



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STANDARD CONTRACT

Contract No. UCPJMU6830

This contract entered into this 21st day of February, 2024, by Elite Research, LLC, hereinafter called the "Contractor" and Commonwealth of Virginia, James Madison University called the "Purchasing Agency".

WITNESSETH that the Contractor and the Purchasing Agency, in consideration of the mutual covenants, promises and agreements herein contained, agree as follows:

SCOPE OF CONTRACT: The Contractor shall provide the services to the Purchasing Agency as set forth in the Contract Documents.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: From February 21, 2024 through February 20, 2025 with four (4) one-year renewal options.

The contract documents shall consist of:

- (1) This signed form;
- (2) The following portions of the Request for Proposal RFP FDC-1189 dated October 2, 2023
 - (a) The Statement of Needs,
 - (b) The General Terms and Conditions,
 - (c) The Special Terms and Conditions together with any negotiated modifications of those Special Conditions;
 - (d) Addendum No. One October 24, 2023
- (3) The Contractor's Proposal dated October 20, 2023 and the following negotiated modification to the Proposal, all of which documents are incorporated herein.
 - (a) Negotiations Summary, dated January 18, 2024

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Contract to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

CONTRACTOR:
By: 
(Signature)

René M. Paulson
(Printed Name)

Title: President & Senior Statistician

PURCHASING AGENCY:
By: 
(Signature)

Doug Chester
(Printed Name)

Title: Buyer Senior

RFP # FDC-1189 Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services
Negotiation Summary for Elite Research, LLC

January 18, 2024

1. Parties agree that this Negotiation Summary modifies RFP# FDC-1189 and the Contractor's initial response to RFP# FDC-1189, and in the event of conflict this negotiation summary shall take precedence.
2. Contractor's pricing schedule for the Purchasing Agency is as follows:

Service, Planning, and Design	Hourly Rates	Primary Staff Level
Research Questions, Aims, and Goals	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Project Design, Feasibility, and Logistics	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Cultural context & community engagement	\$72.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Research Design, Methodology, & Protocol	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Instrument Development	\$106.00 - \$128.00	Consultant
Data Governance Planning	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Data Sources (Primary/Secondary)	\$72.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Logical Model, Evaluation Plans	\$106.00 - \$128.00	Consultant
Monitoring and Evaluation	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst

Data Collection		
Interview and focus groups	\$72.00 - \$85.00	Analyst, Associate
Sampling and Recruitment	\$43.00 - \$85.00	Analyst, Associate, Assistant
Database Set-up and Management	\$106.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Survey Collection and Monitoring	\$85.00 - \$85.00	Analyst, Associate, Assistant

Analysis		
Data Preparation and Validation	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Basic Statistical Analysis	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Advanced Statistical Analysis	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant
Data Visualization	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst

Data Insights		
Custom Dashboards	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Results Presentations and Reports	\$72.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Evidence-based recommendations	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst
Process Optimization	\$72.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst, Associate

Optional		
Transcription	\$43.00 - \$64.00	Editor, Assistant, Associate
Translation	\$43.00 - \$64.00	Editor, Assistant, Associate
Editing (Line-by-line, Formatting, & Writing)	\$43.00 - \$64.00	Editor
Coaching and Training	\$85.00 - \$128.00	Consultant, Analyst

3. Elite Research, LLC and JMU will engage in discussions regarding projects as the need arises. Both parties will collaboratively establish a clear scope of work, and a consensus will be reached on the applicable hourly rate(s) and reimbursable expenses for the project as may be mutually agreed upon in advance.

The Contractor shall not be reimbursed for, nor will James Madison University purchase, any operational needs or expenses of the Contractor, which includes, but is not limited to, office supplies and equipment, computers and accessories, and office furniture.

4. Billable hours shall be for actual work hours on authorized projects/tasks rounded to the quarter hour.
5. Should travel be required during the term of this contract, all travel Contractor billing for travel related expenses must invoice in accordance with the U. S. General Services Administration (GSA) for lodging, meals and incidental expenses at the time of travel, which can be referenced at: <http://www.jmu.edu/finprocedures/4000/4215mie.shtml>.

Transportation for air travel and car rental will be paid at cost with Contractor providing a documented receipt to the University. Contractor shall book air travel and car rental to ensure expenses remain economical. Air fare shall be reimbursed for coach/standard with no upgrades and car rental shall be reimbursed for standard with no upgrades.

6. Contractor shall provide detailed invoicing to include project title, number of hours worked onsite and/or offsite, role of individual(s) performing the work, and specific tasks performed.
7. The University may also request that these services be provided as a fixed-fee project, as would be mutually agreed to prior to services being rendered, with deliverables billed upon completion of milestones.
8. The Purchasing Agency reserves the right to reject any assigned personnel at any time with or without cause. Contractor shall provide a suitable replacement within a timely manner.
9. Contractor has disclosed all potential fees. Additional charges will not be accepted.



PROPOSAL

Commonwealth of Virginia

RFP No. FDC-1189

Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services

Submission: Thursday, November 2nd, 2023 at 2:00 CT

TO: Doug Chester, Buyer Senior, Procurement Services
Commonwealth of Virginia
James Madison University
Procurement Services MSC 5720
752 Ott Street, Wine Price Building
First Floor, Suite 1023
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
T. 540-568-4272
F. 540-568-7935
E. chestefd@jmu.edu
W. <https://www.virginia.gov/agencies/james-madison-university>

FROM: Dr. René Paulson
Elite Research, LLC
9901 East Valley Ranch Parkway, Suite 2035
Irving, TX 75063
T. (800) 806-5661
F. (800) 806-5661
E. rpaulson@eliteresearch.com
W. www.eliteresearch.com

RFP# FDC-1189

Issue Date: October 2, 2023

Title: Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services

Issuing Agency: Commonwealth of Virginia
James Madison University
Procurement Services MSC 5720
752 Ott Street, Wine Price Building
First Floor, Suite 1023
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Period of Contract: From Date of Award Through One Year (Renewable)

Sealed Proposals Will Be Received Until 2:00 PM on November 2, 2023 for Furnishing the Services Described Herein.

SEALED PROPOSALS MAY BE MAILED, EXPRESS MAILED, OR HAND DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO THE ISSUING AGENCY SHOWN ABOVE.

All inquiries for information and clarification should be directed To: Doug Chester, Buyer Senior, Procurement Services, chestefd@jmu.edu; 540-568-4272; (Fax) 540-568-7935 not later than five business days before the proposal closing date.

NOTE: THE SIGNED PROPOSAL AND ALL ATTACHMENTS SHALL BE RETURNED.

In compliance with this Request for Proposal and to all the conditions imposed herein, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the goods/services in accordance with the attached signed proposal or as mutually agreed upon by subsequent negotiation.

Name and Address of Firm:

Elite Research

9901 East Valley Ranch Parkway, Suite 2035

Irving, TX 75063

By:


(Signature in Ink)

Name:

Rene Paulson

(Please Print)

Date: 10/20/23

Title:

President and Senior Statistician

Web Address: www.eliteresearch.com

Phone:

(800) 806-5661

Email: rpaulson@eliteresearch.com

Fax #:

(800) 806-5661

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF ADDENDUM: #1 RP #2 #3 #4 #5 (please initial)

SMALL, WOMAN OR MINORITY OWNED BUSINESS:

☐ YES; ☐ NO; *IF YES =>* ☒ SMALL; ☐ WOMAN; ☐ MINORITY *IF MINORITY:* ☐ AA; ☐ HA; ☐ AsA; ☐ NW; ☐ Micro

Note: This public body does not discriminate against faith-based organizations in accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, § 2.2-4343.1 or against an offeror because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

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Abbreviations Used Throughout This Document

- JMU= James Madison University
- PD = PsychData
- DWS = Divergent Web Solutions, LLC
- ER = Elite Research, LLC
- RFP = Request for Proposal

Cover Letter

Dear Mr. Doug Chester,

Elite Research is submitting a proposal in response to James Madison University's RFP entitled, *Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services*. We believe we are a great fit for your external evaluation needs based off of our team's individual and collective expertise. I started the firm just over 20 years ago in order to empower researchers to build capacity within their programs related to external evaluation, statistical and research consulting. Over the years, the varied academic and professional training of our 30 team members allows for cross-reference of experience and abilities, broadening range of knowledge and expertise. We have focused on bringing in the right expertise and developed internal processes that help our clients to build capacity and succeed within their expertise.

We've worked on a myriad of Department of Education grants, including HSI STEM grants in different capacities. While supporting institutions we have worked in preproposal preparation of grants, working with multidisciplinary teams on programmatic concepts, logic models, team development, evaluation planning, with quarterly, annual and final reporting. During proposal development, we are requested to articulate program evaluation concepts, act as external evaluators, budgets, and final editors. Post award, we are an extension of the team, we support the external evaluation, monitoring, annual reporting, capacity building, and comprehensive final reports.

We would like to be your external evaluation team. By highlighting our alignment to your needs below and throughout this proposal we believe we are the firm you are seeking.

Content Expertise & Demonstrated Experience with Data Collection for Similar Projects. Our team has supported a multitude of studies ranging in capacity in areas of education, public health, disparity issues, and medical health research to program and impact evaluation and M&E development. We have also worked with clinicians, practitioners, and academics to procure and successfully secure education-related federal grant funding through agencies such as HHS, DOE, NIH and NSF. Part of our roles with these clients have been to strategize innovative ideas, create goals and objectives for those ideas, align those goals and objectives with the greater organizational initiatives and funder requirements, and ensure the development of a solid evaluation plan. Team members have also served as external evaluators for federal grants in education, and mentored grantees through the process of grant development, management, and completion. In each of these projects and programs, logic model development has been the critical planning and evaluation tool. We then carry the knowledge and experiences from the proposal development into our understanding and in-depth knowledge of the practices, protocols, analysis and reporting required to carry out these evaluation and analysis work.

Typically, within the initial planning and document review stage, we will confirm alignment of the evaluation plan in the awarded grant with the appropriate metrics to address the logic model components. If a logic model is not provided, ER will work with the grant team to prepare one. The collection schedule, sampling plan, surveys, tools, and protocols following WWC guidelines will be developed with the grant team along with the documentation and tracking processed needed for the grant team to provide us with valid and reliable data. Once data collection is complete each year, a detailed data preparation and validation check will be conducted, as well as a comprehensive analysis plan following WWC guidelines for the strongest research evidence possible, as well as formative and summative evaluation so that the program can be adjusted year to year (if needed). In the final year, a comprehensive analysis and evaluation will be conducted, and the detailed report will include insights and recommendations.

Ability to Handle Multiple Project Deliverables & References. Complexities of evaluating the desired outcomes of similar HSI Grant projects have shown that valid data collection is most important in outcomes evaluation. Reporting is only as good as the data gathered, in so that we work with groups on their initial research design, and molding the process for hiccups along the way, working in an agile way to be fluid to the initial logic model and how it may change throughout. Additionally, group synergies/communications are structured in that there is a transparent model of needs, assessments, and evaluation. This transparency creates a team that is engaged

and plugged in to the overall impact. Finally, we've found that timing of bringing in a new or need for an external evaluator (years 3 or beyond) leads to a hurdle in evaluation, so we work with these multidisciplinary teams early to create limited complexities in evaluation and allowing a timeline that aligns with programmatic milestones.

Based on our extensive expertise and desire to be a strategic partner, Elite Research believes that it is a strong and viable candidate for the work as laid out in the RFP. Along with this letter of interest, we are providing a list of our relevant services. Our proposal presents descriptions of best practices, training, and thorough evaluation services from start to finish. As requested in the RFP, this proposal is submitted in eight main parts: Company Qualifications, Content Expertise & Demonstrated Experience, Prior Evaluations Projects, Approach & Methodology, Proposed Evaluation Cohort, Price Proposal, and required signed documentation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'René M. Paulson', with a stylized, flowing script.

René M. Paulson, Ph.D.
President & Senior Statistician
Elite Research, LLC

Firm Experience & Qualifications

For more than 20 years, the Elite Research team has served as key partners on the grant life cycle, starting with pre-award services of proposal development, research development, prospecting, evaluation planning, funder alignment, compliance and strategies for institutions of higher education, organizations, non-profit entities, and government agencies. Post award, we are an extension of the team, we support the external evaluation, monitoring, annual reporting, capacity building, comprehensive final reports, presentations, visualizations, and publications. Based on our team's individual and collective expertise, along with the content experts who work with us.

Our team has supported a multitude of studies and ***we have expertise ranging in areas of education, public health, disparity issues, and medical health research to program and impact evaluation and M&E development.*** We have also worked with clinicians, practitioners, and academics to procure and successfully secure education-related federal grant funding through agencies such as HHS, DOE, NIH and NSF. Part of our roles with these clients have been to strategize innovative ideas, create goals and objectives for those ideas, align those goals and objectives with the greater organizational initiatives and funder requirements, and ensure the development of a solid evaluation plan. Team members have also served as external evaluators for federal grants in education, and mentored grantees through the process of grant development, management, and completion. In each of these projects and programs, logic model development has been the critical planning and evaluation tool. We then carry the knowledge and experiences from the proposal development into our understanding and in-depth knowledge of the practices, protocols, analysis and reporting required to carry out these evaluation and analysis work.

Within the initial planning and document review stage, we will confirm alignment of the evaluation plan in the grant with the appropriate metrics to address the logic model components. The collection schedule, sampling plan, surveys, tools, and protocols following WWC guidelines will be developed with the grant team along with the documentation and tracking processed needed for the grant team to provide us with valid and reliable data. Once data collection is complete each year, a detailed data preparation and validation check will be conducted, as well as a comprehensive analysis plan following WWC guidelines for the strongest research evidence possible, as well as formative and summative evaluation so that the program can be adjusted year to year. In the final year, a comprehensive analysis and evaluation will be conducted and the detailed report will include insights and recommendations.

Company Information

Elite Research, LLC is a **WBENC-certified Women Owned Small Business (WOSB), Historically Underutilized Business (HUB), and SBA certified** research and statistical consulting firm based out of Dallas, Texas with staff also located in North Texas, Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. Our Elite Research team consists of graduate (Masters and PhD) level consultants with extensive experience and training in theoretical statistics and their application, design, sampling, data collection methodologies, training, and project involvement both domestically and internationally. Our professional and academic backgrounds vary from Clinical Psychology, Informatics, Social Psychology, Sociology, Statistics/Biostats, Chemical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and International Relations to Economics, Anthropology, and International and Comparative Education. The varied academic and professional training allow for cross-reference of experience and abilities, broadening range of knowledge and expertise. Our team has supported a multitude of studies and proposals ranging in capacity in areas of public health, education, social science, program evaluation, disparity issues, and bio-medical research. In the event that a proposal topic is not in our expertise, we rely on our extensive experienced network to identify subject matter experts to support the proposal review process. Certifications located in Appendix C.

ER brings grants life cycle, evaluation design, data collection, and analysis expertise. Our team has supported a multitude of studies ranging in capacity in areas of education, public health, disparity issues, and medical health research to program and impact evaluation and M&E development. We have worked with organizations and

researchers to procure and successfully secure federal grant funding through agencies such as NSF, NIH, HHS, DOD, DOE, IES, CDC, DOJ, USDA, and FDA, and we are open to pursuing other federal agencies as many agencies and programs have very similar processes and components.

Elite Research shares decades of experience in system management, operationalizing, program optimization and evaluation. We understand the value of articulating outcomes and building a theory of change and/or logic model(s), and the necessary embedding of monitoring and evaluation (tracking and reporting) processes that ensure organizations are moving in the right direction, and which are valuable to proposals. More importantly, ER is able to carry these organizations throughout their entire process from management to optimization to evaluation. Functional departments such as research, evaluation and statistics, data collection and field service, computing and information technology, web and marketing, development, editing, and optimization coordinate regularly with production groups based on individual project needs. This allows facilitation of expert staff per project, rather than the duplication of products or resources. Unlike other firms, consultants at ER are often trained in real-world research, rather than solely theoretical or mathematical approaches, and, as such, are highly qualified to deal with the unique situations that often go hand-in-hand with real-world research. Our team of research and data consultants serves educational institutions, organizations, nonprofit entities, and government agencies with data collection and statistical consulting from community evaluation projects to education impact projects and large-scale federal funded grants.

A division of ER, Divergent Web Solutions was founded in 2015. Since inception of the DWS division, ER has worked on various projects including data migration, visualization of data on websites, portals, and apps, bridge building for data management, partnership dashboards and site build from scratch, and integrating existing software solutions. The team creates and manages content for various sites, represented in the professional and technical support staff profiles. The benefit of working with ER and DWS is that the array of expertise allows a one stop shop for the work needed; including data insights, research, evaluation, and statistical support, digital design, development and implementation, content writing and editing, visual presentation, applied executive/collaborative/consultative project management, and information technology

PsychData, a survey platform, has supported researchers and evaluators in more than 30 states. Institutional Research Boards prefer the way data is maintained and collected with this tool, given that its typical use is with students and researchers collectively for the past 20 years. The tool provides survey collection and a system for data collection that is easily used with statistical software that can be utilized in tandem with visualization software used for near real-time reporting.

Relevant Services and Expertise

As an organization, Elite Research offers many services to academics, nonprofits, corporations, organizations, government entities, and students. Some of the services particularly relevant to this RFQ are noted below.

Proposal Development. Strong proposals come from a healthy understanding of both the grantee organization and the funder. Proposals must articulate the strengths of the organization seeking funds and they must be able to succinctly *tell the story* of the context, need, and how they are suited to meet that need through their programs, research, etc. To do this well, the approach and methodology must be well defined. On the other hand, the grantseeker must be able to find the alignment of their work within the funder's priorities, goals, and parameters. ER consultants are experienced with writing to a variety of local, county, state, federal, private, and foundation funders, each with their own guidelines, specificities, and requirements. Any experienced grant writer will tell you; *the devil is in the details*.

Editing. Relative to proposal development, editing is a critical service that ER consultants provide. Depending on the topic, there are two to three types of editing generally required for a proposal. The first would be the "scientific" review, which is usually conducted by a subject matter expert; this type of editing ensures that the approach and methodology are appropriate to the subject and scope. The second type of editing is for content; this ensures that the funding notice priorities, goals, and scope have been addressed and requirements (formatting, page limitations, etc.) have been accurately followed. The third type of editing would be

considered a “polish” – in that the proposal is reviewed and modified for appropriate white space, graphic appearance, spelling, grammar, consistency in numbering and formatting of titles, etc. This third type should be the final step in proposal preparation.

Logic Model Development. ER consultants develop and use logic models as the solid foundation for research, program development, and evaluation. Logic models create stronger programs by tightening planning, implementation, and evaluation elements. Consultants work with clients through many iterations of a logic model to ensure that it succinctly visualizes the appropriate content and demonstrates the theory of change.

Evaluation Design. Evaluation is a critical element of business, nonprofit, academic, and medical/health industries. While each may call it something different, the function is the same. Each industry “evaluates” whether processes are carried out as specified, how many were used, how the program performed, were targets met, etc. When change is the ultimate intended outcome, evaluation seeks to answer questions such as how well are we doing what we say we are doing, are we actually making a difference in this community, what transformation has taken place with this group of people, etc. Elite Research works with clients to develop strong evaluation designs and plans, based on logic models that ensure data answers the evaluation questions. Data collection follows quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method protocols that will withstand academic scrutiny. Evaluation reports (and reporting in general) are tailored to the audience engaging with them.

Third Party Evaluation. With growing transparency and accountability measures and requirements, grantees are increasingly required to provide an independent, third-party evaluation of their work. Elite Research has experience in providing these services, even to high federal funding levels. Often times, Elite Research works with clients before proposal submission to create evaluation plans and are written into the grant itself as the contracted evaluator. Sometimes, the team is requested to join post award, and at other times, Elite Research is asked to either *correct* the work of a previous contractor or finish an evaluation project in which the original evaluator walked away. The preference is always to work with the grantee at the beginning, so that we can help build a strong plan.

Survey/Instrument Design. ER survey/instrument design consultants have extensive experience and work to ensure that surveys or questionnaires are both reliable and valid, yielding usable data and accurate results, while providing counsel in relation to data collection methods as requirements differ by survey method (web, mail, and on-site paper administration). Ordering of items, question formats, and scale placements are all considered in every survey. Consultants provide the best survey services by remaining up to date with the latest literature on survey methodology and design.

Qualitative Data Collection & Analysis. ER qualitative consultants have training and experience in the design of sound qualitative data collection instruments, such as interview guides and focus group scripts, as well as in collecting data from observations, field notes, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, focus groups, as well as from relevant documents. ER consultants are skilled at collecting robust, in-depth qualitative data by paying careful attention to the wording on data collection instruments and during interviewing/moderating that avoids assumptions or bias, as well as with the appropriate use of probing. Consultants are experienced in recording data through the use of hand-written notes, video and audio recorders, and mobile applications. ER consultants are skilled at preparing and analyzing multiple forms of qualitative data for analysis, including transcribing video and audio-recorded data, incorporating relevant documents, photographs, and artifacts, and coding and analyzing textual and visual data. Consultants are experienced in using a variety of coding techniques (e.g., descriptive, magnitude, in vivo, evaluation, values, etc.) to assist in the iterative coding process in order to answer a study’s research questions. Consultants are also skilled in multiple computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) packages (including NVIVO, ATLAS.ti, MAXQDA, Dedoose, and Symphony) to aid in organization and visualization of data for analysis and presentation of results.

Quantitative Data Collection. ER statistical consultants have training and experience in data collection, including a variety of web-based software training for online survey administration. With the team’s access to large databases and panel companies, online data collection is simplified for clients. ER has experience in collecting and organizing structured, semi-structured, and unstructured data to prepare them for analysis. Consultants

check for valid respondents, ensuring quality assurance and control. Additionally, consultants can also create a data entry template and codebook with instructions to ensure the smoothest transition from data entry to data preparation. For projects that require archival, simulated, or secondary data, consultants work with clients to ensure they obtain the most useful data to address their study's goal.

