be responsible to obtain and to pay for background checks (including, but not limited to, checks for registered sex offenders) for all individuals performing any services related to this RFP on the UAPB campus, whether on a paid or volunteer basis, in a manner requested by UAPB and consistent with procedures established by UAPB for its background checks. No person may perform any duties or services for Contractor on the UAPB campus under any circumstances whatsoever until a satisfactory background check has been completed for each individual and copies furnished to UAPB.

1.33 NO ASSIGNMENT AND SUBLICENSING

Respondents may not assign or sublicense any resulting Contract without the prior written consent of an authorized representative of UAPB as provide by UAPB's Board of Trustee Policy.

1.34 BEST AND FINAL OFFER

UAPB reserves the right to request an official "Best and Final Offer" from Bid Respondents if it deems such an approach is in the best of the institution. In general, the "Best and Final Offer" will consist of an updated cost Proposal in addition to an opportunity for the Respondent to submit a final response to specific questions or opportunities identified in subsequent discussions related to the original Proposal response submitted to UAPB. If UAPB chooses to invoke a "Best and Final Offer" option, all responses will be re-evaluated by incorporating the information as requested in the official "Best and Final Offer" document, including costs and answers to specific questions presented in the document. The specific format for the official "Best and Final Offer" request will be determined during evaluation discussions. The official request for a "Best and Final Offer" will be issued by the UAPB Procurement Department.

SECTION 2 – REQUIREMENTS

- **Do not provide responses to items in this section unless specifically and expressly required.**

2.1 SCOPE OF WORK

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB) seeks to contract with a qualified contractor to perform a comprehensive, outcomes-based evaluation and gap analysis of its research development enterprise under the BUILD@UAPB initiative, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF Award #2433153). The evaluation will be used to strengthen institutional research capacity, guide strategic planning, and demonstrate the impact of partnership-building efforts across academia, industry, and community sectors.

The selected contractor will be responsible for designing and delivering an integrated, independent evaluation framework that supports the goals of BUILD@UAPB. This includes assessing infrastructure enhancements, partnership development, and internal accountability systems that empower faculty and staff to pursue competitive funding and produce research with societal and economic relevance.

Gap Analysis services dates: **March 2026 through September 2027**

Key activities to be evaluated through this RFP include:

- A gap analysis of UAPB's research enterprise, informed by the project team's initial landscape assessment.
- Development and refinement of metrics for the Evaluation Plan.
- Facilitation of stakeholder alignment around key knowledge and information gaps.
- Planning and documentation of strategic engagement activities, including tours of state core lab facilities and participation in state-level research association meetings.
- Ongoing data collection, synthesis, and interpretation to support annual reporting and highlight submissions to NSF.
- Conduct a minimum of three on-site visits to UAPB

The evaluation services sought in this RFP are central to the surveillance, assessment, and strategic planning components of UAPB's research development strategy. The selected evaluator will work closely with principal investigators and designated campus stakeholders to ensure timely, actionable, and mission-aligned deliverables.

2.2 MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS and EXPECTATIONS:

The Contractor shall have exclusive use as an independent contractor, the facilities listed herein.

1. The Contractor must be familiar with program gap analysis standards and reporting for National Science Foundation awards
2. The Contractor must be familiar with and have demonstrated experience working with research development enterprise initiatives aimed at expanding research capacity at emerging research institutions.
3. The Contractor should have experience with research administration software systems and strategies.
4. In addition, the Contractor should have:
 - i. Experience working with HBCUs, MSI, or other emerging research institutions
 - ii. A proven track record of providing actionable evaluation services for colleges/universities in the United States

- iii. Qualifications and experience in assisting emerging research institutions with interpreting the data gleaned from a gap analysis and co-creating a roadmap to address the gaps identified because of the analysis
5. The Contractor should demonstrate the capability to undertake and effectively manage a project of this size and complexity, including the availability of adequate resources (staff and facilities), including:
 - i. The ability to plan, cost, schedule, and manage a project of this scope and budget.
 - ii. Evidence of experience and qualifications for providing services to a public entity; and
 - iii. Ability to collect, organize, synthesize, and communicate complex information in a timely manner
6. The Contractor should also show sensitivity to the goals and the strategic plans of the University and an understanding of the University's planning processes and development initiatives.

Expected Deliverables and Timelines

- Submit Gap Analysis Plan within 30 days from the start of the contract
- Stakeholder Engagement Report: Monthly updates and Summary reports after each engagement activity
- Final Gap Analysis Report: Comprehensive report with actionable recommendations within 120 days of project start
- Annual Data Summary: For NSF reporting and highlights submissions

2.3 CONTRACTOR'S INSURANCE REQUIREMENT

- A.** Successful Contractor must provide and maintain during the life of the contract and any renewals a certificate of insurance indicating the type and amount of insurance provided. Insurance coverage is outlined **under item #2.3 B this document.**

1. The Certificate of Insurance shall be furnished to the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff prior to the issuance of the purchase order to commence services.
2. The policy shall be written by a Casualty Company authorized to do business in the State of Arkansas. Company must have an A.M. Best Rating of "A" VII or better.
3. The Certificate of Insurance shall show the agent's signature, business name, address and telephone number and be submitted to the UAPB Office of Procurement, prior to contract award.
4. It must carry a 30-day notice of cancellation clause.
5. The certificate must be current and bear the name of the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees acting on behalf of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff as the Certificate Holder. It must also indicate in the description of the exact name of this project and the amount bid which will indicate that this certificate is valid for this project.
6. In the event that the bidder fails to maintain and keep in force product liability insurance, commercial general liability insurance, automobile and worker's compensation insurance, the University **shall have the right to cancel and terminate the agreement immediately and without notice.**

- B.** The bidder shall purchase and maintain such insurance as will protect him from claims set forth which may arise out of or result from the bidder's operation under this contract, whether such operations be by himself or by anyone directly or indirectly employed by any of them or by anyone for whose acts many of them may be liable.

- Workers Compensation: As required by the State of Arkansas. Additionally, the Contractor shall maintain Employer's Liability Insurance with a policy limit of not less than \$100,000 each accident, \$500,000 disease, and \$100,000 disease each employee.
- Comprehensive General Liability, with no less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence/\$2,000,000 aggregate for bodily injury, products liability, contractual liability, and property damage liability.
- Comprehensive Automobile Liability, with no less than combined coverage for bodily injury and property damage of \$1,000,000 each occurrence.

SECTION 3 – SELECTION CRITERIA

BEST VALUE PROPOSALS EVALUATION

The Competitive Sealed Request for Proposal method and award shall be the basis for evaluating each proposal. Interested contractor's proposal shall include responses to the following criteria which will be used in evaluating the "Best Value" proposal (pursuant to Arkansas Code 19-4-1416 (a) (1)) for the campus.

3.1 QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Contractor(s) selected for an award will be the Contractor(s) who submits the most advantageous proposal to the University. The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff is not bound to accept the lowest priced proposal if that proposal does not provide the "Best Value". Where Contract negotiations with a Respondent do not proceed to an executed Contract within a time deemed reasonable by UAPB (for whatever reasons), UAPB may reconsider the Proposals of other Respondents and, if appropriate, may enter into Contract negotiations with one or more of the other Respondents. Proposals shall remain valid and current for the period of ninety (90) days after the due date and time for submission of Proposals. The criteria for evaluation of qualified proposals, and selection of the successful Contractor(s) for this award, will be based on the factors listed below. Each criterion should be on a separate page, numbered and titled as listed below. The University will evaluate Proposals submitted based on the criteria listed below.

Selection of the successful contractor will be determined in committee by evaluation of several factors:

1. **Preliminary Evaluation**-assignment of tentative rating points by individual selection committee member.
2. **Final evaluation**-assignment of final rating points by full selection committee.

Note: All proposals must be typewritten in single spaced, size 11-point Arial or Times New Roman font on standard 8 ½ x 11 paper (larger paper is permissible for charts, spreadsheets, etc.) with appropriated binding and tabs that index each section. Margins shall be set at 1" on all sides of the pages. Pages must be numbered. All responses to this RFP shall be organized in the same order as listed below in sections

Bidders should address each item listed as point scoring criterion in this section to be assured a complete evaluation.

The following is a summary of evaluation factors with point value assigned to each. These, along with the general requirements, will be used in the evaluation of vendor proposals.