Statistical Analysis. ER consultants have PhDs in related statistical fields and are experienced in a variety of software packages (including STATA, SPSS, SAS, SYSTAT, LISREL, MPlus, EQS, Smart PLS, WarpPLS, EViews, and R Stats) enabling them to handle any statistical need. Consultants are skilled in a variety of statistical methods, such as basic descriptive analyses, factor analyses, cluster analyses, multivariate analyses of variance, multiple regressions, logistic regressions, propensity score analyses, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), meta-analyses, structural equation modeling (SEM), Q-sort analyses, machine learning, Bayesian methods, and more. Statistical consultants strive to not only present accurate results Through our data analysis services, but also ensure that the client understands the analytic techniques utilized. With every project, consultants offer an explanation and summary of the research findings in plain, everyday language. Throughout the course of any given project, the consultants at ER strive to be 100% transparent about our process, so that clients not only get findings to their research questions, but also learn the decision-making process that drives statistical analyses and reporting.

Data Visualization. Insight and solutions extracted from data do not end with statistical analysis. The results of statistical analyses need to be communicated in a way in which the broadest possible audience can easily understand them. Lengthy tables loaded with p-values and coefficients are bland and off-putting, whereas good data visualization can both demand attention and curiosity while easily delivering a complex message to the viewer. Whether it is a series of scatter plots or interactive visualization dashboards, we have a strong track record of providing the highest quality visualizations to our clients. Complexity for complexity's sake should never be the goal for visualization. If a simple bar graph communicates the intended message best, then we recommend that visualization. A great data visualization presents eye-catching aesthetics without sacrificing clarity. The consultants and developers at ER have extensive experience using tools such as Tableau, R, R shiny, ggplot2, D3.js, Python, and many others to create illuminating both static and interactive data visualizations following industry best practices and technological advancements in the field. We work with organizations to develop the most appropriate and effective visualization/dashboard plan, whether that is starting from scratch or integrating with the organizations existing visualization tools.

We've worked on a myriad of Department of Education grants, including HSI STEM grants in different capacities. While supporting institutions we've worked in preproposal preparation of grants, working with multidisciplinary teams on programmatic concepts, logic models, team development, evaluation planning, with quarterly, annual and final reporting. During proposal development, we are requested to articulate program evaluation concepts, act as external evaluators, budgets, and final editors. Post award, we are an extension of the team, we support the external evaluation, monitoring, annual reporting, capacity building, and comprehensive final reports.

Prior & Relevant Evaluation Projects

1. University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) - Elite Research was initially contracted by UIC to assist their Social Science department with writing “as needed” elements of a new program proposals. By the end of the first conversation, it was clear that our consultants had more to offer UIC than they initially expected. Because UIC came to us before a proposal was written, we were able to help guide their program design, as well as write major pieces of the proposal. Once the proposal was submitted, UIC asked if we could step in as the External Evaluator on their current grant which ended September 2020. Within this role, we compiled their five years of data into a summative, comprehensive program report.

Grant Name: *University of Illinois at Chicago’s AANAPI Citizens who are Culturally Responsive, Engaged, Dynamic, Informed, and Thoughtful (ACCREDIT) Project*

Funder: Department of Education

Program: Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions Program

Funding Status: Submitted 2020

Role: Program Design, Planning & Logic Model, Proposal Development, Evaluation Plan, Instrumentation, Data Collection, Logistical Support, Analysis, Evaluation, and Presentation of Findings

Grant Name: *University of Illinois at Chicago proposes the Pipeline for Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPI) Student Success (UIC PASS)*

Funder: Department of Education

Program: Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions Program

Funding Status: Funded 2015; active

Role: Instrumentation, Data Collection, Logistical Support, Analysis, Evaluation, and Findings

PI: Karen Su, Ph.D. – Project Director, UIC AANAPISI Initiative and Clinical Assistant Professor Global Asian Studies; 312-996-8530, karensu@uic.edu

Institutional Representative: Tracy Sikorski – Director, Office of Social science Research; 312-996-4408; sikorski@uic.edu

2. Texas Woman’s University (TWU) – Several consultants from Elite Research, including all five key personnel involved in this proposal, worked for TWU on all aspects of strategy development, project planning, funder selection, and proposal development. Consultants supported more than 100 foundation and federal grant proposals in varying capacities, including strategic planning for research and grant development.

Grant Name: *TWU STAR – Scholarships, Teams, and Research*

Funder: National Science Foundation

Program: Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Program (S-STEM)

Funding Status: Funded 2019; active

Role: Proposal Development, Research Design, and Evaluation Plan

Grant Name: *TWU PRIME – Partnerships, Research, Innovation, Mentoring & Engagement*

Funder: National Science Foundation

Program: Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI Program)

Funding Status: Funded 2019; active

Role: Proposal Development, Research Design, and Evaluation Plan

PI: Diana Elrod, Ph.D. – Director, Center for Student Research, 940-206-6287, delrod@twu.edu

3. HEAL NOLA - Children Health Assessment. The NOLA project currently assesses various health and education measures for approximately 25,000 children in 20 schools in the New Orleans, Louisiana metropolitan area. This project was funded to evaluate whether HEAL programs are having a significant effect on student outcomes in these schools over a three-year period. This project is conducted in conjunction with the program implantation team to provide development of analysis structure, coding, data preparation directions and processes, in addition to reporting for the HEAL organization's NOLA project effectiveness. Capacity building of the team was an important component for sustainability.

Implementation Dates: August 2015 – July 2018

Key Milestones & Deliverables: Dataset management for three academic years cleaned and matched/merged both in excel and SPSS formats, data/variable information chart, output analysis for primary intervention testing, funder report templates/presentation, school reports for participants, capacity building for HEAL NOLA to continue annually

Reference: Danielle Hollar, Ph.D., MHA, MS, – President, Healthy Networks Design and Research, Contact: 305-992-4085; daniellehollar@gmail.com

Federal Grant Proposal Experience

Our specific expertise and success are with **NSF, NIH, DOD, DoED, IES, CDC, DOJ, USDA, DOL, and FDA**, and we are open to pursuing other federal agencies as many agencies and programs have very similar processes and components. Examples of our successes include:

- During the 2022-2023 Academic year, Elite Research provides an 8-session (26-week) interactive Grant Academy to the **University of Texas at Arlington**. The Academy builds grant seeking capacity across research faculty. Each meeting session is 60-90 minutes, and faculty participants enter the Academy with research and/or project (proposal) ideas and potential funders. Participants receive one-on-one feedback from Elite Research on their proposal components.
- In 2021, we built a grant proposal development partnership with the **Racial Equity Group** of Dallas, Texas to submit State proposals to California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia for support of strategic planning, training and assessment around diversity, equity, and inclusion. We provided narrative, costing, service model support, and submission. In this work, a theory of change and framework were developed along with analytical support of the state data (both primary and secondary) to map action planning and implementation of change guidelines.
- In 2020, **[Project 1]** Elite Research assisted the University of Illinois – Chicago to write a comprehensive evaluation report for the **Department of Education's** Institutional Service's funding program entitled, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (ANNAPISI) Program (CFDA Number: 84.031L; 84.382B). Though not a part of the evaluation design in the planning stages, Elite Research stepped in to complete the evaluation when evaluator changes occurred. This contract included a gap analysis, measure development, additional data collection, reviewing the data, analysis, and annual reports prepared by the program staff, and to provide an overall comprehensive review of the program with recommendations. **[Project 2]** Additionally in 2020, Elite Research assisted the University of Illinois – **Chicago** in successfully receiving funding from the **Department of Education's** Institutional Service's funding program entitled, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (ANNAPISI) Program (CFDA Number: 84.031L; 84.382B). Once the funding was received, Elite Research was hired as the external evaluator to carry out the evaluation plan they designed for the grant, which included the development of a data collection plan based on the program's logic model, measure development, reviewing and analyzing the data collected by program staff, and the development of the comprehensive program report upon grant completion.
- In 2019 we helped Texas Health Resources and their community partners secure a **Health & Human Services YES! Initiative** (Youth Engagement in Sports: Collaboration to Improve Adolescent Physical Activity & Nutrition) with a deadline of less than two weeks. Texas Health is the only health system in the nation

awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services for the Federal Youth Engagement in Sports (YES) initiative.

- In 2018-2019 Elite Research was part of the founding team for the inaugural Grant Academy at Texas Woman's University. Supporting faculty in their research trajectories by capacity building federal proposal skillsets and promoting interdisciplinary work environments among multiple cohorts. This provided off-peak sessions to faculty with a project/proposal with potential funders. Elite primarily had success with funders including, but not limited to the **Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, the Department of State, National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health**, and many Foundations.
- In 2017, 2018 and 2019, we led TWU multi-disciplinary teams to secure two **National Science Foundation** grants: 1) *Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Program (S-STEM)* and 2) *Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI Program)*. Within the same span, we helped TWU receive four major grants through the **Department of Education**: 1) *Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (Title V)* grant, a 2) *Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS)* program, and 3 & 4) two *TRIO Student Support Services Program* grants. Also, within the same years, we worked with TWU faculty to secure several **National Institute of Health** R15, R21, and R01 grants.
- Additionally, from 2015-2020 we worked with three successful **Department of Education** WIOA programs for TWU to secure program funding and provide evaluation: 1) *Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH)* program, 2) *Project PIONERAS: Professional Improvement through Optimization of Native-language Education and the Realization of Academic/familial Symbiosis* and 3) *ELLevate! English Language Learner Educators Vested in the Advancement of Teaching Excellence*.

References

ATTACHMENT A

OFFEROR DATA SHEET

TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFEROR

1. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFEROR: Offerors must have the capability and capacity in all respects to fully satisfy the contractual requirements.
2. YEARS IN BUSINESS: Indicate the length of time you have been in business providing these types of goods and services.

Years 19 Months 7

3. REFERENCES: Indicate below a listing of at least five (5) organizations, either commercial or governmental/educational, that your agency is servicing. Include the name and address of the person the purchasing agency has your permission to contact.

CLIENT	LENGTH OF SERVICE	ADDRESS	CONTACT PERSON/PHONE #
Texas Women's University	17 years	1719 Bell Avenue, Denton, TX 76204	Diana Elrod, Ph.D. -- Director, Center for Student Research 940-206-6287
UTA	2 years - current	701 S Nedderman Dr, Arlington, TX 76019	Jeremey Forsberg, VP for Research and Innovation 817-272-3657
Chicago University	4 Years - current	Edward H. Levi Hall 5801 S. Ellis Ave. Chicago, IL 60637	Karen Su, Ph.D. -- Project Director, UIC AANAPISI Initiative and Clinical Assistant Professor Global Asian Studies 312-996-8530
Heal NOLA	5 years	1700 Josephine St, Suite 200 New Orleans, LA 70113	Danielle Hollar, Ph.D., MHA, MS, -- President 305-992-4085
University of Florida	3 years - current	Gainesville, FL 32611	Maria Coady; Faculty and Researcher; 352-359- 9995

4. List full names and addresses of Offeror and any branch offices which may be responsible for administering the contract.

Elite Research, LLC

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA: Is any member of the firm an employee of the Commonwealth of Virginia who has a personal interest in this contract pursuant to the CODE OF VIRGINIA, SECTION 2.2-3100 – 3131?

☐ YES ☒ NO

IF YES, EXPLAIN: _____

Team Personnel

Research proposes a core team to produce the strongest outcomes in the grant life cycle, primarily pre-award services. The team presented here exemplify the strength in grant prospecting, grant writing and editing, grant alignment, grant components (i.e., research design, program development and evaluation design, technical writing, logic models, letters of support, bio sketch/cv development).

Elite Research's anticipated team will consist of **Dr. Rene Paulson** (oversight of the directors, process optimization and data management directions, President and Senior Statistician, spending alignment to objectives), **Ms. Mindy Chandler** (primary proposal development officer, evaluation consultant, program designer), **Ms. Jacquelyn Stephens** (Research and statistical consultant), **Ms. Gabrielle Lynch** (grant writer, grant editor), **Ms. Claras Frahm** (project management), **Ms. Jodi Woodside** (prospecting officer, compliance, operations and development director), and **Ms. Eileen Flaig** (grant writer, editor, human resources director). Elite research will also bring in lead members of the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods department as needed. The project team leads have worked collectively for over a decade on various grant assessments, narrative development, editing and formatting, and submissions, both internally for the organization and externally for various institutions. They are often sought out because of word of mouth. They respect their work product, relationships, and working ability and follow the company core values and processes outlined below.

Core Values and Processes

Our mission revolves around empowerment through capacity building and cultural competence allowing us to help impart our knowledge in the gaps where you find it necessary for training, process development and improvement, or templates for future use. Our goal is not to maintain projects over time, but to help you with the higher-level needs where you see fit. Elite Research's is committed to our core values of:

Collaboration: we are committed to partnerships and synergistic ideas ultimately create the greatest value

Cultural Humility: we are committed to strive to know more about and understand the communities with which we work, while being reflexive about our position as outsiders, because we know cultural competence as not something to be attained but rather something to always be working towards

Empowerment: we are committed to creating opportunities for growth in knowledge, skills, and practices

Equity: we are committed to work that builds access and power for all, as well as using disaggregated data to highlight existing inequities

Environmental Responsibility: we are committed to leaving less of an environmental footprint through our internal and external practices

Data Integrity: we are committed to quality, valid, and reliable data that can be trusted

Fiscal Integrity: we are committed to making responsible and effective use of available assets and not taking advantage of those with whom we work

Social Impact: we are committed to working towards a greater good

Transparency: we are committed to being clear, direct, honest, and engaging communication

Core values are present in day-to-day operations, communication and team work.

Evaluation Team

Dr. René M. Paulson – brings expertise in strategic and multidisciplinary direction, program monitoring and evaluation, proposal development, statistics, instrument development, and methodological protocols. Her role will be oversight of the project and overall project leadership. At the core of these efforts is her ability to form coalitions, engage stakeholders and work collectively towards project synergies. Dr. Paulson has led the inception, strategic planning, implementation and staffing of the first research design and analysis center in Texas State institutions, universities and departments. She has sat on the boards for strategic planning, quality enhancement and improvement, and advancement and opportunity for various academic entities. Dr. Paulson received her PhD from Texas Christian University.

Ms. Mindy Chandler — brings culturally-competent expertise in program design, evaluation, and project management to help a strengthened proposal planning process. With her master's in Education and Human Development from George Washington University, Ms. Chandler has worked with leaders, researchers, and practitioners in the nonprofit and philanthropic world to design strong long-term designs through the development of theories of change and logic models, and then identifying appropriate outcomes, indicators, and measures (including the development of instruments tailored for their purpose). Her role will be proposal planning, key content writing, funder alignment, and will be the *go-to person for every step of services provided*.

Ms. Gabrielle Lynch — brings expertise in proposal writing, including content research and generation. She has experience in survey design, instrumentation, on-site data collection and analysis, research with at-risk populations, and research design. With her masters in curriculum and instruction from the University of Kansas and applied linguistics from the University of Massachusetts, Gabrielle has extensive experience in the dissertation and academic research publishing process, guiding students and writers through research generation, writing, and submission for publication. Ms. Lynch is working on her Ph.D. from Walden University.

Ms. Claras Frahm — brings expertise in grant project coordination, technical writing, and editing. She has experience in large project coordination and filling team gaps where needed. Because of her bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education with a Minor in Special Education and Learning Technologies from Iowa State University, she is familiar with the grant's life cycle, and brings extensive level of team collaboration, timeline adherence, funded grants and post-award execution of grant monies. On this project she will work closely to edit narratives, provide synergies in writing composition, and ensure components are polished for submission.

Ms. Eileen Flaig — brings expertise in technical, scientific, and academic editing and writing. She has worked in both business and academic settings and has a proven eye for detail, serving as an editor and content contributor for research publications, grant proposals, solicitation responses, academic journal articles, university institutional content, corporate reports, internal content, as well as doctoral dissertations and masters theses, specializing in all forms of stylistic reference, university, institutional, organizational, and journal guidelines. Using her degrees in Spanish and pedagogy at the University of Delaware, and Literature from the University of Maryland, she has extensive experience and knowledge in successful grant proposal development and is particularly skilled in narrative creation and review, as well as goal and funder alignment.

Dr. Jacquelyn Stephens — brings expertise in the areas of research design and advanced statistical techniques. As a research consultant, she works with clients to determine the best path forward with their research, evaluation, or analytic needs in order to create actionable insights from their data. As a passionate applied statistician with years of experience conducting public health and education research using her with her doctorate in human development and social policy from Northwestern University, Dr. Stephens specializes in outcome and process evaluation, cost-effectiveness analysis, matching procedures, and modeling student growth in Stata. Her experience with academic evaluation services poses a great aid in future methods of research analysis within specific populations. She is committed to conducting research with equity lens to produce evidence to inform policy and practice.

Ms. Jodi Woodside — brings expertise in prospecting and RFx assessment, compliance, optimization, contracts and confidentiality, communications, and logistical support. Because of her degree in Business Administration, Management Information Systems from Southern New Hampshire University, she often is tasked with designing and managing systems and processes for increased impact, efficiency, quality improvement and cost reduction. She has held C-suite positions with top level executives where she coordinated large-scale events, managed policies/procedures, held confidentiality, and coordinated staff communications and logistics. Her exposure to academic populations and institutions, she is able to delegate and support the proper facilitations and management necessary to execute and perform evaluation and reporting effectively and optimally.

Appendix D contains full resumes for the lead project team above.

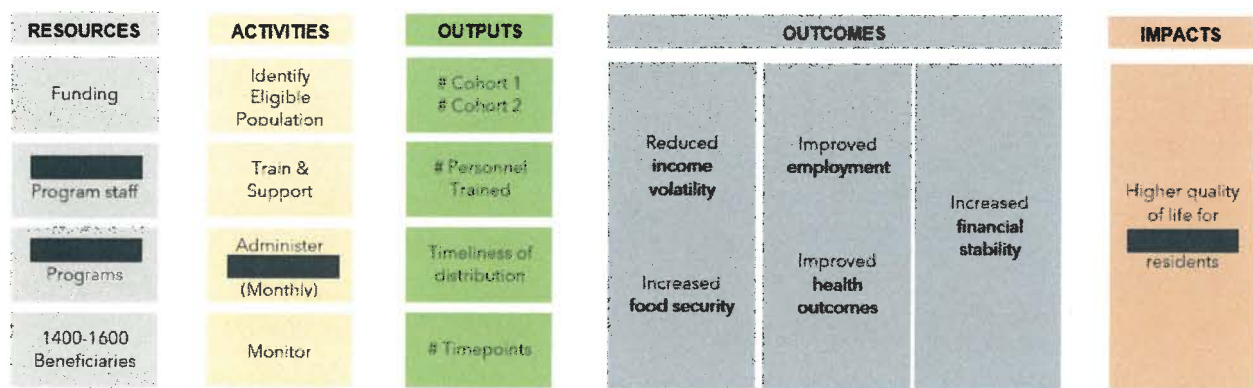
Evaluation Planning and Implementation Methodology

Design Approaches and Strategies

The following is an example of a 24-month methodology used for both an implementation and impact evaluation of a Guaranteed Income Pilot funded through ARPA's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), to address economic inequality and insecurity for low-income households most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic:

Of critical importance to each evaluation is the *planning* stage where ER and the **project team** together design a comprehensive evaluation. Key to evaluating grants, are logic models which identify the *theory* behind why the program will work, to identify metrics and measures to collect and analyze data, and to provide a "living" model that can be adjusted as data provides insight. ER would like to highlight the *need of a significant planning period* in order to do effectively conduct this pilot and evaluation.

The below very simplified example could serve as the basis of this evaluation framework, which would be built out with the **project team** in the early stages of this contract.



Having such a model in place allows for other organizations to learn from this program and implement their own versions from what is conducted. It also allows for very targeted evaluation design. Once those elements are defined, evaluation questions can be further refined. The logic model, itself, provides the framework for *monitoring progress* towards desired impacts. The process would also help identify potential gaps (e.g., needed training and support) and other barriers (e.g., policies that may affect coordination) that may influence program operations or performance. By doing this upfront work, many of the gaps and barriers can be identified and resolved before implementation; it also helps to avoid scope creep and work outside their focus. The process helps to uncover *assumptions* about why the programs are needed and how organizers understand the program to work. Finally, the logic model would dictate the *different types of metrics* needed to monitor this work.

Cultural Competence and Humility

Cultural competence is defined by the HHS' Health Resources & Services Administration as the "behaviors, attitudes, and policies that can come together on a continuum that will ensure that a system, agency, program, or individual can function effectively and appropriately in diverse cultural interaction and settings. It ensures an understanding, appreciation, and respect of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups"¹. In 1998, Tervalon & Murray-Garcia² introduced the idea of cultural humility as "a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing power imbalances...and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations." There has been much debate on whether professionals in public health, medical, social work, and other fields should take a

¹ Selig, S., Tropiano, E., & Greene-Moton, E. (2006). Teaching cultural competence to reduce health disparities. *Health Promotion Practice*, 7(3 Suppl.), 247S–255S. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839906288697>

² Tervalon, M. & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 9, 117–125.

cultural competence or a cultural humility approach to their work. We uphold the same position as Green-Moton and Minkler (2020)³, that “we see substantial complementarity and synergy between the concepts and practice of cultural humility and cultural competence.”