The maximum number of points is 170

A. HISTORY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

50 POINTS

Bidder must provide information to be used to evaluate the following:

- **References:** List of prior clients for similar services, including contact person's name, phone, email, full address and entity name.
- **Table of Contents:** Organized outline of proposal materials
- **Summary of Proposal** – One-page executive summary
- **Organization Profile:** Background, mission, and relevant expertise.
- **Previous Project Narrative Description:** For each project cited as evidence of qualifications, include:
 - Description of work performed

- Time period of project
- Scheduled vs. actual completion dates
- Contractor's responsibilities
- Customer reference (with current/phone/email)

B. LEVEL OF RESPONSIVENESS TO RFP

60 POINTS

- How well did the bidder respond to Mandatory Requirements?
- Did this bidder address the Comprehensive Integrated and Independent Program Evaluation?
- Did this bidder address and explain in detail the evaluation reports and presentation?
- Did bidder discuss in detail the Evaluation Technical Assistance?
- How well did the bidder respond to all the submittal information?

C. BUDGET AND COST EXPLANATION

30 POINTS

Points shall be assigned as follows:

Cost Sheet - See Technical Package

- Remaining bids shall receive points in accordance with the following formula:

$$(a/b) (c) = d$$

a = lowest bid

b = second lowest bid

c = maximum points for cost category

d = number of points allocated to bid

D. INTERVIEW

30 POINTS

The two (2) companies with the highest scores from the preliminary evaluation may be requested to attend a thirty (30) minute conference interview. The date and time will be emailed to those companies later in this process

The University may also opt to do oral interviews, which if done, interviews points will be eliminated from the evaluation criteria.

The total interview time will be 30 minutes, broken down as follows:

- ✓ 15 minutes for the firm's presentation
- ✓ 15 minutes for questions and answers

Interview: the interview criteria and their associated maximum points are as follows:

- ✓ Presentation: **15 points**
- ✓ Response to questions: **10 points**

- ✓ Quality of overall interaction between team members and with the University: **5 points**

Subtotal: **30 points**

3.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Proposal criteria and their associated maximum points are as follows:

Section	Points
History and Past Performance	50
Bidder's Level of Responsiveness to RFP	60
Budget and Cost Explanation	30
Interview	30
Total Points	170

SECTION 4 – GENERAL CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Do not** provide responses to items in this section.

4.1 PAYMENT AND INVOICE PROVISIONS

A. Forward invoices to:

**Accounts Payable Department
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
1200 N. University Drive, Mail Slot 4984
Pine Bluff, AR 71601**

- A. Payment will be made in accordance with applicable State of Arkansas accounting procedures upon acceptance of goods and services by the agency.
- B. Do not invoice UAPB in advance of delivery and acceptance of any goods or services.
- C. Payment will be made only after the Contractor has successfully satisfied the agency as to the reliability and effectiveness of the goods or services purchased as a whole.
- D. The Contractor should invoice the UAPB by an itemized list of charges. The agency's Purchase Order Number and/or the Contract Number should be referenced on each invoice.
- E. Other sections of this RFP Solicitation may contain additional Requirements for invoicing.

4.2 GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The State will not:

1. Lease any equipment or software for a period of time which continues past the end of a fiscal year unless the contract allows for cancellation by UAPB upon a 30-day written notice to the Contractor/lessor in the event funds are not appropriated.
 2. Contract with another party to indemnify and defend that party for any liability and damages.
 3. Continue a contract once any equipment has been repossessed.
 4. Agree to any provision of a contract which violates the laws or constitution of the State of Arkansas.
 5. Enter a contract which grants to another party any remedies other than the following:
 - a. The right to possession.
 - b. The right to accrued payments
 - c. The right to expenses of deinstallation
 - d. The right to expenses of repair to return the equipment to normal working order, normal wear and tears excluded.
 - e. The right to recover only amounts due at the time of repossession and any unamortized non-recurring cost as allowed by Arkansas Law.
- B. Any litigation involving the State **must** take place in Pulaski County, Arkansas
- C. The laws of the State of Arkansas govern this contract
- D. A contract is not effective prior to award being made by a State Procurement Official.

4.2 CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT

- A. Observe and comply with federal and State of Arkansas laws, local laws, ordinances, orders, and regulations existing at the time of, or enacted subsequent to the execution of a resulting contract which in any manner affects the completion of the work.
- B. Indemnify and save harmless the agency and all its officers, representatives, agents, and employees against any claim or liability arising from or based upon the violation of any such law, ordinance, regulation, order or decree by an employee, representative, or subcontractor of the Controller.