Understanding that we cannot ever be *fully* competent in another’s culture, we view cultural competence as not something to be attained (or not), but rather a reminder and prompt to continue to strive to know more about and understand the communities with which we work, while being reflexive about our position as researchers and evaluators. The two concepts work together to provide professionals (and citizens at large) with critical tools for working with diverse individuals, groups, and communities in today’s complex world.

As part of our approach utilizing both practices, we understand that our own evaluation work is culturally-influenced, as is stated by the AEA⁴ that, “Evaluations cannot be culture free. Those who engage in evaluation do so from perspectives that reflect their values, their ways of viewing the world, and their culture. Culture shapes the ways in which evaluation questions are conceptualized, which in turn influence what data are collected, how the data will be collected and analyzed, and how data are interpreted.” The ways in which we are mindful and committed to taking both a cultural competence and cultural humility approach include, but are not limited to:

- Practice cultural relativism; the idea that a person’s or group’s beliefs, values, and practices should be understood within context of their own culture and not judged by values and beliefs of another culture.
- Engage in self-reflective thinking.
- Take the time up front to really learn about the cultural realities of groups with whom we work in order to diminish misunderstandings and distrust that can hold partnerships from reaching full potential.
- Acknowledge our own explicit and implicit biases, assumptions, as well as stereotypic beliefs.
- Recognize and value natural systems (family, community, church, etc.) as support mechanisms.
- Understand that the needs of some groups may require that they are served and facilitated by people who share their cultural identity.
- Being conscious of the fact that cultural groups are affected—directly and indirectly—by the evaluation decisions, and working to ensure those perspectives are given consideration in the evaluation process.
- Listen to the needs of stakeholders without making generalizations about individuals based on some element or fact related to a cultural group.
- Analysis of data should include cultural and contextual factors related to the issue being evaluated.

Practical evaluation terms include educating ourselves about the cultural groups involved in the programs and evaluation, which can include literature reviews, desk research, and informational interviewing with stakeholders and other members of target populations. We provide surveys, interviews, and focus groups in multiple languages and include interpreters when appropriate. When collecting data, we consider diversity within target populations and strive to include populations of diverse, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Capacity Building with an Equity and Inclusion Lens

Equity is critical to our future. Elite Research is committed not only to culturally-competent practices, but also to applying an equity and inclusion lens to the work we do. Applying an equity and inclusion lens in research means that we look at the implications for effective *long-term* change benefiting society as a whole. When considering our support through a racial and equity lens, we do this in multiple ways:

- **Research design** -- we consider the full scope of beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design process, along with *how* we would use disaggregated data to benefit those groups. Since the audience and client have the inside knowledge, we build processes and communication that honors and builds trust. We consider the audience for those receiving the intervention or assessment, and ensure that the language

³ Greene-Moton E. & Minkler M. (2020). Cultural competence or cultural humility? Moving beyond the debate. *Health Promotion Practice*, 21(1), 142--145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839919884912>

⁴ American Evaluation Association. (2011). *American evaluation association public statement on cultural competence in evaluation*. <https://www.eval.org/Portals/0/Docs/aea.cultural.competence.statement.pdf>

is not only inclusive but relevant to them. We also commit to never over-selling to a client or grantee what they do not need, but rather work with them to identify their goals and build a design that supports their vision.

- **Data collection** – we consider the audience during data collection, and try to bring facilitators and data collectors that mirror the audience. We also try to use collection measures (online, offline, etc.) that meets the audience’s need/desire – meeting them where they are, recognizing time and capacity constraints that they may be under.
- **Analysis** – we consider demographics in the data, and conduct analysis that compares key groups, produce findings that are disaggregated by categories that would be critical to the equity conversation.
- **Reporting** – we consider the audience for whom the project is intended, and ensure that the language and goals are met. We encourage stakeholders to be a part of the writing process, especially when it comes to conclusions and recommendations that are made.
- **Overall** – we try to create a diverse work culture within our own organization, both internally and externally with those with whom we subcontract. We build research plans that draw on multiple collaborators, and build our team members’ portfolios by broadening their involvement across project and client types.

We, as Elite Research, acknowledge that while we bring extensive evaluation and statistical knowledge, our approach may not be aligned with unstated or intuitive ideas. As such, we want to remain flexible and welcome dialogue around areas that would prefer be handled in a different way.

Intersectional Equity

Elite Research carefully considers intersectional equity in our approach, which focuses on “the voices of those experiencing overlapping, concurrent forms of oppression in order to understand the depths of the inequalities and the relationships among them in any given context.”⁵ Using an intersectional lens also means recognizing the historical contexts surrounding an issue.

Elite Research consultants also use an intersectional lens in our work, understanding that all aspects of cultural, sociobiological, economic, structural, and social contexts (including socially constructed categories like race and gender, and inequalities such as racism, genderism, heterosexism, ageism, and classism, poverty, disability, etc.) are **interconnected**, and therefore, to truly understand people’s experiences and address the diversity, equity, and inclusion issues, these must be considered within the context of **an interrelated and intersectional whole**.

DEI Commitment

Allocation of staff

Our roles on the grant development team have been to strategize innovative ideas, create goals and objectives for those ideas, align those goals and objectives with the greater organizational initiatives and funder requirements, and ensure the development and rollout of a solid evaluation plan based on logic models. Team members have also served as evaluators for federal grants, and mentored grantees through the process of grant development, management, and completion. They have extensive experience in capacity building and training in these areas, as well as developing strong narratives with strategic plans leading to growth and sustainability of projects.

Collaboration and empowerment are central tenets of Elite Research; our impact as a group is in the tools and processes, we embed in others, as much as the work we produce. This is done through intentional training in areas where our clients need support, building solid and feasible methodologies and protocols for data collection and analysis, and supporting our clients through those processes. Collaboration *with* our clients as well as field experts is critical to our success. Though we consider issues of equity in our processes, we also have equity content experts review procedures and findings.

⁵ Bilge, S., & Collins, P. H. (2016). *Intersectionality*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

The companies follow a functional organizational structure with oversight from the President. Functional departments such as research, evaluation and statistics, data collection and field service, computing and information technology, web and marketing, editing, and optimization coordinate regularly with production groups based on individual project needs. This allows facilitation of expert staff per project, rather than the duplication of products or resources. Unlike other firms, consultants at ER are often trained in real-world research, rather than solely theoretical or mathematical approaches, and, as such, are highly qualified to deal with the unique situations that often go hand-in-hand with real-world research. Elite Research uses a combination of WPM, CPM, and AEP to manage projects. While these project management approaches can seem conflicting, Elite Research's expertise in where to use different management approaches throughout a large-scale project can optimize the efficiency and accuracy of the work needed. Please see the Project Management section for more information.

Functional departments span ER, PD, and DWS, maintaining a lead consultant listed in the Company Organizational Chart. Leads are designated based on academic training, experience, and tenure within the companies. Interdepartmental and Intradepartmental communication and collaboration occur for every project. Each forecasted project has a team personnel requisition based on expertise and availability that may be subject to change as scope, timeline, or resources are allocated. Project management within the firms are conducted by consultants with over 10-years' experience working on comprehensive projects.

Our team of 35+ consists of graduate (Masters and PhD) level consultants with experience and training in grant writing and proposal development, theoretical statistics and their application, research design, sampling, data collection methodologies, training, and project involvement both domestically and internationally. Our professional and academic backgrounds vary from Clinical Psychology, Informatics, Sociology, Statistics/Biostats, Engineering (Chemical, Computer, and Mechanical) and International Relations to Economics, Anthropology, Internet Technology, and International and Comparative Education. The varied academic and professional training allow for cross-reference of experience and abilities, broadening the range of knowledge and expertise. Depending on the type of evaluation and expertise required, we can allocate different consultants and utilize their knowledge and resources to produce the results desired by each service and goal, benefiting JMU with financial and time-management efficiency.

Management methods

Dr. Rene Paulson, president and senior statistician of Elite Research, LLC, and former executive director of statistical consulting for Texas Woman's University, earned a Ph.D. and Master's degree in experimental psychology from Texas Christian University after obtaining her Bachelor's degree from Ohio University. She holds Six Sigma certifications and memberships for several professional organizations, including Association for Women in Mathematics, American Evaluation Association, and the American Statistical Association. In the fall of 2015, she earned an honorary Doctor of Community Leadership degree from Franklin University for her dedicated work in the field. She creates, manages, and oversees the organization's budget.

ER, DWS, and Dr. Paulson's core passions lie in the empowerment of researchers. Making a difference is at the core of whom she is, and one of the main avenues for affecting change is through her work with programs, nonprofit organizations, and communities. Over the years, she has worked with a number of varying domestic and international nonprofits, institutions, and government entities, assisting in everything from survey design and program evaluations to outcome measurements and (community) asset mapping. She has not limited herself to specific service types but has taken on projects ranging from domestic violence and mental health to adolescent behavior and faith-based work. However, setting up these projects is only part of what she loves about her work; the other part is imparting knowledge and skills to practitioners in order to help them do their work more effectively. Through her work with charities, she has been able to be a part of social change at the local, regional, and global level. She is known for her community participatory approach to evaluation utilizing impact as a community change agent through frameworks and benchmarks. With this approach, her core passion is intermixed with long lasting outcomes that benefit both research and the community alike.

Agility and flexibility are the keystones of Elite Research. Additionally, group synergies/communications are structured in that there is a transparent model of needs, assessments, and evaluation. This transparency creates a team that is engaged and plugged in to the overall impact. Elite Research is constructed to catapult their resources (human and capital) to support positive change through our services to the communities we serve. Throughout 20+ years of business we have redefined our service offerings and restructured our business model to be able to provide services that surpass our competitors. Our capacity is monitored by our Department of Human Resources and triggers a hiring need with approximately 2-years lead time to bring employees the training needed to operate at the desired level to consult. We pride ourselves on our strategic planning, and assignment of roles and responsibilities to the individual's strength. Over the past 10 years we have worked heavily on automating our billing and project management processes. Automation is helpful, but our people are what makes working with our firm unforgettable. Our management and staff are equally responsible for our day-to-day operations, over 35+ staff are assessed for skill set, availability, and need for each project.

Systems To Ensure Maintenance of Complete and Accurate Records

Elite Research typically uses the secure and compliant file hosting services by Dropbox. Dropbox standards and regulations using these frameworks. All files stored online by Dropbox are encrypted and kept in secure storage servers. Storage servers are located in data centers across the United States. To satisfy client requirements, ER may be required to utilize one or more 3rd party survey and data collection tools. ER has significant experience with many tools and based on client need may recommend or engage a vendor to provide this service. In such case, ER will:

- Ensure that selected tools/vendors have implemented privacy policies and security standards regarding the collection and storage of survey data.
- Ensure that the select survey tools/vendors implement a data retention/deletion policy to match client requirements.
- Ensure that any data that is extracted from a collection tool for analysis by ER has been de-identified.
- Based on client request, replace a tool/vendor with one of the client's preferences. This may result in a change to the cost structure of the project.

Any electronic transmission of sensitive data should be executed in a manner that protects it against unauthorized access and ensures its integrity. ER follows standard deidentification and redaction policies. Internal processes for data breaches or impermissible use or disclosure under the Privacy Rule are reported to a director or officer of the company. Risk management and emergency access policies are in place. Technological onboard and offboarding along with procedures for encryption and decryption, automatic logoff, passwords, and document destructions are maintained by HR.

Processes In Place to Protect Personally Identifiable Information

Data governance of government data is provisioned by security responsibilities to protect personally identifiable information. This is managed through risk assessment, software selection and usage, access level management, as well as policies and procedures that govern this data.

ER restricts access to controlled data that may be confidential or secured. Our commitment is to the client's data and how inappropriate access might adversely affect our long-standing excellent reputation. ER promotes a strong stance against malicious data theft, internally and externally through increased user awareness with documented and policy driven data management, storage, and usage.

Our data program applies to all client or company data in storage, awareness, access, and retention and is subject to all risk assessment and compliance for FERPA, HIPPA, HITRUST, HITECH requirements. All company employees and affiliates are expected to abide by the standards of this program. Access is granted with specific credential and managed by a single administrator.

A multi-tenant, compliant, cloud-based location is provided for internal non-networked file storage, along with secure data transfer and sharing. Records of security access to the storage and sharing of files is routinely audited. Credentials are managed by the security administrator and identity management and provisions are

handled through support@eliteresearch.com e-mail communication with IT support. IT support will provide any requested documentation of the data security policy and governance under NDA assuming proposal award. Password requirements are outlined within the policies and procedures executed by the company. Individual requirements for security at the desktop, workspace and credentials are outlined in the company data standards protocol. Levels of access are granted per project and data file management requirement.

Our servers are housed in a secure data facility and are monitored 24 hours-per-day and 7 days-per-week by network operations personnel for all aspects of operational security. Biometric/intrusion sensors, card readers, personal identification numbers, and environmental sensors are used to ensure server integrity and safety. Redundant HVAC systems ensure an optimized operational environment. Server power is provided by a redundant, multi-stage, uninterruptible system.

Access control methods in place are withheld within the policies and procedures and audits are regularly conducted. Incident reports are communicated to the support department. Outlined per job description are data level ownership, administration, responsibility, and response requirements. Any access found within violation of this program and written protocol are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. No network access is provided to subcontractors or affiliates.

Potential Use of Subcontractors

In the event that Elite should bring in sub-contractors, given that we have a list of various resources and aid from previous work in academic, medical, and educational avenues, our affiliations can help increase our depth and expansion of expertise we bring to each evaluation. With our resources at hand, we would be able to adapt to the need and demand of each project and enhance the quality and accuracy of the evaluation process. Aside from meeting the demands of the project more efficiently, it can also help in cost reduction and proficient time-allocation management.

Commitment To Project Completion Within Time and Budget Constraints

Meeting timeline and budget requirements within an evaluation project is paramount for its success. It is essential to strategically plan and allocate resources while maintaining flexibility to adapt to changing variables. Initially, the project's timeline and budget should be carefully established to ensure feasibility. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that unforeseen circumstances, resource limitations, or shifting priorities can impact the original budget. If necessary, resources are not readily available, it may require adjustments, potentially resulting in a budget change due to the need for more allocation of resources not yet anticipated in the overall plan and budget. Effective project management involves continuous monitoring, risk assessment, and a willingness to adapt. By maintaining a dynamic approach and transparent communication, deviations can be minimized, and the evaluation project can remain on track to fulfill its objectives while addressing budgetary fluctuations when required. If budget cannot be adjusted or easily modified, resources will stay the same which may result in timeline modifications and adjustments.

Quality Control Process Mechanisms to Detect and Reduce Fraud and Errors In Data Collection

Elite Research has 30+ consultants and numerous subject matter experts to support the needs of JMU. Their adaptive mindset allows openness to change and project priorities, they work with agility and are familiar with agile methodologies which give way to adaptive project processes. In conjunction with the leads mentioned above, the Organizational chart is found in Appendix D outlined additional leads and organizational structure. This team, collectively works to meet and maintain knowledge of reporting requirements.

It is the policy of ER's team to provide quality work, service, and products that meet or exceed needs and expectations. Our quality assurance approach focuses on defining quality, measuring quality, and improving quality. **Defining quality** means identifying the expected level of performance for a project or system whether it is for technical performance, service access, interpersonal relations, service delivery, safety, etc. These standards are based on up-to-date scientific evidence but may also include stakeholder perception and expectations depending on the circumstance. **Improving quality** involves closing the gap between the current

and expected level of quality; this is done by identifying the element that needs improvement, analyzing the problem, developing possible solutions (hypotheses), implementing the changes and testing their effectiveness, and then determining the best way forward (abandoning, modifying, or implementing the change). *Measuring quality*, to Elite Research, is all about determining whether current performance meets or complies with expected standards. To do this, specific and appropriate-to-industry performance indicators must be identified and then used to assess the level of compliance with standards. The ER team will apply quality measures for alignment with approaches to work to ensure process optimization both in project management, partnership development, and work product.

Service Support Philosophy

Elite Research seeks to serve our clients through our holistic support philosophy. With a mission to empower our clients in research, evaluation, and analysis, our goal is to meet our clients where they are at. Our desire is to help increase our clients' effectiveness in achieving their goals by empowering them and their teams with the appropriate tools, skills, abilities, and ways of thinking that will take their work much further than where it is right now. We believe there is a solution or applicable approach for almost every issue and are committed to helping our clients find a way forward.

Our commitment to forward momentum of the project goals includes:

- Responsive communication (within 1 business day).
- Practical feedback, options, and recommendations.
- Internal project management that gauges project milestones and conducts weekly project reviews.
- Sharing (educational, organizational, and template) materials that we have developed that would save client time and resources.

We are committed to working with our clients where they are and will not try to get them to take on more than they can handle or need.

Quality Assurance Measures

We dedicate time and effort into each level of our evaluation services, ensuring that we meet the needs of every program to guarantee the highest level of quality for our clients. Our team contains personnel with exceptional credentials and experience that enhance the quality of evaluation and process efficacy. With many who are well-equipped to tackle a diverse size and depth of evaluations, we consistently meet and exceed the highest standards, delivering value and confidence to our valued partners. We maintain open channels of communication with our clients, actively seeking feedback to refine and adapt our services to meet the evolving needs of those we work closely with.

Third Party Evaluation. With growing transparency and accountability measures and requirements, grantees are increasingly required to provide an independent, third-party evaluation of their work. Elite Research has experience in providing these services, even to high federal funding levels. Often times, Elite Research works with clients before proposal submission to create evaluation plans and are written into the grant itself as the contracted evaluator. Sometimes, the team is requested to join post award, and at other times, Elite Research is asked to either *correct* the work of a previous contractor or finish an evaluation project in which the original evaluator walked away. The preference is always to work with the grantee at the beginning, so that we can help build a strong plan.

Software Used for Statistical Analysis of Data.

Elite Research uses a variety of software packages (including STATA, SPSS, SAS, SYSTAT, LISREL, MPlus, EQS, Smart PLS, WarpPLS, EViews, and R Stats) as one component of our data analysis services. Our statistical consultants are skilled in a variety of statistical methods, such as basic descriptive analyses, factor analyses, cluster analyses, multivariate analyses of variance, multiple regressions, logistic regressions, propensity score analyses, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), meta-analyses, structural equation modeling (SEM), Q-sort analyses, and more.

Example Evaluation Report

coordinated in tandem with the assessment forms and activities for the evaluation protocol, keeping them separate where necessary and not duplicating feedback requests to program participants where avoidable so as not to overwhelm students.

In addition, AANAPISI GMT will meet once a month to monitor all ongoing implementation and coordination of grant activities. They will coordinate and facilitate an annual meeting for the AANAPISI team as a whole, including other relevant staff and faculty from AARCC and GLAS to attend an all-staff retreat for team building, highlighting annual progress and successes, and identifying steps for improvement to be implemented in the coming year, especially attending to any feedback and recommendations from the AANAPISI Advisory Board.

The quality of each employee's work will be evaluated through the standard UIC annual employee performance evaluations (including professional staff, graduate assistants, and undergraduate employees) following the structure provided by UIC Human Resources. In addition, the GMT will elicit annual feedback specific to the enhancement of AANAPISI programs, noting how employee performance and skills can be improved for the success of the proposed project. This feedback will include annual reporting as well as assessments toward improvements in the operation of the proposed project. This feedback will be considered along with any input from the EE through the monthly GMT meetings to ensure that the quality of project services remains excellent.

VII. EVALUATION SERVICES FOR UIC ACCREDIT

A strong and solid evaluation plan is critical to ensure UIC ACCREDIT is meeting its objectives, creating impact, and continually improving. UIC will contract with an external evaluator (EE) to assist in developing the final details of the evaluation plan. The EE will work

with the Primary Investigators (PIs) to help fine tune the evaluation plan, help develop the documents necessary for formative and summative evaluations, and then annually examine program adherence to the funded proposal concerning finances, personnel, and participant services and progress. The GMT will be responsible for collecting data, while the EE will be responsible for analyzing the data alongside the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), creating reports for the Department of Education, and making recommendations for improvement. The EE and PI will meet twice a year to discuss the data and analyses and determine recommendations for improvement.

How the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

The evaluation methodology utilized will provide formative as well as summative information while focusing on the outcomes of the project and how to make project modifications, if and when they are needed. Collecting data from multiple sources, multiple times, using multiple methods will enhance the breadth and quality of the information while decreasing the responsibility of any individual to provide objective data measures. The project's evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

The proposed evaluation will consist of two designs. First, a quasi-experimental design will be used to compare student retention and academic success for *students who are served* by the proposed project relative to a *control group of students who are not served*. Second, an alternative treatments design will be used to examine what aspects of project participation contribute to the highest rates of retention and academic success of students who are served. Participation rates will be controlled for, as the assumption is that someone more engaged in the

programs would have more benefit. Both designs will provide information about the effects of participation in the proposed project, as well as information about the specific components of the project that contribute to academic success.

Evaluation Methods. This proposed evaluation plan utilizes a *pre/post intervention/comparison design* to investigate the efficacy of participation in UIC ACCREDIT activities on increasing the short, medium, and long-term outcomes. The evaluation also utilizes a *repeated-measures design* to examine the efficacy of the project throughout its course on key outcome measures. This design will allow the GMT to use the data necessary to make formative changes throughout the project and for summative evaluation of the project efficacy. *Comparison group analysis* will compare the UIC ACCREDIT students to comparable non-participants on rates of graduation and certification rates, as well as first year retention rates.

Comparison student data to assess differences from the UIC ACCREDIT students will be conducted in two methods. First, UIC ACCREDIT students' rates of graduation will be compared to UIC institution rates of the same graduating classes reported in the Student and Adult Learner Follow Up Institution reports provided by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). Second, the project director will work with UIC's OIR to identify comparable nonparticipants who will be surveyed about their financial stability, satisfaction with professional pathway, and community/civic engagement status one year post graduation. Comparison nonparticipants will be matched on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, SES, gender, age, major and transfer status. The EE recognizes the advantages of mixed-method designs that capitalize on opportunities to a) evaluate academic success in different environments, b) use multiple informants to minimize systematic bias, and c) reduce inflated associations due to shared method variance.

How the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

UIC ACCREDIT is guided by its logic model (Figure 1, p.10). The strategies (S), activities and products (outputs) align with the outcomes (change intended as a result from the program).

Outputs Measured. The outcome measures for this program will focus on the short term outcomes of (S1) increasing students' knowledge of educational resources for academic success, increasing academic skills, increasing sense of belonging, (S2) increasing competency in personal life skills, increasing financial literacy skills, increasing knowledge of informed career and educational options, and (S3) increasing knowledge of Chicago AANAPI communities and increasing cross-racial interaction and community connections. By focusing on these seven short-term outcomes, the program should see an (S1) increased academic self-efficacy, increased academic grit, decreased time to credit-bearing courses, as well as an (S2) increase in financial empowerment and an increase in self-efficacy in the areas of finance, life, and career. Additionally, in the mid-term, AANAPI students should demonstrate (S3) an increased sense of cultural identity and increased cross-racial interaction and community connections. These 6 intermediate outcomes should, in the long-term, cause an increase in student retention, graduation rates, financial stability, satisfaction with professional pathway, and civic engagement, stronger cross-racial alliances in the community, and stronger connections between UIC GLAS and local, national, and global communities. Ultimately, the impact of the program should be demonstrated by an increased number of UIC students graduating who have a stronger understanding of AANAPI identity and are well-equipped for life, career, and civic engagement. Additionally, the program should produce an increased

number of UIC graduates who are greater engaged community members locally, nationally, and globally. The evaluation, therefore, aims to answer the question, *to what degree did UIC ACCREDIT affect these changes in these intended outcomes?*

Outputs Measured. The strategies noted in the logic model yield a number of outputs that will be assessed through the program, and aim to directly answer the questions: (S1) *To what extent did AANAPI students participate in and take advantage of academic support activities?* (S2) *To what extent did AANAPI students complete life skills education activities?* (S3) *To what extent did AANAPI students engage in the community-engaged experiential learning activities?*

Measures. Specific measures will be collected over the course of this program. All measures are either already developed or will be developed, pilot tested, and validated before baseline measurement is collected. Due to page limits of this proposal, an example of the data collection plan for Strategy 1 (Figures 6 and 7, pp. 49-50) based off the logic model is given.

- *Program Utilization Form (PUF)* - This log will detail participation in AANAPISI related activities. The data will allow program leadership to assess if the program is engaging students in program activity. [Outputs]
- *Feedback Forms (FF) - Formative & Summative* - This Likert scale assessment will be developed and given to AANAPI student participants after *each* project activity attended. These forms will assess students' perceptions of the utility of the specific activity in a) enhancing their academic experience, b) increasing their sense of connection to AANAPI communities, and c) building a support network or system. Students will be given the opportunity to provide suggestions for future programming. [Outcomes: increased knowledge of educational resources for academic success]
- *Interviews - Formative & Summative* - Qualitative data will be collected through interviews

with students in order to gain in-depth insights into participants' culturally responsive academic support experience, their interaction and satisfaction with program administration, and their perceptions of the program overall. Interviews will also be collected from GLAS faculty and community partners. Interviews are considered summative in that findings will demonstrate program satisfaction, yet also formative as findings will be used to make program improvements. [Outcomes: increased knowledge of educational resources for academic success, informed career educational options]

- *Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) - Summative* - Data from UIC's automated system will be used to track UIC ACCREDIT participants academic success, time to credit-bearing courses, school retention, and if they continue through to graduation. Comparison data of non-program student will be used to determine if the program affects students' graduation rates. [Outcomes: decreased time to credit-bearing courses]
- *Student Self-Assessment (SSA) - Formative & Summative* - This Likert scale assessment will be developed and given to AANAPI student participants to measure knowledge and behavior changes as a result of the culturally-responsive academic support and life skills education content. Pre-data will be collected as part of the application process, and post-data will be collected at the end of each semester; the second semester data collection will assess students' overall perception of the program. It is considered summative in that findings will demonstrate overall program effectiveness, yet also formative as findings will be used to make program improvements. [Outcomes: increased academic skills, competency in personal life skills, financial literacy skills, knowledge of Chicago AANAPI communities, academic grit, financial empowerment, self-efficacy]
- *Alumni Questionnaire (AQ) - Summative* - This Likert scale assessment will be developed and

given to AANAPI graduates to measure long-term outcomes as a result of the culturally-responsive life skills education and experiential learning content. [Outcomes: increased financial stability, satisfaction with professional pathway, community and civic engagement]

- *Community Impact Tool (CIT) - Summative* - This assessment will be completed by community partners and staff to document impact of the community-engaged experiential learning component. Specifically, the CIT will capture data regarding the a) number of students participating in the each of the learning elements, b) number of projects/publications completed by students, and c) number of community members impacted by student efforts. [Outputs; Outcomes: stronger cross-racial alliances, stronger connections to local and global communities]
- *Academic Grades – Summative* – Academic records will be monitored for change. [Outcomes: increased academic skills]

Sample Size and Power Analysis. A priori power analysis was conducted with G*Power version 3.1.9 to determine the minimum sample size that is required to find significance with a desired level of power set at .80, α -level at .05, and a moderate effect size of .25 (f) for repeated measures analysis analyses. It was determined that a minimum of 34 participants are required to ensure adequate power for testing for significant change in the outcome variables.

Data Management. The primary tool used to house and manage program participant data is the customized Microsoft Access database. Reports are generated from this information and quantitative information stored in the database, such as SSA, CIT, FF, and other pertinent information is documented here.

Data quality and cleaning will be monitored by the project director in consultation with

UIC's Office of Institutional Research. The assessments will be extensively checked to ensure that data entry are correct. In addition, correlations and psychometric attributes of scales will be examined to check for possible problems. Data will be protected from inappropriate use through following procedures of OIR. All data calculations and recoding will be recorded in a study codebook along with the syntax used so that all changes are recorded.

Missing Data Plan. To address potential for missing data, we will investigate and report any baseline predictors of loss to follow-up so that findings can be interpreted in light of these differences. Attrition patterns will be examined for participants, and binary logistic regression analysis will be used to predict missingness from individual-level variables, including age, gender, SES, as well as baseline measures. Because complete-case analysis is reliable only when the percentage of incomplete cases in the data is less than 5%, treatment of missing data will be used to reduce bias and/or inefficient results. If missing data are determined to be missing at random (MAR), missing values will be treated with multiple imputations in R using the package mice 2.22.62. Incomplete data will be imputed M times (3–5) to create M pseudo-completed datasets. Results will be pooled using Rubin's rules.

Data Preparation & Analysis. The quantitative evaluation data will be analyzed and used throughout the funding period to inform formative changes to the overall program. At the end of the project period, data analysis will also provide an overall picture of the project's development and success. Data will be collected by the GMT and analyzed by the EE. Quantitative data will be analyzed using SPSS (v26.0). Preliminary analyses will provide descriptive statistics and to evaluate missing data, attrition, and statistical assumptions related to primary analyses. Identified issues with the data will be resolved based on the state of the obtained data.

This study utilizes a repeated-measures design to examine the efficacy of the program on key

measures throughout the course of this program. Tests for pre- and post-differences for scores on the continuous measures will be tested using repeated measures ANOVAs. Covariates identified in the preliminary analyses will also be tested in regression models and change scores will be calculated. Comparison group analysis, such as z tests of proportions, will compare the UIC ACCREDIT students to comparable non-participants on retention and graduation rates.

Figure 6. Project Process Evaluation (S1: Culturally-Responsive Academic Support)

Key Question	Outputs of Interest	Indicators	Measures	Timeframe Yr:Sem	Person(s) Responsible
Did students participate in and utilize academic support?	# of AARCC education advisees	By the end of each semester, 80% of AANAPI students entering with remedial placements visit AARCC for educational advising.	PUF	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI
	# of peer tutoring hours/week	By the end of each semester, 80% of AANAPI students entering with remedial placements seek tutoring services.	PUF	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI

Figure 7. Project Outcomes Evaluation (S1: Culturally-Responsive Academic Support)

Key Question	Outcomes of Interest	Indicators	Measures	Timeframe Yr-Q	Person(s) Responsible
How did the program affect students' knowledge?	Increased knowledge of educational resources for academic success (S)	By the end of each semester, 80% of AANAPI students entering with remedial placements visit AARCC for educational advising.	PUF	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI
	Increased academic skills (S)	By the end of each academic year, AANAPI students in ACCREDIT demonstrate a 20% increase in their academic skills.	SSA; Academic grades	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI
To what extent did the program affect student self-efficacy?	Increased academic self-efficacy (M)	By the end of each academic year, AANAPI students in ACCREDIT who have participated in S1 and S2 demonstrate a 20% increase in their self-efficacy.	SSA	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI
To what extent did the program affect student academic grit?	Increased academic grit (M)	By the end of each academic year, AANAPI students in ACCREDIT demonstrate a	SSA	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI

		20% increase in their academic grit.			
How did the program affect time to credit-bearing courses?	Decreased time to credit-bearing courses (M)	By the year 2023, UIC will see a 20% decrease in time to credit-bearing courses for AANAPI students entering with remedial placements.	DARS	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI; IR
How did the program affect student retention rates?	Increased student retention (L)	By the year 2025, UIC will see a 15% increase in retention rates for AANAPI students entering with remedial placements.	DARS	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI; IR
How did the program affect student graduation rates?	Increased student graduation (L)	By the year 2025, UIC will see greater student graduation rates for students who participated in ACCREDIT compared to those who did not participate.	DARS	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI; IR
How did the program affect students' financial stability?	Increased financial stability (L)	By the end of each academic year, 80% of AANAPI program participants will report increased financial stability.	AQ	Y2-5: Fa/Sp	PI

Key: S=Short term, M=Medium term, L=Long term, PI=Primary Investigator, Y=Year, Fa=Fall, Sp=Spring

Additionally, this project will report the following Performance Measures as outlined in the Federal Notice: (a) The percentage of first-time, full- time degree-seeking undergraduate students at four-year AANAPISIs who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year at the same AANAPISI. (b) The percentage of first-time, full- time degree-seeking undergraduate students at two-year AANAPISIs who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year at the same AANAPISI. (c) The percentage of first-time, full- time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at four-year AANAPISIs who graduate within six years of enrollment. (d) The percentage of first-time, full- time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at two-year AANAPISIs who graduate within three years of enrollment.

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Timeline

This timeline for this work shall be for (1) year with an option to renew for four (4) additional one-year periods (RFP, pg4).

Hourly Rates

Elite Research has had a total of zero sales within the last twelve months with each listed VASCUPP Member Institution. A list of VASCUPP Members can be found at: www.VASCUPP.org.

Hourly Rates

The following table presents the costs associated with consulting services which are billed in ¼ hour increments. Due to the contractual nature of the consulting relationship, an hourly rate is set based on the project terms set forth in the Consulting Agreement. Billable hourly rates are calculated based on salary, fringes, benefits, and operating expenses as standard to the industry with our nonprofit client discount of 10% below. Software, instruments, and licenses needed for this project are owned and operated by Elite Research. This table does not contain costs for additional subject matter experts, participant incentive fees, travel expenses, or other expenses, should they be identified and approved during the project. Each request will be reviewed and a project specific statement of work prepared with hourly rates and estimated hours will be approved by client.

Service	Typical Hours*	Hourly Rates	Discounted Rate	Primary Staff Level
Planning & Design				
Research Questions, Aims, and Goals	5 - 10	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Project Design, Feasibility and Logistics	10 - 25	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Cultural context & Community Engagement	5 - 15	\$85 - \$150	\$77 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Research Design, Methodology, Protocol	10 - 25	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Instrument Development	15 - 45	\$125 - \$150	\$113 - \$135	Consultant
Data Governance Planning	10 - 25	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Data Sources (Primary/Secondary)	5 - 10	\$85 - \$150	\$77 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Logic Model, Evaluation Plans	10 - 25	\$125 - \$150	\$113 - \$135	Consultant
Monitoring & Evaluation	10 - 25	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Data Collection				
Interviews and focus groups	Per Focus Group	\$85 - \$100	\$77 - \$90	Analyst, Associate
Sampling & Recruitment	5 - 15	\$50 - \$100	\$45 - \$90	Analyst, Associate, Assistant
Database Set-up & Management	5 - 15	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Survey Collection & Monitoring	15 - 25	\$50 - \$100	\$45 - \$90	Analyst, Associate, Assistant
Analysis				
Data Preparation & Validation	15 - 30	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Basic Statistical Analysis	15 - 25	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Advanced Statistical Analysis	20 - 35	\$125 - \$150	\$113 - \$135	Consultant
Data Visualization	10 - 25	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Data Insights				
Customized Dashboards	15 - 45	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Results Presentation & Reports	10 - 25	\$85 - \$150	\$77 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Evidence-based recommendations	5 - 10	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst
Process Optimization	15 - 40	\$85 - \$150	\$77 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst, Associate
Optional				
Transcription	Per Min/Service	\$50 - \$75	\$45 - \$68	Editor, Assistant, Associate
Translation	Per Word/Service	\$50 - \$75	\$45 - \$68	Editor, Assistant, Associate
Editing (Line by Line, Formatting, Writing)	Per Document/Service	\$50 - \$75	\$45 - \$68	Editor
Coaching & Training	Per Workshop	\$100 - \$150	\$90 - \$135	Consultant, Analyst

* Each project will be reviewed and a project specific statement of work prepared with hourly rates and estimated hours

Appendices

Appendix A: Small, Women and Minority-owned Businesses (SWaM) Utilization Plan

Appendix B: Sample Contract Acknowledgement

Appendix C: Company Certifications

Appendix D: Company Organizational Charts

Appendix E: Resumes

Appendix F: Insurance Requirements

Appendix A: Small, Women and Minority-owned Business (SWaM) Utilization Plan

ATTACHMENT B

Small, Women and Minority-owned Businesses (SWaM) Utilization Plan

Offeror Name: Elite Research LLC Preparer Name: Rene Paulson

Date: 10/25/23

Is your firm a **Small Business Enterprise** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)?
Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, certification number: WBE1701303 Certification date: 7/11/2017

Is your firm a **Woman-owned Business Enterprise** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, certification number: WBE1701303 Certification date: 7/11/2017

Is your firm a **Minority-Owned Business Enterprise** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, certification number: _____ Certification date: _____

Is your firm a **Micro Business** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, certification number: _____

Certification date: _____

Instructions: Populate the table below to show your firm's plans for utilization of small, women-owned and minority-owned business enterprises in the performance of the contract. Describe plans to utilize SWaMs businesses as part of joint ventures, partnerships, subcontractors, suppliers, etc.

Small Business: "Small business " means a business, independently owned or operated by one or more persons who are citizens of the United States or non-citizens who are in full compliance with United States immigration law, which, together with affiliates, has 250 or fewer employees, or average annual gross receipts of \$10 million or less averaged over the previous three years.

Woman-Owned Business Enterprise: A business concern which is at least 51 percent owned by one or more women who are U.S. citizens or legal resident aliens, or in the case of a corporation, partnership or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51 percent of the equity ownership interest in which is owned by one or more women, and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of such individuals. **For purposes of the SWaM Program, all certified women-owned businesses are also a small business enterprise.**

Minority-Owned Business Enterprise: A business concern which is at least 51 percent owned by one or more minorities or in the case of a corporation, partnership or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51 percent of the equity ownership interest in which is owned by one or more minorities and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of such individuals. **For purposes of the SWaM Program, all certified minority-owned businesses are also a small business enterprise.**

Micro Business is a certified Small Business under the SWaM Program and has no more than twenty-five (25) employees AND no more than \$3 million in average annual revenue over the three-year period prior to their certification.

All small, women, and minority owned businesses must be certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) to be counted in the SWaM program. Certification applications are available through SBSD at 800-223-0671 in Virginia, 804-786-6585 outside Virginia, or online at <http://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/> (Customer Service).

RETURN OF THIS PAGE IS REQUIRED

ATTACHMENT B (CNT'D)
Small, Women and Minority-owned Businesses (SWaM) Utilization Plan

Procurement Name and Number: Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services __RFP No. FDC-1189__ Date Form Completed: __10/30/2023__

Listing of Sub-Contractors, to include, Small, Woman Owned and Minority Owned Businesses
for this Proposal and Subsequent Contract

Offeror / Proposer:

Elite Research LLC
Firm

9901 Valley Ranch Pkwy. E, Ste. 2035
Address

Rene Paulson
Contact Person/No.

Sub-Contractor's Name and Address	Contact Person & Phone Number	SBSD Certification Number	Services or Materials Provided	Total Subcontractor Contract Amount (to include change orders)	Total Dollars Paid Subcontractor to date (to be submitted with request for payment from JMU)
N/A					

(Form shall be submitted with proposal and if awarded, again with submission of each request for payment)

RETURN OF THIS PAGE IS REQUIRED

Elite Research meets the needs of the small business, and women-owned business requirement for the proposed work.

Appendix B: Sample Contract Acknowledgement

ATTACHMENT C



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STANDARD CONTRACT

Contract No. _____

This contract entered into this _____ day of _____, 20____, by _____ hereinafter called the "Contractor" and Commonwealth of Virginia, James Madison University called the "Purchasing Agency".

WITNESSETH that the Contractor and the Purchasing Agency, in consideration of the mutual covenants, promises and agreements herein contained, agree as follows:

SCOPE OF CONTRACT: The Contractor shall provide the services to the Purchasing Agency as set forth in the Contract Documents.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: From _____ through _____

The contract documents shall consist of:

- (1) This signed form;
- (2) The following portions of the Request for Proposals dated _____:
 - (a) The Statement of Needs,
 - (b) The General Terms and Conditions,
 - (c) The Special Terms and Conditions together with any negotiated modifications of those Special Conditions;
 - (d) List each addendum that may be issued
- (3) The Contractor's Proposal dated _____ and the following negotiated modification to the Proposal, all of which documents are incorporated herein.
 - (a) Negotiations summary dated _____.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Contract to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

CONTRACTOR:

PURCHASING AGENCY:

By: _____
(Signature)

By: _____
(Signature)

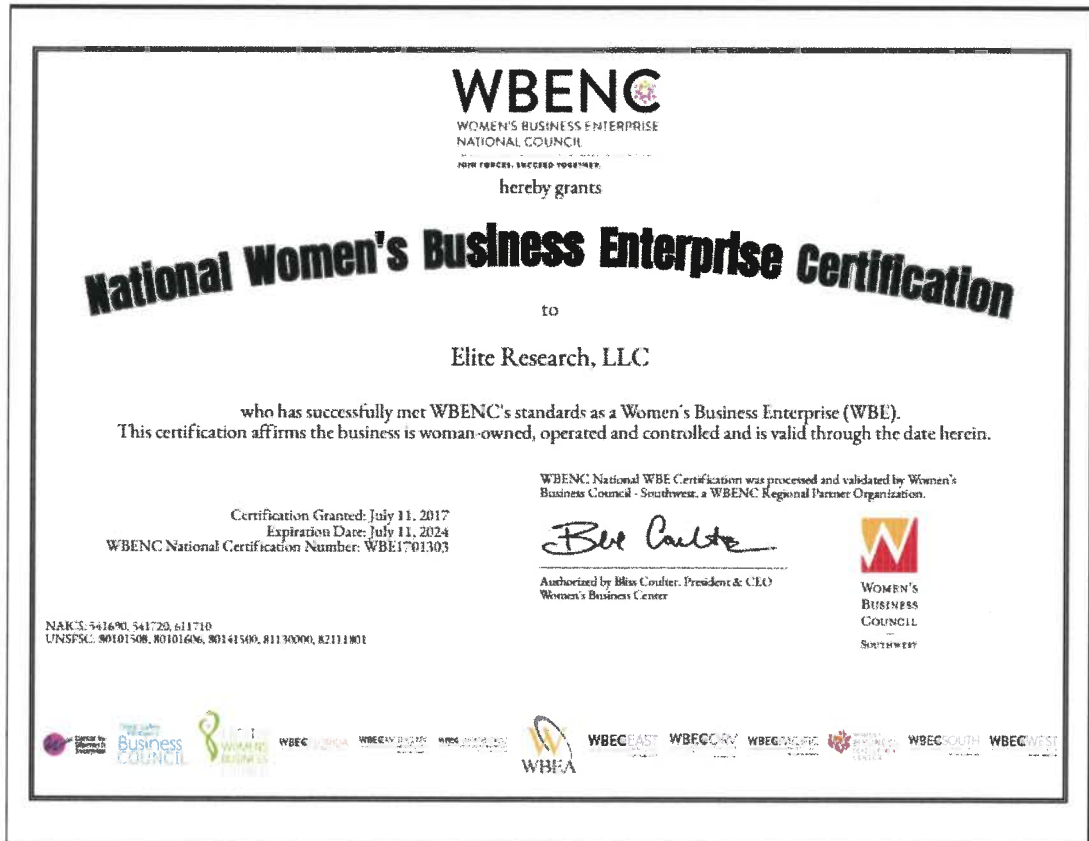
(Printed Name)

(Printed Name)