4.3 STATEMENT OF LIABILITY

- A. The State will demonstrate reasonable care but will not be liable in the event of loss, destruction or theft of Contractor-owned equipment or software and technical and business or operations literature to be delivered or to be used in the installation of deliverables and services. The Contractor will retain total liability for equipment, software and technical and business or operations literature. The State will not at any time be responsible for or accept liability for any Contractor-owned items.
- B. The Contractor's liability for damages to the State will be limited to the value of the Contract or \$X,000,000, whichever is higher. The foregoing limitation of liability will not apply to claims for infringement of United States patent, copyright, trademarks or trade secrets; to claims for personal injury or damage to property caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the Contractor; to claims covered by other specific provisions of the Contract calling for damages; or to court costs or attorney's fees awarded by a court in addition to damages after litigation based on the Contract. The Contractor and the State will not be liable to each other, regardless of the form of action, for consequential, incidental, indirect, or special damages. This limitation of liability will not apply to claims for infringement of United States patent, copyright, trademark or trade secrets; to claims for personal injury or damage to property caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the Contractor; to claims covered by other specific provisions of the Contract calling for damages; or to court costs or attorney's fees awarded by a court in addition to damages after litigation based on the Contract.
- C. Language in these terms and conditions **must not** be construed or deemed as the UAPB's waiver of its right of sovereign immunity. The Contractor agrees that any claims against UAPB, whether sounding in tort or in contract, will be brought before the Arkansas Claims Commission as provided by Arkansas law and governed accordingly.

4.4 RECORD RETENTION

- A. Maintain all pertinent financial and accounting records and evidence pertaining to the contract in accordance with generally accepted principles of accounting and as specified by the State of Arkansas Law. Upon request, grant access to State or Federal Government entities or any of their duly authorized representatives.
- B. Make financial and accounting records available, upon request, to the State of Arkansas's designee(s) at any time during the contract period and any extension thereof, and for five (5) years from expiration date and final payment on the contract or extension thereof.
- C. Other sections of this Bid Solicitation may contain additional Requirement regarding record retention.

4.5 PRICE ESCALATION

- A. Price increases will be considered at the time of contract renewal
- B. The Contractor **must** provide to UAPB a written request for the price increase. The request **must** include supporting documentation demonstrating that the increase in contract price is based on an increase in market price. UAPB has the right to require additional information pertaining to the requested increase.
- C. Increases will not be considered to increase profit or margins.
- D. UAPB has the right to approve or deny the request.

4.6 CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. The Contractor, Contractor's subsidiaries, and Contractor's employees will be bound to all laws and to all Requirements set forth in this Bid Solicitation concerning the confidentiality and secure handling of information of which they may become aware of during the course of providing services under a resulting contract.
- B. Consistent and/or uncorrected breaches of confidentiality may constitute grounds for cancellation of a resulting contract, and UAPB has the right to cancel the contract on these grounds.
- C. Previous sections of this Bid Solicitation may contain additional confidentiality Requirements.

4.7 CONTRACT INTERPRETATION

Should UAPB and Contractor interpret specifications differently, either party may request clarification. However, if an agreement cannot be reached, the determination of UAPB is final and controlling.

4.8 CANCELLATION

- A. For Cause. The State may cancel any contract resulting from this solicitation for cause when the Contractor fails to perform his obligations under it by giving the Contractors written notice of such cancellation at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of proposed cancellation. In any written notice of cancellation for cause by curing any deficiencies identified in the notice of cancellation for cause prior to the date of proposed cancellation. To the extent permitted by law and at the discretion of the parties, the parties may agree to minor amendments to the contract and avoid the cancellation for cause upon mutual agreement.
- B. For Convenience. The State may cancel any contract resulting from the solicitation by giving the Contractor written notice of such cancellation sixty (60) days prior to the date of cancellation.
- C. If upon cancellation the Contractor has provided commodities or services which the State of Arkansas has accepted, and there are no funds legally available to pay for the commodities or services, the Contractor may file a claim with the Arkansas Claims Commission under the laws and regulations governing the filing of such claims.

4.9 SEVERABILITY

If any provision of the contract, including items incorporated by reference, is declared of found to be illegal, unenforceable, or void, then both the agency and the Contractor will be relieved of all obligations arising under such provision. If the remainder of the contract is capable of performance, it will not be affected by such declaration or finding and **must** be fully performed.