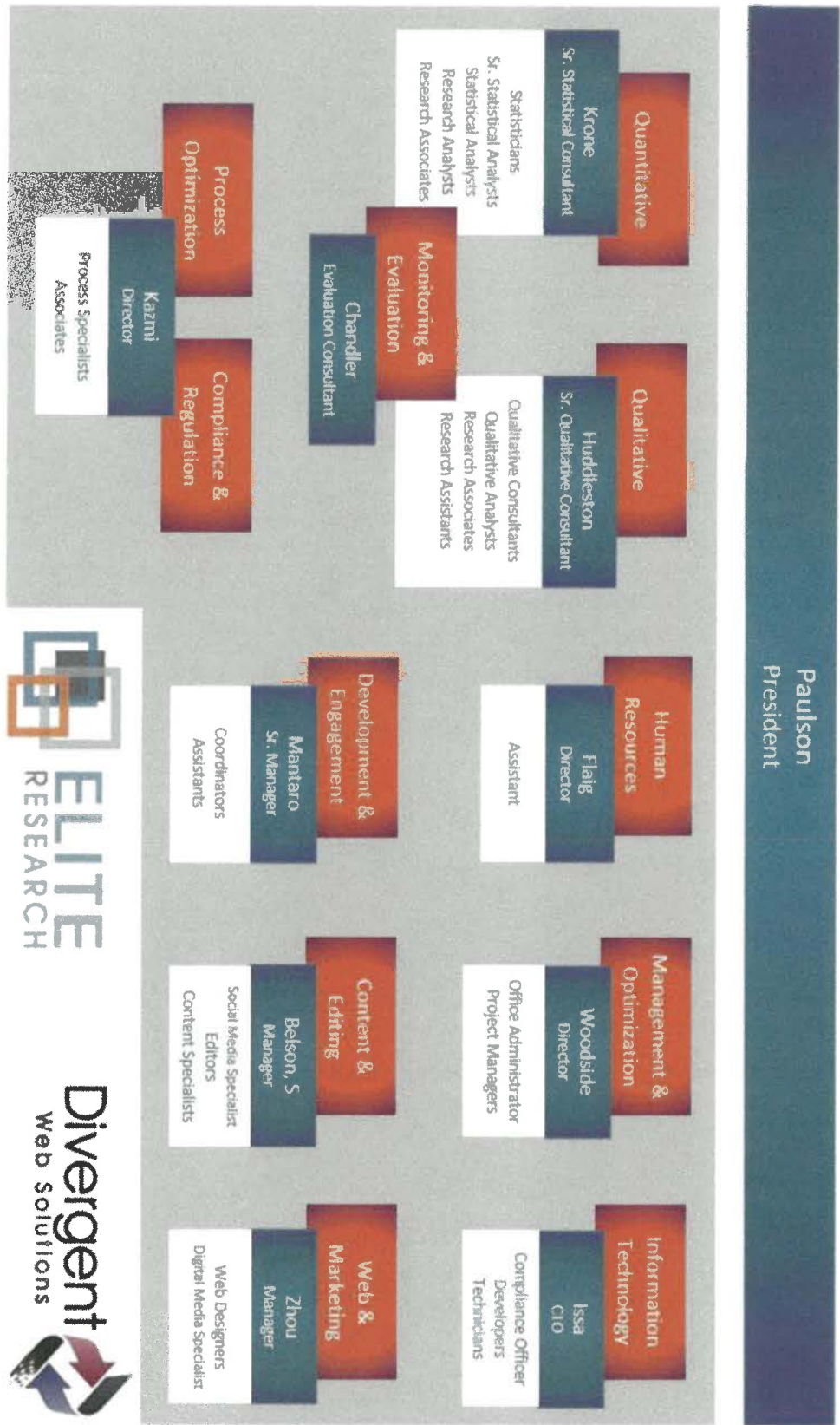
Title: _____

Title: _____

Appendix C: Company Certifications



Appendix D: Company Organizational Charts



Appendix E: Resumes

DR. RENE PAULSON

MS. MINDY CHANDLER

MS. GABRIELLE LYNCH

MS. CLARAS FRAHM

MS. JODI WOODSIDE

DR. JACQUELYN STEPHENS

MS. EILEEN FLAIG



RENÉ PAULSON

President and Senior Statistician
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(972) 538-1374

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Rene Paulson is the Founder, President, and Senior Statistician of Elite Research and Founder of Divergent Web Solutions. Her main goal in the development of both companies was to provide scientific and technical support to institutions seeking collaborative expertise across academic business functions including research and evaluation, program design, marketing and advertising, informational systems and technologies, operations and strategic planning, and finance. With a doctorate and master's in experimental psychology from Texas Christian University, her personal research has been dedicated to attitude and behavioral change in relation to minority groups and women in STEM. Dr. Paulson has led the inception, strategic planning, implementation and staffing of the first research design and analysis center in Texas State institutions. She has sat on the boards for strategic planning, quality enhancement and improvement, and advancement and opportunity for various academic entities. She is exceptional at the evaluative process and hold a Six Sigma Black Belt in optimization. Her psychological background is a foundation for the way that she leads teams and motivates and propels her staff and colleagues. She has published her work in optimization, change management, research design, and evaluation for over 20 years.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Honorary, Community Leadership, Franklin University, 2015
Ph.D. Experimental Psychology, Texas Christian University, 2004
M.S. Experimental Psychology, Texas Christian University, 2001
B.S. Psychology, Ohio University, 1999

EXPERTISE

- Creativity in reviewing external and internal factors that are the bases for current or future strategies
- In-depth knowledge of performance measurement and corrective action
- Managing complex research projects and working with diverse internal and external teams to achieve project aims within a specified timeline
- Designing effective research and evaluation strategies
- High performer capable of leading exceptional team under tough deadlines to meet key deliverables and expectations
- Translating large amounts of data into succinct reports with evidence-based actionable items
- In-depth knowledge of rigorous research methods that align with unique needs of each project
- Creating tools and solutions for process optimization and presentation
- Multi-tasker, with strong organization ability; planning, project, and people management

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Elite Research, LLC

- Direct team of consultants
- Research design and statistics
- Clinical protocols & program evaluations
- Evaluation of institutional and organizational effectiveness
- Factors for strategic development and implementation
- Optimization of data file management

- Training and capacity building
- Verification of statistical approaches
- Analyze data, manuscript preparation for grants, industry, and individual research
- Small and large group training seminars
- Organization-wide consulting

Divergent Web Solutions

- Direct technical teams from project inception to maintenance
- Develop long and short-term strategies for growth
- Develop and manage budgets for marketing, operations, and technology
- Recruit, manage, and develop personnel to support business growth
- Develop a culture of success and employee satisfaction
- Directs solutions to functional and technical problems
- Directs the work of project staff that design, develop, and test programs and information systems

Texas Woman's University

- Consult on research design and statistics for grant and faculty research
- Advise on data file management
- Training of statistical software
- Verification of statistical approaches
- Advise on manuscript and grant preparation
- Evaluation of institutional effectiveness
- Teaching, statistical programming packages, statistics primer, grant proposal development

RELEVANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

- **Horizon Health.** Support the client with job description and salary structure for current and future staff of their Health Informatics team focused on research, statistics, and database management. Due to the unique nature of the type of staff employed on this team, a new designation of structured descriptions of job tasks and skills need to be defined to better attract and retain appropriate applicants. Allocating the current and future staff into a customized matrix of skill base will allow assessment of needs and training priorities for the overall team.
- **Fairbanks, LLC.** Compared two sample methodology results, random and segmented to show the impact on Medicaid services and state level school services reimbursements as well as reviewed historical data from at least two quarters and other background information regarding parameters, sampling information, and typical data patterns. Dr. Paulson also prepared a simulated data set, conduct simulation analysis for each method, compare the results, and create a justification report including the results, appropriate theory and references justifying the recommended current sampling approach.
- **Teacher Retirement System of Texas.** As part of their service evaluation, TRS contracted ER in early 2020 for their annual Membership Satisfaction Survey. This survey reviews member engagement of health, social, and economic variables, and products. Dr. Paulson supplied the data management, analysis, graph and chart creation, report, facilitated stakeholder meetings and board presentations. She also developed customized survey instruments with online and CATI data collection, visualization, as well as process optimization for multiple years.
- **University of Florida.** Support the client with preparing a strategy to submit to Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition program entitled, National Professional Development. Dr. Paulson assisted with the statistical design of the study, finalize the program logic model, and create an appropriate evaluation plan to meet funding requirements.
- **Community Impact.** Assisted in documenting the prevalence of interpersonal violence and PTSD among income-assisted men and women living in priority and nonpriority neighborhoods of Toronto and testing the validity of a theoretical model that highlights the process by which neighborhood status and

gender intersect to influence violence exposure, resource availability/accessibility, and development/persistence of PTSD, as well as to identify the foundation factors and root causes for sustainable change at various points in the community system.

- **Health and Education Alliance of Louisiana.** Provided routine training and capacity building to the HEAL team and their community partners, as well as developed logic models, evaluation plans, provided analysis, and evaluated whether HEAL programs are having a significant effect on student outcomes in these schools over a three-year time period. This project was conducted in conjunction with the program implementation team to provide reporting for the HEAL organization's NOLA project effectiveness and development of CQI based on data informed decisions, as well as build tools for long-term analysis structure, coding, data preparation and other processes. The results of this 3-year assessment and capacity building significantly increased the funding and reach to the program, eventually resulting in standard screening practices in the NOLA school system.
- **Racial Equity Group.** Works with REG on collective efforts for clients in assessments to inform leadership of employee competency levels, data collection gaps, and opportunities to modify policies and practices to advance equity and become equity focused institutions. In this work, Dr. Paulson provides analytical support of the data (both primary and secondary) for action planning and implementation of change guidelines on DEI practices and policies to assess organizational pipeline, including development of performance indicators. Dr. Paulson conducts the sampling frame, survey tool setup, dissemination of link to respondents, data collection, performance analysis, and reporting/implementation. This helps to inform modifications and suggested opportunities to both current and future strategy for impact.
- **United Religions Initiative.** Conduct mixed methods impact assessment to explore the purpose of its interfaith cooperation model (Cooperation Circles), to understand if it is effective, relevant, impactful, and sustainable, and whether it is successfully adapting to the changing contexts and needs of its members. The impact assessment and capacity building will play a critical role in making data-informed decisions regarding planning, resources, challenges and gaps, goals, and future activity prioritization.
- **Lurie Children's Hospital.** A multicenter study needs processed, uniform communication, and collaboration to create standard procedures to track goals/milestones, training and recruitment, to manage site communications and resource alignment. Dr. Paulson supports Lurie Children's Hospital as an extension of their administrative team, focusing on system development of a 33-site study in administrative support in managing sites: communications, invoicing and payments for subcontracts, tracking training, trial participant recruitment and timelines.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Research Skills: Evaluation Design, Data Collection Procedures, Publication and Report Dissemination, Presentation of Findings, Interviewing Skills, Focus Group Moderation Experience, Qualitative Coding and Theme Building Analysis, Statistical Analysis, Data Processing, Data Visualization, Machine Learning (Regression, Classification, Clustering), Deep Learning (CNN, RNN), Time Series Forecasting

Statistical Skills: Bivariate Statistics (crosstabs, t-tests, correlations, ANOVA, and MANOVA), Multivariate Statistics (linear, logistic, ordinal, multinomial, Poisson, Negative binomial, Probit, Tobit, and GLM), Time Series Forecasting, Hierarchical Linear Modelling (HLM), Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), Factor Analysis, Power Analysis, Missing Replacement Techniques, Bayesian Techniques

Software Proficiencies: MS Office Suite, Six Sigma, Trello, Java 8, Adobe Suite, Prezi, Oracle, Google Suite, Web Browsers, Photoshop, FileZilla, Notepad++, Dropbox, R/RStudio, SPSS, MySQL, Microsoft SQL Server, Microsoft Access, Google Ads & Analytics, Moz, Google Keyword Planner, Social Media Platforms

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Statistical Association

Regional Educational Laboratories Southwest

Search Engine Marketing Professionals Organization
International Mathematical Optimization Society
Association for Women in Mathematics
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

Psi Chi, National Honor Society in Psychology
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Southwestern Psychological Association

PUBLICATIONS

Leaf, C., Turner, R. P., Wasserman, C. S., Paulson, R. M., Kopooshian, N., Lynch, G., Leaf, A. M. G. (2023). Psycho-neuro-biological Correlates of Beta Activity. *NeuroRegulation*, 10(1), 11-20. <https://doi.org/10.15540/nr.10.1.11>

McFarlane, J., Maddoux, J., **Paulson, R.**, Symes, L., & Jouriles, E. N. (2020). An evidence-based assessment tool for estimating future post-traumatic stress disorder: A 7-year follow-up study. *Journal of Women's Health*, 29(4), 520–523. <https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2019.7699>

Jouriles, E. N., McFarlane, J., Vu, N. L., Maddoux, J., Rosenfield, D., Symes, L., Fredland, N., & **Paulson, R.** (2018). Mother's posttraumatic stress and child adjustment problems in families seeking services for intimate partner violence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 86(7), 604–614. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000318>

McFarlane, J., Karmallani, R., Khuwaja, H. M. A., Gulzar, S., Somani, R., Ali, T. S., Somani, Y. H., Bhamani, S., Krone, R. D., **Paulson, R. M.**, Muhammad, A., & Jewkes, R. (2017). Preventing peer violence against children: Methods and baseline data of a cluster randomized controlled trial in Pakistan. *Global Health: Science and Practice*, 5(1), 115–137. <https://doi.org/10.9745/GHSP-D-16-00215>

McFarlane, J., Pennings, J., Symes, L., Maddoux, J., & **Paulson, R.** (2016). Predicting abused women with children who return to the abuser: Development of a rapid assessment triage tool. *Violence Against Women*, 22(2), 189–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215599843>

Fredland, N., McFarlane, J., Symes, L., Maddoux, J., Pennings, J., **Paulson, R.**, Binder, B., & Gilroy, H. (2016). Modeling the intergenerational impact of partner abuse on maternal and child function at 24 months post outreach: Implications for practice and policy. *Nursing Outlook*, 64(2), 156–169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2015.10.005>

Fredland, N., McFarlane, J., Gilroy, H., Nava, A., **Paulson, R.**, & Pennings, J. (2015). Connecting partner violence to poor functioning for women and children: Modeling intergenerational outcomes. *Journal of Family Violence*, 30(5), 555–566. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-015-9702-1>

Maddoux, J. A., Liu, F., Symes, L., McFarlane, J., **Paulson, R.**, Binder, B., Fredland, N., Nava, A., & Gilroy, H. (2015). Partner abuse of mothers compromises children's behavioral functioning through maternal mental health dysfunction: Analysis of 300 mother-child pairs. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 39(2), 87–95. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.21708>

McFarlane, J., Pennings, J., Liu, F., Gilroy, H., Nava, A., Maddoux, J. A., Montalvo-Liendo, N., & **Paulson, R.** (2015). Predicting abused women with children who return to a shelter: Development and use of a rapid assessment triage tool. *Violence against Women*, 22(2), 189–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215599843>

Pennings, J., McFarlane, J., **Paulson, R.**, Fredland, N., Binder, Br., Koci, A., & Montalvo, N. (2015). Predicting behavioral dysfunctions of youth living in violent homes: A rapid assessment triage tool. *Journal of Applied Research on Children*, 6(1).

Hipolito, E., Samuels-Dennis, J., Shanmuganandapala, B., Maddoux, J., **Paulson, R.**, Saugh, D., & Carnaha, B. (2014). Trauma-informed care: Accounting for the interconnected role of spirituality and empowerment in mental health promotion. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 16(3), 193–217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19349637.2014.925368>

Koci, A. F., McFarlane, J., Cesario, S., Symes, L., Liu, F., Montalvo-Liendo, N., Bianchi, A., Nava, A., Gilroy, H., Zahed, H., & **Paulson, R.**, (2014). Women's functioning following an intervention for partner violence: New knowledge for clinical practice from a seven year study. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 35(10). <https://doi.org/10.3109/01612840.2014.901450>

Maziarz, M., Preisendanz, S., Sherrard, M., **Paulson, R.**, Imrhan, V., Prasad, Ch., Juma, S., & Vijayagopal, P. (2014). High-amylose maize resistant starch 2 favorably influences body composition in healthy overweight adults [Abstract]. *The FASEB Journal*. https://doi.org/abs/10.1096/fasebj.28.1_supplement.641.4

Small, R., Tiernan, C., Kwon, Y., **Paulson, R. M.**, Imrhan, V., Prasad, C., Vijayagopal, P., & Juma, S. (2014). Age-associated effect of freeze-dried grape powder on inflammatory markers and physical activity in adults with knee osteoarthritis [Abstract]. *The FASEB Journal*. https://doi.org/abs/10.1096/fasebj.28.1_supplement.1025.8

McFarlane, J., Symes, L., Binder, B., Maddoux, J., & **Paulson, R.** (2014). Maternal-child dyads of functioning: The intergenerational impact of violence against women on children. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 18(4), 2236–2243. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-014-1473-4>

McFarlane, J., Nava, A., Gilroy, H., **Paulson, R.**, & Maddoux, J. (2012). Testing two global models to prevent violence against women and children: Methods and policy implications for a seven year prospective study. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 33(12), 871–881. <https://doi.org/10.3109/01612840.2012.731135>

Paulson, R. M., Lord, C. G., Taylor, C. A., Brady, S. E., McIntyre, R. B., & Fuller, E. W. (2012). A matching hypothesis for the activity level of actions involved in attitude–behavior consistency. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(1), 40–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611408347>

McIntyre, R. B., **Paulson, R. M.**, Taylor, C. A., Morin, A. L., & Lord, C. G. (2011). Effects of role model deservingness on overcoming performance deficits induced by stereotype threat. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(3), 301–311. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.774>

Taylor, C. A., Lord, C. G., McIntyre, R. B., & **Paulson, R. M.** (2011). The Hillary Clinton effect: When the same role model inspires or fails to inspire improved performance under stereotype threat. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 14(4), 447–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430210382680>

Hoop, J. G., Lapid, M. I., **Paulson, R. M.**, & Roberts, L. W. (2010). Clinical and ethical considerations in pharmacogenetic testing: Views of physicians in 3 "early adopting" departments of psychiatry. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 71(6), 745–754. <https://doi.org/10.4088/JCP.08m04695whi>

Bernal, A., Walters, S. T., **Paulson, R. M.**, & Mubasher, M. (2008). Effect of patient adherence to antiretroviral therapy on the progression of cervical dysplasia among HIV-infected women. *The AIDS Reader*, 18(7), 382–385.

Bond, C. F., Thomas, B. J., & **Paulson, R. M.** (2004). Maintaining lies: The multiple-audience problem. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 40(1), 29–40. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031\(03\)00087-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031(03)00087-8)

Lord, C. G., **Paulson, R. M.**, Sia, T. L., Thomas, J. C., & Lepper, M. R. (2004). Houses built on sand: Effects of exemplar stability on susceptibility to attitude change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87(6), 733–749. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.87.6.733>

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Wallace, D. S., **Paulson, R. M.**, Lord, C. G., & Bond, C. F. (2003). Which behaviors did attitudes predict? Meta-Analyzing the effects of social pressure and perceived difficulty. *Journal of General Psychology*, 9, 214–227. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.9.3.214>



ARMINDA CHANDLER

Research & Evaluation Consultant

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BIOGRAPHY

Arminda (Mindy) Chandler is a Research & Evaluation Consultant for Elite Research where she directs evaluation efforts for domestic and international programs. She has extensive experience working with clients' varying evaluation and data collection needs, and brings successful grant funding experience from foundation, state, and federal levels. With her master's in Education and Human Development from George Washington University, Mindy brings culturally-competent expertise in nonprofit program design, evaluation, and project management to help a strengthened strategic planning process. She works with leaders, researchers, and practitioners in the nonprofit and philanthropic world to design strong long-term designs through the development of theories of change and logic models, and then identifying appropriate outcomes, indicators, and measures. Having served as a third party evaluator for federal grants, she has proven to have an eye for detail, to ask insightful questions, discern key lessons, make valuable recommendations, and have the ability to deliver on key deliverables.

EDUCATION

M.A. Education & Human Development, George Washington University, 2004

B.S. Human Environmental Science, Oklahoma State University, 2002

EXPERTISE

- Capable of leading high performing teams under tough deadlines to meet expectations of client/program needs
- Multi-tasker, with strong organization ability, planning and project management
- Federal, state, and foundation grant development
- Logic model development and tying it to planning and evaluation
- International data collection
- Instrument development and methodological protocols
- In-depth knowledge of social media marketing platforms

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Elite Research, LLC

- Survey and instrumentation creation or modification
- Online survey data collection
- Analyze data for grants, industry, and individual research
- Small and large group training seminars
- Manuscript and grant preparation
- Program and grant evaluations
- Consult on research design and evaluation for nonprofits

Texas Woman's University

- Consult on evaluation design and analysis for grant and faculty research
- Program evaluation
- Grant evaluation
- Conduct trainings & workshops for grant evaluation

OneHope, Inc

- Consult on research design & integration
- Advise on data file management
- Analyze data, manuscript preparation
- Direct team of multiple project coordinators
- Conduct independent and group film products and multi-project management (international)
- Strategic planning & implementation
- Development and implementation of team protocols
- Budget preparation & management

Metadigm Group, LLC

- Direct team of multiple research managers
- Conduct independent and group research and multi-project management (international)
- Development of research methodology, design, and analysis
- Strategic planning & implementation
- Development and implementation of team & nonprofit protocols
- Budget preparation & management

RELEVANT PROJECT EXAMPLES

- **United Religions Initiative.** Conduct mixed methods impact assessment to explore the purpose of its interfaith cooperation model (Cooperation Circles), to understand if it is effective, relevant, impactful, and sustainable, and whether it is successfully adapting to the changing contexts and needs of its members. The impact assessment and capacity building will play a critical role in making data-informed decisions regarding planning, resources, challenges and gaps, goals, and future activity prioritization.
- **Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation.** Conducted an evaluation of a funded program that seeks to address social determinants of health for vulnerable populations in north Texas to develop a meaningful understanding of the experiences of individuals who have interacted with the program, including patients, social workers, and program staff members using mixed methods. Ms. Chandler designed the qualitative methodology, and all qualitative data collection instruments, while incorporating client feedback. Qualitative results were integrated with quantitative results collected by the organization to provide a better understanding of the research objective. A detailed report that provided an in-depth understanding of the experiences of participants was created at the end of the 8-week project.
- **Community Impact.** Assisted in documenting the prevalence of interpersonal violence and PTSD among income-assisted men and women living in priority and nonpriority neighborhoods of Toronto and testing the validity of a theoretical model that highlights the process by which neighborhood status and gender intersect to influence violence exposure, resource availability/accessibility, and development/persistence of PTSD, as well as to identify the foundation factors and root causes for sustainable change at various points in the community system.
- **Texas Woman's University.** Developed the program logic models, help design the programs, build out appropriate outcomes and evaluations, data governance, data gathering, conduct external evaluation, and provide technical assistance to TWU-awarded grants to help close the nation's STEM skills gap and increase the number in, and diversity of, the talent pipeline through innovative and collaborative inter- and intra- institutional efforts using a multi-intervention approach to increase retention and graduation in STEM majors.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Research Skills: Evaluation Design, Data Collection Procedures, Publication and Report Dissemination, Presentation of Findings, Interviewing Skills, Focus Group Moderation Experience, Qualitative Coding, Theme Building Analysis

Software Proficiencies: MS Office Suite, Dropbox, Trello, Microsoft Excel



GABRIELLE LYNCH

Research Associate

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BIOGRAPHY

Gabrielle Lynch is a Research Associate and Applied Linguistics content expert with Elite Research. She works primarily with qualitative research projects, including document review, coding, content analysis, and more. Gabrielle assists with proposal writing, including content research and generation. While working towards her doctorate in educational psychology from Walden University, she has gained experience in survey design, instrumentation, on-site data collection and analysis, research with at-risk populations, and research design. With her years in the editorial and publication business as well as her master's in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Kansas and master's in Applied Linguistics from the University of Massachusetts, Gabrielle has extensive experience in the dissertation and academic research publishing process, guiding students and writers through research generation, writing, and submission for publication.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Educational Psychology, Walden University, Expected 2024

M.S.E Curriculum and Instruction, University of Kansas, 2019

M.A. Applied Linguistics, University of Massachusetts, 2018

B.A. Linguistics and English, University of Michigan, 2022

EXPERTISE

- Research Writing/Instruction
- Distance Learning Instruction
- ESL/ELL, Applied Linguistics, and Dissertation/Thesis Writing
- Publication Editing & Writing Styles of APA 6th-7th, MLA 8, CMOS-17, Harvard, AMA, Vancouver, CVs

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Elite Research, LLC

- Education and applied linguistics content expertise
- Survey design, instrumentation, and on-site data collection and analysis
- Research with at-risk populations
- Research design

The Chicago School for Professional Psychology

- Course and materials design
- Making grammar and writing instruction relevant to students of all programs, lifepaths, and careers
- Creates interactive learning experiences using Prezi, Screencast-o-matic, Canvas Collaboration, Kahoot, EdPuzzle, and live conferences
- Provides comprehensive writing support on coursework and theses/dissertations including research, literature reviews, methodology, data analysis, and formatting
- Facilitates specialized instruction, curriculum, and digital learning resources for multilingual students, first generation students, and adult learners
- Developing a diagnostic tool that will assess student regulation and self-efficacy and coach them through their academic and writing skills development

Scribendi

- Appraises and polishes grant proposals, academic journal articles, CVs, book manuscripts, student writing, corporate documents, website content, and more
- Provides fully revised references, formatting, style adherence, data clean up, and document alignment with client guidelines
- Monitors queues and completes revisions

Tarrant County College

- Designed and led a new course for ELL students: Conversation & Pronunciation
- Analyzed student discourse and provided individualized instruction
- Facilitated writing consultations and alignment to grammar, content, and citation requirements
- Conducted online writing tutorials and classroom instruction
- Collaborated with faculty in embedded tutoring to identify and serve student needs

The University of Michigan

- Facilitated consultations for academic papers, applications, resumes, and graduate theses
- Elicited the most polished rendition of a writing sample while both retaining the writer's voice and following the academic/industry standards required
- Managed Online Writing Lab (OWL) support service for writers through multimodal tutoring asynchronously and synchronously

RELEVANT PROJECT EXAMPLES

- **Crescendo Education Group.** For school districts in Texas and other states, a teacher professional development organization, the Crescendo Education Group, is working with Elite Research to develop processes and tools for district-wide school data collection on standardized tests and grading. The evaluation of their equitable grading program involves collection planning and strategy, data management with database development, data preparation, analysis, and reporting.
- **NeuroCycle.** Facilitating the team vision for the NeuroCycle app with the technical developers, provide program optimization advice, data collection, etc. The team also requested as needed support with general research readiness items, such as survey development, user experience, and IRB templates. The project includes app development through routine meetings, with development and testing and content creation, app user testing, launch support, and access program management.
- **University of Michigan.** Facilitated consultations for academic papers, applications, resumes, and graduate theses. Elicited the most polished rendition of a writing sample while both retaining the writer's voice and following the academic/industry standards required. Ms. Lynch also managed the Online Writing Lab support service for writers through multimodal tutoring asynchronously and synchronously.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Software Proficiencies: Office 365 Suite, Prezi, Genially, VoiceThread, Canvas, Website/Graphic Design



Claras Frahm

Senior Project Coordinator
Elite Research, LLC.
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BIOGRAPHY

Claras Frahm is the Senior Project Coordinator at Elite Research where she organizes daily operations for the consulting team, manages projects, and assist the consulting team in strategic thinking and analysis. She has previously held roles at various school districts creating lesson plans, curriculum overviews, organizing large group events, and coaching other teachers through their own career choices. Because of her bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education with a Minor in Special Education and Learning Technologies from Iowa State University, she is often tasked with project organization, team building, and problem solving for increased time management, organizational skills, critical thinking, and collaboration throughout the team. She has previously held roles as Community Director at Catalyst Coworking, Operations Manager/Owner of an online Boutique, and an Educational Technology Manager at various school districts.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science from Iowa State University, 2015
Major: Early Childhood Education
Minor: Special Education, Learning Technologies

EXPERTISE

- Capable of organizing high-performing teams, strengthening mindsets, and increasing collaboration
- Strong organization ability, project management, and collaboration skills
- Able to think outside the box and ask strategic questions to spark creativity and problem solving
- Creativity in organization and planning the best use of resources
- Up-beat attitude with a growth mindset
- In-depth knowledge of entrepreneurial business, social media selling, and organization

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Elite Research, LLC

- Organizing several large projects and their resources
- Coaching consultants through project strategy, implementation, and organization
- Liaison between consultants to clients and management
- Organizing team resources and increasing team collaboration

Catalyst Coworking

- Vetted, hired, and organized contractors to complete building renovations and updates
- Organized community members, events, and on-boarding
- Scheduled and performed building walkthroughs with potential members and community leaders
- Held and assisted in developing the Midwest Female Entrepreneurs
- Maintained all technology, social media, and network connections

Varied School Districts in Iowa

- Collaborated with PLC's to develop lessons using essential standards from the Common Core
- Released content gradually to students and staff using meaningful learning experiences

- Planned lessons using assessment data to ensure high quality, impactful lessons
- Managed behaviors by implementing behavior plans and whole class reward systems
- Built relationships with students and staff to establish and maintain trust and respect
- Remained calm and flexible during the many challenges present in the day of a teacher

Roland Story School District

- Supported educators with educational technology solutions and lessons
- Provided technology support to students and staff
- Collaborated with the administration to implement student iPad rights
- Updated and maintained all educational technology
- Stayed flexible and tackled each day's challenges with an up-beat attitude

Boutique Plan, LLC

- Forecasted, researched, and ordered on-trend, on-brand, and high quality products
- Grew the boutique and community to produce a \$25,000 recurring monthly revenue
- Coached boutique owners and spoke at conferences focusing on growth mindset in business
- Photographed, organized, and inventoried existing and upcoming products
- Planned and implemented marketing strategies for our target market
- Managed all social media platforms and wrote and maintained a bi-weekly email focused on fashion, business practices, and up-coming events

RELEVANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

- **Switch On Your Brain.** Mrs. Frahm collaborated with the client and lead Elite consultant for various projects running simultaneously to produce on time deliverables.
- **Compassion International.** In need of a sizeable number of translations, Compassion International sought out Elite Research for guidance. Mrs. Frahm was able to develop a plan to organize 1300+ translations for over 128 countries. While also organizing, planning, and implementing quick and effective team deliverables.
- **Catalyst Coworking.** Mrs. Frahm worked alongside Catalyst Coworking from inception to acquisition. She collaborated with staff, advised the owners, and built a community of members to increase profits while simultaneously planning, maintaining budget, and executing the renovation of the same facility. From year 3 to year 4, she increased their value by \$500,000 and increased membership by 88%.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Software Proficiencies: Windows, MS Office Suite, Dropbox, TestFlight, Trello, Shopify, G-Suite, Planoly, Dropbox, MailChimp, Slack, Quickbooks, Canva, WordPress, Wix, iMovie, Lightroom, GoToMeeting, Zoom, Adobe Connect, OpenPath, RentRedi, PandaDoc, Facebook Ads, AESOP, Lumens Ladibug, iPads, Apple TV SMART Board, Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Numbers, Pages, Aperture, iPhoto, Apple Configurator, and Keynote.



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Project & Systems Manager
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(972) 538-1374

BIOGRAPHY

Jodi Woodside is the Director of Development and Operations for Elite Research where she directs daily operations for the consulting team with solution focused functional and technical problems, including the Divergent Web Solutions team. She has held roles within the organization and others in business optimization and program management. Because of her degree in Business Administration, Management Information Systems from Southern New Hampshire University, she is often is tasked with designing systems and processes for increased impact, efficiency, quality improvement and cost reduction. She has held C-suite positions with top level executives where she coordinated large-scale events, managed policies/procedures, held confidentialities, and coordinated staff communications and logistics. She also supported Texas Woman's University in their data system management of their strategic initiative for faculty promotion and presentation, managing the three campus' faculty activities into an online display system that has shown to increase faculty collaboration, student interaction, and enrollment.

EDUCATION

B.S. Business Administration, Management Information Systems, Southern New Hampshire University, 2022
A.S. Associates of Science, Dallas County Community College, 2020

EXPERTISE

- Capable of leading high performing teams under tough deadlines to meet expectations of client/program needs
- Formalizing visions and reflecting them to a result of report, advertisement, or webpage
- Creating tools and solutions for visual presentation
- Creativity and forethought in solving complex project issues
- Multi-tasker, with strong organization ability, planning and project management
- In-depth knowledge of social media marketing platforms

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Elite Research, LLC

- Planning and strategize projects, systems analysis and troubleshooting, forecasting, results tracking
- Alignment of organizational mission with daily operations
- Liaison between management, clients, and personnel
- Executive and company initiative training

Divergent Web Solutions

- Lead development, maintenance, and redesign efforts of various sites for responsiveness, functionality, and visual presentation models in CMS systems, such as Joomla!, WordPress and Wix.
- Coordinating hosts, developers and stakeholders.
- Collaborated with team and developer to build user personas, strategy boards, site maps, wireframes, graphics, and content. Chaired meetings.
- Enhanced proposals with changes for site architecture, navigation, functionality, and user development.
- Developed process items for online marketing consultations outside of website development and maintenance. Expanding the client reach.

Texas Woman's University

- Data systems for MY1CV
- Faculty support and training
- Program marketing and robust web presence, SEO
- Communications management for stakeholders and end users
- Maintains development, credentials, and activity and assessment records

Stewart Partners/Ian Reid, LLC.

- Account and communications management
- Logistic coordination of projects, meetings, materials and dissemination
- Process and procedure development and implementation

Lerner Enterprises & Lerner Family Foundation

- Managed confidential material and data
- Monitored costs, expense reports, and vendor contracts
- Created promotional materials and record management for non-profit

RELEVANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

- **Texas Woman's University.** Ms. Woodside oversaw the preparation of the content, layout, long tailed keywords and link building needed to optimize the user experience for faculty profiles. She worked congruently with faculty and staff to create visualizations of the processes, workshop announcements, and adherence to university branding and content presentation guidelines.
- **SLAP'D.** Slapd.com is a unique site providing resources and support for grieving teens. COPPA regulations dictated a lot of what could and could not be done on the site. Website launched in 2014 with visual direction of the president at her age of 14. In 2016, the site was migrated to a newer platform, led by Ms. Woodside, updated security and optimized with a content centric focus. The site continues to be monitored and updated as needed.
- **NeuroCycle.** Facilitating the team vision for the NeuroCycle app with the technical developers, provide program optimization advice, data collection, etc. The team also requested as needed support with general research readiness items, such as survey development, user experience, and IRB templates. The project includes app development through routine meetings, with development and testing and content creation, app user testing, launch support, and access program management.
- **MomMD.** MomMD.com required a full site redesign for responsiveness along with new features and functionality. Boasting over one million community members there was a high attention to usability. This medical-resource site, connecting women in medicine now consists of continuing medical education listings, a diverse forum, and a job board. Under supervision by Ms. Woodside, migration of over 850+ pages of articles, images, blogs, forms, specialized components (job board/forum).
- **Broward College.** Formatting and suggested web content was required on 8 national certifications and a Common Learning Blocks supplemental document for entry and mid-level managers in Supply Chain Management. Ms. Woodside provided project management, glossaries, diagram creation, image and figure creation and mentions, along with incorporating stakeholder changes and feedback.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Software Proficiencies: MS Project, Windows, MS Office Suite, Joomla!, Wordpress, Wix, Quickbooks, Dropbox, Basecamp, Trello, PhotoShop, HTML, CSS, Google Ads Search, Google Ads Display, Google Ads Video, Shopping Ads, Google Ads Apps, and Google Ads Measurement, Certified Technical Program Manager, Digital Dexterity, Agile Project Management

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Marketing Association

The American Society of Administrative Professionals

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity



Jacquelyn Stephens

Research & Statistical Consultant
jstephens@eliteresearch.com
972-538-1374

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Stephens received her PhD in Human Development & Social Policy from Northwestern University. She has strong experience in research design, protocol development, and optimizing interdisciplinary teams for research. She is fluent in SPSS, Excel, and R used for statistical analysis and data visualization, and is well published in her field. Dr. Stephens personal research specializes in how people can live longer, healthier, and happier lives. Specifically, her research emphasizes the links between stress, emotional processes, and health and well-being. Her work also considers the influence of close relationships (i.e., romantic relationships, friendships, parent-child dyads) on mental and physical health across the lifespan.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Human Development and Social Policy, Northwestern University, 2022
M.A. Human Development and Social Policy, Northwestern University, 2019
B.A. in Psychology, DePauw University, cum laude, 2014

EXPERTISE

- Experience in designing research studies, including longitudinal randomized controlled trials (RCTs), and collaborating with interdisciplinary research teams.
- Proficiency in conducting data analysis using statistical software such as SPSS, R, and Excel. Ability to analyze and interpret research data for grants, industry reports, and presentations.
- Skill in visualizing data using software like R and Excel, to create clear and meaningful representations for reports, grants, and presentations.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with cross-functional teams and interdisciplinary research teams to design and implement research studies.
- Experience in writing and collaborating on peer-reviewed publications in top Psychology journals, demonstrating proficiency in academic writing.
- Specialization in stress, health, and well-being research, with a focus on adolescents and older adults.
- Proficient in analyzing research data, identifying key insights, and drawing meaningful conclusions.
- Experience delivering effective presentations to diverse stakeholders, including conference presentations and communicating research findings to various audiences.
- Ability to identify research problems, propose innovative solutions, and adapt research methodologies as needed.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Senior Research Associate

- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to design and implement research studies, including evaluating the impact of health and well-being programs for older adults
- Conduct data analysis and visualization using SPSS for industry reports and presentations

- Communicate study findings to through conference presentations, peer-reviewed publications, and blog posts

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

- Design and implement research studies, including evaluating the impact of digital longitudinal randomized controlled trials (RCTs), on stress, health, and well-being in clinical populations
- Conduct data analysis and visualization using R, SPSS, & Excel for grants and presentations
- Communicate key insights to diverse stakeholders through presentations and peer-reviewed publications

Graduate Student Researcher

- Designed research studies and analyzed data from 5+ studies on stress, health, and well-being, collaborating with interdisciplinary research teams
- Wrote and collaborated on 15+ conference presentations and 6 peer-reviewed publications in academic journals

RELEVANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

- **Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University.** Evaluation of a plant-based school food program in a public charter school setting, focusing on physical and mental health outcomes. Assisted with developing long-term research plan, creating developmentally-appropriate measures, and disseminating findings through presentations at several conferences.
- **Northwestern University.** Implementation of an ethnic-racial identity program for first-year students in three high schools. Led collection of cognitive performance measures over 3-year grant cycle, spanning technical documentation, training, and collaboration on academic publications.
- **Institute of Aging.** As Senior Research Associate, evaluates impact of community programming on older adults' health and well-being and conducts advanced statistical analysis for reports, presentations, and publications.

RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

Collier Villaume, S., **Stephens, J.E.**, Craske, M.G., Zinbarg, R.E., Adam, E.K. (In Press). Sleep, daily affect, and risk for major depression: Day-to-day and prospective associations in late adolescence and early adulthood. *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

Meier, T., **Stephens, J.E.**, & Haase, C.M. (In Press). Changes in emotion regulation across the life span. In A.C. Samson, D. Sander & U. Kramer (Eds.), *Change in Emotion and Mental Health*.

Meier, T., **Stephens, J. E.**, Haase, C.M. (In Press). Emotion regulation in romantic relationships. In J.J. Gross, & B. Ford (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotion Regulation*, 3rd ed. The Guilford Press.

Rodosky, S.E., **Stephens, J.E.**, Hittner, E.F., Rompilla, D.B., Jr, Mittal, V.A., & Haase, C.M. (2023). Facial expressions in adolescent-parent interactions and mental health: A proof-of-concept study. *Emotion*.

Stephens, J. E., Rompilla, D. B., Jr., Hittner, E. F., Mittal, V.A., & Haase, C. M. (2022). Executive Functioning & Non-Target Emotions in Late Life. *Emotion*.

Stephens, J. E., Hittner, E.F., Haase, C.M. (2021). Emotion regulation in couples across the lifespan. In D. Dukes, A. Samson, & E. Walle (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Emotional Development*. Oxford University Press.

Rompilla, D. B., Jr., **Stephens, J. E.**, Hittner, E. F., Mittal, V.A., & Haase, C. M. (2021). Can Emotion Regulation Enhance Cognitive Functioning? A laboratory-based study of older adults. *Emotion*.

Collier Villaume, S., **Stephens, J.E.**, Nwafor, E.E., Umaña-Taylor, A., & Adam, E.K. (2021). High parental education protects against changes in adolescent stress and mood early in the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

Stephens, J. E., Kessler, C. L., Buss, C., Miller, G. E., Grobman, W. A., Keenan-Devlin, L., Borders, A.B., & Adam, E. K. (2021). Early and current life adversity: Past and present influences on maternal diurnal cortisol rhythms during pregnancy. *Developmental Psychobiology*.

Rompilla, D.B., Jr., Hittner, E.F., **Stephens, J.E.**, & Haase, C.M. (2021). Emotion regulation in the face of loss: How detachment, positive reappraisal, and acceptance shape experiences, physiology, and perceptions in late life. *Emotion*.

Hittner, E.F., **Stephens, J.E.**, Turiano, N.A., Gertorf, D., Lachman, M.E., & Haase, C.M. (2020). Positive affect predicts less memory decline: Evidence from a 9-year longitudinal study of mid- and late life. *Psychological Science*.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Research Skills: Linear Regression, Mediation & Moderation, Longitudinal Analyses, Multilevel Modeling, Means Comparisons (t-tests, ANOVA, MANOVA)

Software Proficiencies: SPSS, R, Excel, DropBox, Microsoft Office & Teams, Qualtrics, RedCap

Certifications: Kellogg School of Management Certificate in Management for Scientists, Certificate in Social Science Computing, Certificate in Society, Biology, & Health



Eileen Flaig

Director Human Resources & Operations
Senior Editor & Technical Writer
epflaig@eliteresearch.com
(972) 538-1374

BIOGRAPHY

Eileen has worked for Elite Research for over 17 years, many of those in the Editing Department as Senior Editor. Eileen has worked on numerous proposals and grants for Elite Research and its clients by providing support with formatting (to match guidelines and requirements) as well as providing detailed grammar edits to ensure a clean final document is ready for submission.

Eileen Flaig is the Director of Human Resources (HR) and Operations for Elite Research where she is responsible for everything about the employee's day-to-day life at work. Eileen oversees and coordinates all aspects of Elite Research's HR policies, including payroll processing, benefits administration, and hiring new staff members or contractors. Eileen helps to manage employee issues (such as grievances, terminations, and other personnel matters) and works closely with department heads to determine the current training needs of the employees and create a training budget accordingly. Additionally, Eileen oversees, guides, and trains the staff to ensure policies and procedures are followed and day-to-day operations run smoothly.

EDUCATION

M.A. Spanish and Pedagogy, University of Delaware, 2000
B.A. Spanish Literature, University of Maryland, 1998

EXPERTISE

- Capable of leading high performing teams under tough deadlines to meet expectations of client/program needs
- Managing employee relations & serves as a liaison between employees and management
- Accounts (invoicing/payments/contracts/quickbooks/customer relations)
- Editing (formatting and grammar)
- Multi-tasker, with strong organization ability, planning and project management
- Proficient in verbal and written communication skills

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE


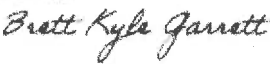
Elite Research, LLC

- Content, format, and grammatical editing of dissertations, proposals, and grants
- Serves as part of the organization's leadership team and contributes to the development and execution of strategic planning and decisions
- Oversees Human Resources business cycle and services, management of timelines, resources, and budgets
- Editing training development and management

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES/CERTIFICATIONS

Software Proficiencies: MS Office Suite, Quickbooks, Dropbox, Trello

Appendix G: Insurance Requirements

ACORD		CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE		DATE (mm/dd/yyyy) 09/27/2023															
<p>THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURER(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER.</p> <p>IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must have ADDITIONAL INSURED provisions or be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s).</p>																			
PRODUCER  State Farm Earl Wood State Farm 2900 S. Hulen St Suite 50 Fort Worth, TX 76109		CONTACT NAME: Brett Garrett PHONE (AC, HO, EXT): 817.922.9300 FAX (AC, HO): 817.922.9328 E-MAIL ADDRESS: blye@earlwood.biz																	
INSURED Elite Research, LLC 9901 Valley Ranch Pkwy E Ste 2035 Irving, TX 75063-7817		INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>INSURER</th> <th>NAIC #</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>INSURER A: State Farm Lloyds</td> <td>43419</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INSURER B: State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company</td> <td>25176</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INSURER C: State Farm Lloyds</td> <td>43419</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INSURER D: State Farm Fire and Casualty Company</td> <td>25143</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INSURER E:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>INSURER F:</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				INSURER	NAIC #	INSURER A: State Farm Lloyds	43419	INSURER B: State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company	25176	INSURER C: State Farm Lloyds	43419	INSURER D: State Farm Fire and Casualty Company	25143	INSURER E:		INSURER F:	
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INSURER E:																			
INSURER F:																			
COVERAGES		CERTIFICATE NUMBER:		REVISION NUMBER:															
<p>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.</p>																			
INSR LTR	TYPE OF INSURANCE	ADDITIONAL INSR LTR	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFF (MM/DD/YYYY)	POLICY EXP (MM/DD/YYYY)														
A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUR GENERAL AGGREGATE LIMIT APPLIES PER: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> PER-ACC <input type="checkbox"/> LOC OTHER:		93-E4-Q835-4	06/12/2023	06/12/2024														
					LIMITS EACH OCCURRENCE \$ 1,000,000 DAMAGE TO RENTED PREMISES (Per occurrence) \$ 300,000 MED EXP (Any one person) \$ 5,000 PERSONAL & ADV INJURY \$ 1,000,000 GENERAL AGGREGATE \$ 2,000,000 PRODUCTS - COMPROP AGG \$ 2,000,000 \$														
B	AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> ANY AUTO <input type="checkbox"/> OWNED AUTOS ONLY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCHEDULED AUTOS <input type="checkbox"/> HIRED AUTOS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> NON-OWNED AUTOS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		464 6181-001-43	09/01/2023	09/01/2024														
					COMBINED SINGLE LIMIT (Per accident) \$ 1,000,000 BODILY INJURY (Per person) \$ BODILY INJURY (Per accident) \$ PROPERTY DAMAGE (Per accident) \$ \$														
C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UMBRELLA LIAB <input type="checkbox"/> EXCESS LIAB <input type="checkbox"/> RETENTION \$ <input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE		93-E5-N810-1	09/01/2023	09/01/2024														
					EACH OCCURRENCE \$ AGGREGATE \$ 1,000,000 \$														
A	WORKERS COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS LIABILITY ANY PROPRIETARY PARTNER/RECREATIVE OFFICER/NUMBER EXCLUDED? (Mandatory in NH) If yes, describe under DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS below	Y/N Y	93-ER-X787-9	06/12/2023	06/12/2024														
					PER STATUTE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> E.L. EACH ACCIDENT \$ 1,000,000 E.L. DISEASE - EA EMPLOYEE \$ 1,000,000 E.L. DISEASE - POLICY LIMIT \$ 1,000,000 Retention - \$5,000 1,000,000 1,000,000														
D	Errors & Omissions/Malpractice Data Breach (Cyber Liability)		6603501	08/19/2023	08/19/2024														
					Retention - \$5,000 1,000,000 1,000,000														
DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES (ACORD 101, Additional Remarks Schedule, may be attached if more space is required) Global provider of research design, program evaluation, and statistical consulting.																			
CERTIFICATE HOLDER			CANCELLATION																
Hamis County 1111 Fannin Street, 12th Floor Houston, TX 77002			SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, NOTICE WILL BE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE 																
ACORD 25 (2016/03)			© 1988-2015 ACORD CORPORATION. All rights reserved. The ACORD name and logo are registered marks of ACORD																
			1001496 132846 15 04-22-2020																



Request for Proposal

RFP# FDC-1189

Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services

October 2, 2023



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP# FDC-1189

Issue Date: October 2, 2023
Title: Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services
Issuing Agency: Commonwealth of Virginia
James Madison University
Procurement Services MSC 5720
752 Ott Street, Wine Price Building
First Floor, Suite 1023
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Period of Contract: From Date of Award Through One Year (Renewable)

Sealed Proposals Will Be Received Until 2:00 PM on November 2, 2023 for Furnishing the Services Described Herein.

SEALED PROPOSALS MAY BE MAILED, EXPRESS MAILED, OR HAND DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO THE ISSUING AGENCY SHOWN ABOVE.

All inquiries for information and clarification should be directed To: Doug Chester, Buyer Senior, Procurement Services, chestefd@jmu.edu; 540-568-4272; (Fax) 540-568-7935 not later than five business days before the proposal closing date.

NOTE: THE SIGNED PROPOSAL AND ALL ATTACHMENTS SHALL BE RETURNED.

In compliance with this Request for Proposal and to all the conditions imposed herein, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the goods/services in accordance with the attached signed proposal or as mutually agreed upon by subsequent negotiation.

Name and Address of Firm:

By:

(Signature in Ink)

Name:

(Please Print)

Date:

Title:

Web Address:

Phone:

Email:

Fax #:

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF ADDENDUM: #1_____ #2_____ #3_____ #4_____ #5_____ (please initial)

SMALL, WOMAN OR MINORITY OWNED BUSINESS:

☐ YES; ☐ NO; *IF YES* ⇒ ☐ SMALL; ☐ WOMAN; ☐ MINORITY ***IF MINORITY:*** ☐ AA; ☐ HA; ☐ AsA; ☐ NW; ☐ Micro

Note: This public body does not discriminate against faith-based organizations in accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, § 2.2-4343.1 or against an offeror because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP # FDC-1189

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	B. SWaM Utilization Plan		
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit sealed proposals from qualified sources to enter into a contract to provide Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services for James Madison University (JMU), an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Initial contract shall be for one (1) year with an option to renew for four (4) additional one-year periods.

II. BACKGROUND

James Madison University (JMU) is a comprehensive public institution in Harrisonburg, Virginia with an enrollment of approximately 22,000 students and more than 4,000 faculty and staff. There are over 600 individual departments on campus that support seven academic divisions. The University offers over 120 majors, minors, and concentrations. Further information about the University may be found at the following website: <http://www.jmu.edu>.

JMU pursues external funding for a variety of programs and special projects that advance the University's mission. External funding is sought from diverse sources, including federal, state, and local agencies, corporate entities, local and national grant making foundations, and private donors. Types of support received at the University includes grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts. In FY2023, JMU faculty and staff received a total > \$34M in external funding to promote research, instruction, outreach, and other activities. A full-report of FY2023 activity can be found at the following website:

https://www.jmu.edu/sponsoredprograms/newsletters-and-reports/fy23-ospannualreport_final.pdf

Increasingly, more sponsors require robust evaluation or assessment plans in their guidelines to receive funding. As a condition of funding, applicants are required to collect and report performance data to show the efficacy of programs. The University currently receives funding from various federal agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, Department of State, National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Environmental Protection Agency as well as state, local, private, and corporate sponsors.

III. SMALL, WOMAN-OWNED AND MINORITY PARTICIPATION

It is the policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia to contribute to the establishment, preservation, and strengthening of small businesses and businesses owned by women and minorities, and to encourage their participation in State procurement activities. The Commonwealth encourages contractors to provide for the participation of small businesses and businesses owned by women and minorities through partnerships, joint ventures, subcontracts, and other contractual opportunities. Attachment B contains information on reporting spend data with subcontractors.

IV. STATEMENT OF NEEDS

James Madison University seeks to contract with an experienced Contractor(s) to provide evaluation services on an as-needed basis for the various externally-funded programs at the University. Contractors should have expertise in program evaluation and research design, management of complex, multi-site evaluation projects with multiple stakeholders, and scientific research methodologies including the development of surveys and other data collection instruments as well as sampling, testing, and statistical analysis. Contractors should also have experience related to a regulatory environment and compliance, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and working with Institutional Review Boards or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees. At the request of the University, Offerors shall create logic models, develop evaluation design plans that include formative and summative assessments and both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods, create and implement data

collection and sampling plans, conduct analyses, write reports, and disseminate results. Some programs may require evaluators with specific skills related to a particular field (i.e. biology, education, human services, engineering).

Describe in detail your firm's approach to each of the following items. Failure to provide responses to the items listed below may result in rejection of the proposal.

- A. Describe in detail the firm's qualifications and expertise in providing evaluation services to organizations similar in size and scope to James Madison University.
- B. Provide a detailed description of the firm's areas of expertise (i.e. biology, education, human services). Include general and specific evaluation design specialties/expertise.
- C. Describe in detail the firm's prior evaluations of externally-funded projects, specifically any evaluations provided for governmental entities and institutions of higher education. Include a list of projects, funding agency, contact information to include name, phone number, and email address, and nature of the project as well as any additional information that would be helpful in evaluating the capacity and complexity of past projects.
- D. Describe any innovative or creative design approaches or strategies.
- E. Describe in detail the firm's evaluation planning and implementation methodology to include the following:
 - 1. Allocation of staff
 - 2. Management methods
 - 3. Systems to ensure maintenance of complete and accurate records
 - 4. Processes in place to protect personally identifiable information
 - 5. Potential use of subcontractors
 - 6. Commitment to project completion within time and budget constraints
- F. Describe your firm's quality control process, including mechanisms to detect and reduce fraud and errors in data collection.
- G. Describe your firm's software used for statistical analysis of data.
- H. Provide the names, titles, and resumes of key management personnel that may be assigned to perform work for James Madison University.
- I. Provide a sample evaluation plan, evaluation report, or executive summary for a recent project for which the firm provided evaluation services.

V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

A. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

To ensure timely and adequate consideration of your proposal, offerors are to limit all contact, whether verbal or written, pertaining to this RFP to the James Madison University Procurement Office for the duration of this Proposal process. Failure to do so may jeopardize further consideration of Offeror's proposal.

1. RFP Response: In order to be considered for selection, the **Offeror shall submit a complete response to this RFP**; and shall submit to the issuing Purchasing Agency:
 - a. **One (1) original and seven (7) copies** of the entire proposal, INCLUDING ALL ATTACHMENTS. Any proprietary information should be clearly marked in accordance with 3.f. below.
 - b. **One (1) electronic copy in WORD format or searchable PDF (*flash drive*)** of the entire proposal, as a single document, INCLUDING ALL ATTACHMENTS. Any proprietary information should be clearly marked in accordance with 3.f. below.
 - c. Should the proposal contain **proprietary information**, provide **one (1) redacted hard copy** of the proposal and all attachments with **proprietary portions removed or blacked out**. This copy should be clearly marked "*Redacted Copy*" on the front cover. The classification of an entire proposal document, line-item prices, and/or total proposal prices as proprietary or trade secrets is not acceptable. JMU shall not be responsible for the Contractor's failure to exclude proprietary information from this redacted copy.

No other distribution of the proposal shall be made by the Offeror.

2. The version of the solicitation issued by JMU Procurement Services, as amended by an addenda, is the mandatory controlling version of the document. Any modification of, or additions to, the solicitation by the Offeror shall not modify the official version of the solicitation issued by JMU Procurement services unless accepted in writing by the University. Such modifications or additions to the solicitation by the Offeror may be cause for rejection of the proposal; however, JMU reserves the right to decide, on a case-by-case basis in its sole discretion, whether to reject such a proposal. If the modification or additions are not identified until after the award of the contract, the controlling version of the solicitation document shall still be the official state form issued by Procurement Services.
3. Proposal Preparation
 - a. Proposals shall be signed by an authorized representative of the Offeror. All information requested should be submitted. Failure to submit all information requested may result in the purchasing agency requiring prompt submissions of missing information and/or giving a lowered evaluation of the proposal. Proposals which are substantially incomplete or lack key information may be rejected by the purchasing agency. Mandatory requirements are those required by law or regulation or are such that they cannot be waived and are not subject to negotiation.
 - b. Proposals shall be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content.

- c. Proposals should be organized in the order in which the requirements are presented in the RFP. All pages of the proposal should be numbered. Each paragraph in the proposal should reference the paragraph number of the corresponding section of the RFP. It is also helpful to cite the paragraph number, sub letter, and repeat the text of the requirement as it appears in the RFP. If a response covers more than one page, the paragraph number and sub letter should be repeated at the top of the next page. The proposal should contain a table of contents which cross references the RFP requirements. Information which the offeror desires to present that does not fall within any of the requirements of the RFP should be inserted at the appropriate place or be attached at the end of the proposal and designated as additional material. Proposals that are not organized in this manner risk elimination from consideration if the evaluators are unable to find where the RFP requirements are specifically addressed.
 - d. As used in this RFP, the terms “must”, “shall”, “should” and “may” identify the criticality of requirements. “Must” and “shall” identify requirements whose absence will have a major negative impact on the suitability of the proposed solution. Items labeled as “should” or “may” are highly desirable, although their absence will not have a large impact and would be useful, but are not necessary. Depending on the overall response to the RFP, some individual “must” and “shall” items may not be fully satisfied, but it is the intent to satisfy most, if not all, “must” and “shall” requirements. The inability of an offeror to satisfy a “must” or “shall” requirement does not automatically remove that offeror from consideration; however, it may seriously affect the overall rating of the offeror’s proposal.
 - e. Each copy of the proposal should be bound or contained in a single volume where practical. All documentation submitted with the proposal should be contained in that single volume.
 - f. Ownership of all data, materials and documentation originated and prepared for the State pursuant to the RFP shall belong exclusively to the State and be subject to public inspection in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by the offeror shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; however, the offeror must invoke the protection of Section 2.2-4342F of the Code of Virginia, in writing, either before or at the time the data is submitted. The written notice must specifically identify the data or materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary. The proprietary or trade secret materials submitted must be identified by some distinct method such as highlighting or underlining and must indicate only the specific words, figures, or paragraphs that constitute trade secret or proprietary information. The classification of an entire proposal document, line-item prices and/or total proposal prices as proprietary or trade secrets is not acceptable and will result in rejection and return of the proposal.
4. Oral Presentation: Offerors who submit a proposal in response to this RFP may be required to give an oral presentation of their proposal to James Madison University. This provides an opportunity for the Offeror to clarify or elaborate on the proposal. This is a fact-finding and explanation session only and does not include negotiation. James Madison University will schedule the time and location of these presentations. Oral presentations are an option of the University and may or may not be conducted. Therefore, proposals should be complete.

B. SPECIFIC PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that James Madison University may properly evaluate your capabilities to provide the required services. Offerors are required to submit the following items as a complete proposal:

1. Return RFP cover sheet and all addenda acknowledgements, if any, signed and filled out as required.
2. Plan and methodology for providing the goods/services as described in Section IV. Statement of Needs of this Request for Proposal.
3. A written narrative statement to include, but not be limited to, the expertise, qualifications, and experience of the firm and resumes of specific personnel to be assigned to perform the work.
4. Offeror Data Sheet, included as *Attachment A* to this RFP.
5. Small Business Subcontracting Plan, included as *Attachment B* to this RFP. Offeror shall provide a Small Business Subcontracting plan which summarizes the planned utilization of Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)-certified small businesses which include businesses owned by women and minorities, when they have received Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) small business certification, under the contract to be awarded as a result of this solicitation. This is a requirement for all prime contracts in excess of \$100,000 unless no subcontracting opportunities exist.
6. Identify the amount of sales your company had during the last twelve months with each VASCUPP Member Institution. A list of VASCUPP Members can be found at: www.VASCUPP.org.
7. Proposed Cost. See Section X. Pricing Schedule of this Request for Proposal.

VI. EVALUATION AND AWARD CRITERIA

A. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals shall be evaluated by James Madison University using the following criteria:

	<u>Points</u>
1. Quality of products/services offered and suitability for intended purposes	20
2. Qualifications and experience of Offeror in providing the goods/services	30
3. Specific plans or methodology to be used to perform the services	20
4. Participation of Small, Women-Owned, & Minority (SWaM) Businesses	10
5. Cost	20
TOTAL	<u>100</u>

- B. AWARD TO MULTIPLE OFFERORS: Selection shall be made of two or more offerors deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals on the basis of the evaluation factors included in the Request for Proposals, including price, if so stated in the Request for Proposals. Negotiations shall be conducted with the offerors so selected. Price shall be considered, but need not be the sole determining factor. After negotiations have been conducted with each offeror so selected, the agency shall select the offeror which, in its opinion, has made the best proposal, and shall award the contract to that offeror. The Commonwealth reserves the right to make multiple awards as a result of this solicitation. The Commonwealth may cancel this Request for Proposals or reject proposals at any time prior to an award, and is not required to furnish a statement of the reasons why a particular proposal was not deemed to be the most advantageous. Should the Commonwealth

determine in writing and in its sole discretion that only one offeror is fully qualified, or that one offeror is clearly more highly qualified than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that offeror. The award document will be a contract incorporating by reference all the requirements, terms and conditions of the solicitation and the contractor's proposal as negotiated.

VII. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A. PURCHASING MANUAL: This solicitation is subject to the provisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia's Purchasing Manual for Institutions of Higher Education and Their Vendors and any revisions thereto, which are hereby incorporated into this contract in their entirety. A copy of the manual is available for review at the purchasing office. In addition, the manual may be accessed electronically at <http://www.jmu.edu/procurement> or a copy can be obtained by calling Procurement Services at (540) 568-3145.
- B. APPLICABLE LAWS AND COURTS: This solicitation and any resulting contract shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of the Commonwealth. The Contractor shall comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- C. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION: By submitting their proposals, offerors certify to the Commonwealth that they will conform to the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, as well as the Virginia Fair Employment Contracting Act of 1975, as amended, where applicable, the Virginians With Disabilities Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act and §10 of the Rules Governing Procurement, Chapter 2, Exhibit J, Attachment 1 (available for review at <http://www.jmu.edu/procurement>). If the award is made to a faith-based organization, the organization shall not discriminate against any recipient of goods, services, or disbursements made pursuant to the contract on the basis of the recipient's religion, religious belief, refusal to participate in a religious practice, or on the basis of race, age, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin and shall be subject to the same rules as other organizations that contract with public bodies to account for the use of the funds provided; however, if the faith-based organization segregates public funds into separate accounts, only the accounts and programs funded with public funds shall be subject to audit by the public body. (*§6 of the Rules Governing Procurement*).

In every contract over \$10,000 the provisions in 1. and 2. below apply:

- 1. During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees as follows:
 - a. The contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment, except where there is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the contractor. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.
 - b. The contractor, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, will state that such contractor is an equal opportunity employer.
 - c. Notices, advertisements, and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule, or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting these requirements.

2. The contractor will include the provisions of 1. above in every subcontract or purchase order over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.
- D. ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING: By submitting their proposals, offerors certify that their proposals are made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other offeror, supplier, manufacturer or subcontractor in connection with their proposal, and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.
 - E. IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986: By entering into a written contract with the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Contractor certifies that the Contractor does not, and shall not during the performance of the contract for goods and services in the Commonwealth, knowingly employ an unauthorized alien as defined in the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.
 - F. DEBARMENT STATUS: By submitting their proposals, offerors certify that they are not currently debarred by the Commonwealth of Virginia from submitting proposals on contracts for the type of goods and/or services covered by this solicitation, nor are they an agent of any person or entity that is currently so debarred.
 - G. ANTITRUST: By entering into a contract, the contractor conveys, sells, assigns, and transfers to the Commonwealth of Virginia all rights, title and interest in and to all causes of action it may now have or hereafter acquire under the antitrust laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, relating to the particular goods or services purchased or acquired by the Commonwealth of Virginia under said contract.
 - H. MANDATORY USE OF STATE FORM AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS RFPs: Failure to submit a proposal on the official state form provided for that purpose may be a cause for rejection of the proposal. Modification of or additions to the General Terms and Conditions of the solicitation may be cause for rejection of the proposal; however, the Commonwealth reserves the right to decide, on a case by case basis, in its sole discretion, whether to reject such a proposal.
 - I. CLARIFICATION OF TERMS: If any prospective offeror has questions about the specifications or other solicitation documents, the prospective offeror should contact the buyer whose name appears on the face of the solicitation no later than five working days before the due date. Any revisions to the solicitation will be made only by addendum issued by the buyer.
 - J. PAYMENT:
 1. To Prime Contractor:
 - a. Invoices for items ordered, delivered and accepted shall be submitted by the contractor directly to the payment address shown on the purchase order/contract. All invoices shall show the state contract number and/or purchase order number; social security number (for individual contractors) or the federal employer identification number (for proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations).
 - b. Any payment terms requiring payment in less than 30 days will be regarded as requiring payment 30 days after invoice or delivery, whichever occurs last. This shall not affect offers of discounts for payment in less than 30 days, however.

- c. All goods or services provided under this contract or purchase order, that are to be paid for with public funds, shall be billed by the contractor at the contract price, regardless of which public agency is being billed.
- d. The following shall be deemed to be the date of payment: the date of postmark in all cases where payment is made by mail, or the date of offset when offset proceedings have been instituted as authorized under the Virginia Debt Collection Act.
- e. **Unreasonable Charges.** Under certain emergency procurements and for most time and material purchases, final job costs cannot be accurately determined at the time orders are placed. In such cases, contractors should be put on notice that final payment in full is contingent on a determination of reasonableness with respect to all invoiced charges. Charges which appear to be unreasonable will be researched and challenged, and that portion of the invoice held in abeyance until a settlement can be reached. Upon determining that invoiced charges are not reasonable, the Commonwealth shall promptly notify the contractor, in writing, as to those charges which it considers unreasonable and the basis for the determination. A contractor may not institute legal action unless a settlement cannot be reached within thirty (30) days of notification. The provisions of this section do not relieve an agency of its prompt payment obligations with respect to those charges which are not in dispute (*Rules Governing Procurement, Chapter 2, Exhibit J, Attachment 1 § 53; available for review at <http://www.jmu.edu/procurement>*).

2. To Subcontractors:

- a. A contractor awarded a contract under this solicitation is hereby obligated:
 - (1) To pay the subcontractor(s) within seven (7) days of the contractor's receipt of payment from the Commonwealth for the proportionate share of the payment received for work performed by the subcontractor(s) under the contract; or
 - (2) To notify the agency and the subcontractors, in writing, of the contractor's intention to withhold payment and the reason.
 - b. The contractor is obligated to pay the subcontractor(s) interest at the rate of one percent per month (unless otherwise provided under the terms of the contract) on all amounts owed by the contractor that remain unpaid seven (7) days following receipt of payment from the Commonwealth, except for amounts withheld as stated in (2) above. The date of mailing of any payment by U. S. Mail is deemed to be payment to the addressee. These provisions apply to each sub-tier contractor performing under the primary contract. A contractor's obligation to pay an interest charge to a subcontractor may not be construed to be an obligation of the Commonwealth.
3. Each prime contractor who wins an award in which provision of a SWAM procurement plan is a condition to the award, shall deliver to the contracting agency or institution, on or before request for final payment, evidence and certification of compliance (subject only to insubstantial shortfalls and to shortfalls arising from subcontractor default) with the SWAM procurement plan. Final payment under the contract in question may be withheld until such certification is delivered and, if necessary, confirmed by the agency or institution, or other appropriate penalties may be assessed in lieu of withholding such payment.
4. The Commonwealth of Virginia encourages contractors and subcontractors to accept electronic and credit card payments.

- K. PRECEDENCE OF TERMS: Paragraphs A through J of these General Terms and Conditions and the Commonwealth of Virginia Purchasing Manual for Institutions of Higher Education and their Vendors, shall apply in all instances. In the event there is a conflict between any of the other General Terms and Conditions and any Special Terms and Conditions in this solicitation, the Special Terms and Conditions shall apply.
- L. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFERORS: The Commonwealth may make such reasonable investigations as deemed proper and necessary to determine the ability of the offeror to perform the services/furnish the goods and the offeror shall furnish to the Commonwealth all such information and data for this purpose as may be requested. The Commonwealth reserves the right to inspect offeror's physical facilities prior to award to satisfy questions regarding the offeror's capabilities. The Commonwealth further reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigations of, such offeror fails to satisfy the Commonwealth that such offeror is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to provide the services and/or furnish the goods contemplated therein.
- M. TESTING AND INSPECTION: The Commonwealth reserves the right to conduct any test/inspection it may deem advisable to assure goods and services conform to the specifications.
- N. ASSIGNMENT OF CONTRACT: A contract shall not be assignable by the contractor in whole or in part without the written consent of the Commonwealth.
- O. CHANGES TO THE CONTRACT: Changes can be made to the contract in any of the following ways:
1. The parties may agree in writing to modify the scope of the contract. An increase or decrease in the price of the contract resulting from such modification shall be agreed to by the parties as a part of their written agreement to modify the scope of the contract.
 2. The Purchasing Agency may order changes within the general scope of the contract at any time by written notice to the contractor. Changes within the scope of the contract include, but are not limited to, things such as services to be performed, the method of packing or shipment, and the place of delivery or installation. The contractor shall comply with the notice upon receipt. The contractor shall be compensated for any additional costs incurred as the result of such order and shall give the Purchasing Agency a credit for any savings. Said compensation shall be determined by one of the following methods:
 - a. By mutual agreement between the parties in writing; or
 - b. By agreeing upon a unit price or using a unit price set forth in the contract, if the work to be done can be expressed in units, and the contractor accounts for the number of units of work performed, subject to the Purchasing Agency's right to audit the contractor's records and/or to determine the correct number of units independently; or
 - c. By ordering the contractor to proceed with the work and keep a record of all costs incurred and savings realized. A markup for overhead and profit may be allowed if provided by the contract. The same markup shall be used for determining a decrease in price as the result of savings realized. The contractor shall present the Purchasing Agency with all vouchers and records of expenses incurred and savings realized. The Purchasing Agency shall have the right to audit the records of the contractor as it deems necessary to determine costs or savings. Any claim for an adjustment in price under this provision must be asserted by written notice to the Purchasing Agency within thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the written order from the Purchasing Agency. If the parties fail to agree on an amount of adjustment, the question of an increase or decrease in the contract price or time for performance shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures for resolving disputes provided by the Disputes Clause of this

contract or, if there is none, in accordance with the disputes provisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia Purchasing Manual for Institutions of Higher Education and their Vendors. Neither the existence of a claim nor a dispute resolution process, litigation or any other provision of this contract shall excuse the contractor from promptly complying with the changes ordered by the Purchasing Agency or with the performance of the contract generally.

- P. **DEFAULT:** In case of failure to deliver goods or services in accordance with the contract terms and conditions, the Commonwealth, after due oral or written notice, may procure them from other sources and hold the contractor responsible for any resulting additional purchase and administrative costs. This remedy shall be in addition to any other remedies which the Commonwealth may have.
- Q. **INSURANCE:** By signing and submitting a proposal under this solicitation, the offeror certifies that if awarded the contract, it will have the following insurance coverage at the time the contract is awarded. For construction contracts, if any subcontractors are involved, the subcontractor will have workers' compensation insurance in accordance with § 25 of the Rules Governing Procurement – Chapter 2, Exhibit J, Attachment 1, and 65.2-800 et. Seq. of the Code of Virginia (available for review at <http://www.jmu.edu/procurement>) The offeror further certifies that the contractor and any subcontractors will maintain these insurance coverages during the entire term of the contract and that all insurance coverage will be provided by insurance companies authorized to sell insurance in Virginia by the Virginia State Corporation Commission.

MINIMUM INSURANCE COVERAGES AND LIMITS REQUIRED FOR MOST CONTRACTS:

1. Workers' Compensation: Statutory requirements and benefits. Coverage is compulsory for employers of three or more employees, to include the employer. Contractors who fail to notify the Commonwealth of increases in the number of employees that change their workers' compensation requirement under the Code of Virginia during the course of the contract shall be in noncompliance with the contract.
 2. Employer's Liability: \$100,000
 3. Commercial General Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate. Commercial General Liability is to include bodily injury and property damage, personal injury and advertising injury, products and completed operations coverage. The Commonwealth of Virginia must be named as an additional insured and so endorsed on the policy.
 4. Automobile Liability: \$1,000,000 combined single limit. *(Required only if a motor vehicle not owned by the Commonwealth is to be used in the contract. Contractor must assure that the required coverage is maintained by the Contractor (or third-party owner of such motor vehicle.)*
- R. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD:** Upon the award or the announcement of the decision to award a contract over \$100,000, as a result of this solicitation, the purchasing agency will publicly post such notice on the DGS/DPS eVA web site (www.eva.virginia.gov) for a minimum of 10 days.
- S. **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE:** During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees to (i) provide a drug-free workplace for the contractor's employees; (ii) post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the contractor's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; (iii) state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor that the contractor maintains a drug-free workplace; and (iv) include the provisions of the foregoing clauses in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

For the purposes of this section, “drug-free workplace” means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific contract awarded to a contractor, the employees of whom are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or marijuana during the performance of the contract.

T. NONDISCRIMINATION OF CONTRACTORS: An offeror, or contractor shall not be discriminated against in the solicitation or award of this contract because of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, faith-based organizational status, any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment or because the offeror employs ex-offenders unless the state agency, department or institution has made a written determination that employing ex-offenders on the specific contract is not in its best interest. If the award of this contract is made to a faith-based organization and an individual, who applies for or receives goods, services, or disbursements provided pursuant to this contract objects to the religious character of the faith-based organization from which the individual receives or would receive the goods, services, or disbursements, the public body shall offer the individual, within a reasonable period of time after the date of his objection, access to equivalent goods, services, or disbursements from an alternative provider.

U. eVA BUSINESS TO GOVERNMENT VENDOR REGISTRATION, CONTRACTS, AND ORDERS: The eVA Internet electronic procurement solution, website portal www.eVA.virginia.gov, streamlines and automates government purchasing activities in the Commonwealth. The eVA portal is the gateway for vendors to conduct business with state agencies and public bodies. All vendors desiring to provide goods and/or services to the Commonwealth shall participate in the eVA Internet eprocurement solution by completing the free eVA Vendor Registration. All offerors must register in eVA and pay the Vendor Transaction Fees specified below; failure to register will result in the proposal being rejected. Vendor transaction fees are determined by the date the original purchase order is issued and the current fees are as follows:

Vendor transaction fees are determined by the date the original purchase order is issued and the current fees are as follows:

1. For orders issued July 1, 2014 and after, the Vendor Transaction Fee is:
 - a. Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) certified Small Businesses: 1% capped at \$500 per order.
 - b. Businesses that are not Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) certified Small Businesses: 1% capped at \$1,500 per order.
2. For orders issued prior to July 1, 2014 the vendor transaction fees can be found at www.eVA.virginia.gov.
3. The specified vendor transaction fee will be invoiced by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of General Services approximately 60 days after the corresponding purchase order is issued and payable 30 days after the invoice date. Any adjustments (increases/decreases) will be handled through purchase order changes.

V. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS: It is understood and agreed between the parties herein that the Commonwealth of Virginia shall be bound hereunder only to the extent of the funds available or which may hereafter become available for the purpose of this agreement.

W. PRICING CURRENCY: Unless stated otherwise in the solicitation, offerors shall state offered prices in U.S. dollars.

- X. E-VERIFY REQUIREMENT OF ANY CONTRACTOR: Any employer with more than an average of 50 employees for the previous 12 months entering into a contract in excess of \$50,000 with James Madison University to perform work or provide services pursuant to such contract shall register and participate in the E-Verify program to verify information and work authorization of its newly hired employees performing work pursuant to any awarded contract.
- Y. CIVILITY IN STATE WORKPLACES: The contractor shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that no individual, while performing work on behalf of the contractor or any subcontractor in connection with this agreement (each, a "Contract Worker"), shall engage in 1) harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, cyber-bullying, or threatening or violent conduct, or 2) discriminatory behavior on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, political affiliation, veteran status, or disability.

The contractor shall provide each Contract Worker with a copy of this Section and will require Contract Workers to participate in training on civility in the State workplace. Upon request, the contractor shall provide documentation that each Contract Worker has received such training.

For purposes of this Section, "State workplace" includes any location, permanent or temporary, where a Commonwealth employee performs any work-related duty or is representing his or her agency, as well as surrounding perimeters, parking lots, outside meeting locations, and means of travel to and from these locations. Communications are deemed to occur in a State workplace if the Contract Worker reasonably should know that the phone number, email, or other method of communication is associated with a State workplace or is associated with a person who is a State employee.

The Commonwealth of Virginia may require, at its sole discretion, the removal and replacement of any Contract Worker who the Commonwealth reasonably believes to have violated this Section.

This Section creates obligations solely on the part of the contractor. Employees or other third parties may benefit incidentally from this Section and from training materials or other communications distributed on this topic, but the Parties to this agreement intend this Section to be enforceable solely by the Commonwealth and not by employees or other third parties.

VIII. SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A. AUDIT: The Contractor hereby agrees to retain all books, records, systems, and other documents relative to this contract for five (5) years after final payment, or until audited by the Commonwealth of Virginia, whichever is sooner. The Commonwealth of Virginia, its authorized agents, and/or State auditors shall have full access to and the right to examine any of said materials during said period.
- B. CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT: James Madison University reserves the right to cancel and terminate any resulting contract, in part or in whole, without penalty, upon 60 days written notice to the contractor. In the event the initial contract period is for more than 12 months, the resulting contract may be terminated by either party, without penalty, after the initial 12 months of the contract period upon 60 days written notice to the other party. Any contract cancellation notice shall not relieve the contractor of the obligation to deliver and/or perform on all outstanding orders issued prior to the effective date of cancellation.

- C. IDENTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL ENVELOPE: The signed proposal should be returned in a separate envelope or package, sealed and identified as follows:

From: _____

_____	_____	_____
Name of Offeror	Due Date	Time

Street or Box No.	RFP #	

City, State, Zip Code	RFP Title	

Name of Purchasing Officer: _____		

The envelope should be addressed as directed on the title page of the solicitation.

The Offeror takes the risk that if the envelope is not marked as described above, it may be inadvertently opened and the information compromised, which may cause the proposal to be disqualified. Proposals may be hand-delivered to the designated location in the office issuing the solicitation. No other correspondence or other proposals should be placed in the envelope.

- D. LATE PROPOSALS: To be considered for selection, proposals must be received by the issuing office by the designated date and hour. The official time used in the receipt of proposals is that time on the automatic time stamp machine in the issuing office. Proposals received in the issuing office after the date and hour designated are automatically non responsive and will not be considered. The University is not responsible for delays in the delivery of mail by the U.S. Postal Service, private couriers, or the intra university mail system. It is the sole responsibility of the Offeror to ensure that its proposal reaches the issuing office by the designated date and hour.
- E. UNDERSTANDING OF REQUIREMENTS: It is the responsibility of each offeror to inquire about and clarify any requirements of this solicitation that is not understood. The University will not be bound by oral explanations as to the meaning of specifications or language contained in this solicitation. Therefore, all inquiries deemed to be substantive in nature must be in writing and submitted to the responsible buyer in the Procurement Services Office. Offerors must ensure that written inquiries reach the buyer at least five (5) days prior to the time set for receipt of offerors proposals. A copy of all queries and the respective response will be provided in the form of an addendum to all offerors who have indicated an interest in responding to this solicitation. Your signature on your Offer certifies that you fully understand all facets of this solicitation. These questions may be sent by Fax to 540/568-7935.
- F. RENEWAL OF CONTRACT: This contract may be renewed by the Commonwealth for a period of four (4) successive one-year periods under the terms and conditions of the original contract except as stated in 1. and 2. below. Price increases may be negotiated only at the time of renewal. Written notice of the Commonwealth's intention to renew shall be given approximately 90 days prior to the expiration date of each contract period.
1. If the Commonwealth elects to exercise the option to renew the contract for an additional one-year period, the contract price(s) for the additional one year shall not exceed the contract price(s) of the original contract increased/decreased by no more than the percentage increase/decrease of the other services category of the CPI-W section of the Consumer Price Index of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics for the latest twelve months for which statistics are available.
 2. If during any subsequent renewal periods, the Commonwealth elects to exercise the option to renew the contract, the contract price(s) for the subsequent renewal period shall not exceed the contract price(s) of the previous renewal period increased/decreased by more than the percentage increase/decrease of the other services category of the CPI-W section of the Consumer Price Index

of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics for the latest twelve months for which statistics are available.

- G. SUBMISSION OF INVOICES: All invoices shall be submitted within sixty days of contract term expiration for the initial contract period as well as for each subsequent contract renewal period. Any invoices submitted after the sixty-day period will not be processed for payment.
- H. OPERATING VEHICLES ON JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS: Operating vehicles on sidewalks, plazas, and areas heavily used by pedestrians is prohibited. In the unlikely event a driver should find it necessary to drive on James Madison University sidewalks, plazas, and areas heavily used by pedestrians, the driver must yield to pedestrians. For a complete list of parking regulations, please go to www.jmu.edu/parking; or to acquire a service representative parking permit, contact Parking Services at 540.568.3300. The safety of our students, faculty and staff is of paramount importance to us. Accordingly, violators may be charged.
- I. COOPERATIVE PURCHASING / USE OF AGREEMENT BY THIRD PARTIES: It is the intent of this solicitation and resulting contract(s) to allow for cooperative procurement. Accordingly, any public body, (to include government/state agencies, political subdivisions, etc.), cooperative purchasing organizations, public or private health or educational institutions or any University related foundation and affiliated corporations may access any resulting contract if authorized by the Contractor.

Participation in this cooperative procurement is strictly voluntary. If authorized by the Contractor(s), the resultant contract(s) will be extended to the entities indicated above to purchase goods and services in accordance with contract terms. As a separate contractual relationship, the participating entity will place its own orders directly with the Contractor(s) and shall fully and independently administer its use of the contract(s) to include contractual disputes, invoicing and payments without direct administration from the University. No modification of this contract or execution of a separate agreement is required to participate; however, the participating entity and the Contractor may modify the terms and conditions of this contract to accommodate specific governing laws, regulations, policies, and business goals required by the participating entity. Any such modification will apply solely between the participating entity and the Contractor.

The Contractor will notify the University in writing of any such entities accessing this contract. The Contractor will provide semi-annual usage reports for all entities accessing the contract. The University shall not be held liable for any costs or damages incurred by any other participating entity as a result of any authorization by the Contractor to extend the contract. It is understood and agreed that the University is not responsible for the acts or omissions of any entity and will not be considered in default of the contract no matter the circumstances.

Use of this contract(s) does not preclude any participating entity from using other contracts or competitive processes as needed.

- J. SMALL BUSINESS SUBCONTRACTING AND EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE:
 - 1. It is the goal of the Commonwealth that 42% of its purchases are made from small businesses. This includes discretionary spending in prime contracts and subcontracts. All potential offerors are required to submit a Small Business Subcontracting Plan. Unless the offeror is registered as a Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)-certified small business and where it is practicable for any portion of the awarded contract to be subcontracted to other suppliers, the contractor is encouraged to offer such subcontracting opportunities to SBSD-certified small businesses. This shall not exclude SBSD-certified women-owned and minority-owned businesses when they have received SBSD small business certification. No offeror or subcontractor shall be considered a Small Business, a Women-Owned Business or a Minority-Owned Business unless

certified as such by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) by the due date for receipt of proposals. If small business subcontractors are used, the prime contractor agrees to report the use of small business subcontractors by providing the purchasing office at a minimum the following information: name of small business with the SBSD certification number or FEIN, phone number, total dollar amount subcontracted, category type (small, women-owned, or minority-owned), and type of product/service provided. **This information shall be submitted to: JMU Office of Procurement Services, Attn: SWAM Subcontracting Compliance, MSC 5720, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.**

2. Each prime contractor who wins an award in which provision of a small business subcontracting plan is a condition of the award, shall deliver to the contracting agency or institution with every request for payment, evidence of compliance (subject only to insubstantial shortfalls and to shortfalls arising from subcontractor default) with the small business subcontracting plan. **This information shall be submitted to: JMU Office of Procurement Services, SWAM Subcontracting Compliance, MSC 5720, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.** When such business has been subcontracted to these firms and upon completion of the contract, the contractor agrees to furnish the purchasing office at a minimum the following information: name of firm with the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) certification number or FEIN number, phone number, total dollar amount subcontracted, category type (small, women-owned, or minority-owned), and type of product or service provided. Payment(s) may be withheld until compliance with the plan is received and confirmed by the agency or institution. The agency or institution reserves the right to pursue other appropriate remedies to include, but not be limited to, termination for default.
 3. Each prime contractor who wins an award valued over \$200,000 shall deliver to the contracting agency or institution with every request for payment, information on use of subcontractors that are not Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)-certified small businesses. When such business has been subcontracted to these firms and upon completion of the contract, the contractor agrees to furnish the purchasing office at a minimum the following information: name of firm, phone number, FEIN number, total dollar amount subcontracted, and type of product or service provided. **This information shall be submitted to: JMU Office of Procurement Services, Attn: SWAM Subcontracting Compliance, MSC 5720, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.**
- K. AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THE COMMONWEALTH: A contractor organized as a stock or nonstock corporation, limited liability company, business trust, or limited partnership or registered as a registered limited liability partnership shall be authorized to transact business in the Commonwealth as a domestic or foreign business entity if so required by Title 13.1 or Title 50 of the Code of Virginia or as otherwise required by law. Any business entity described above that enters into a contract with a public body shall not allow its existence to lapse or its certificate of authority or registration to transact business in the Commonwealth, if so required under Title 13.1 or Title 50, to be revoked or cancelled at any time during the term of the contract. A public body may void any contract with a business entity if the business entity fails to remain in compliance with the provisions of this section.
- L. PUBLIC POSTING OF COOPERATIVE CONTRACTS: James Madison University maintains a web-based contracts database with a public gateway access. Any resulting cooperative contract/s to this solicitation will be posted to the publicly accessible website. Contents identified as proprietary information will not be made public.
- M. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS OF PERSONNEL ASSIGNED BY CONTRACTOR TO PERFORM WORK ON JMU PROPERTY: The Contractor shall obtain criminal background checks on all of their contracted employees who will be assigned to perform services on James Madison University property. The results of the background checks will be directed solely to the Contractor.

The Contractor bears responsibility for confirming to the University contract administrator that the background checks have been completed prior to work being performed by their employees or subcontractors. The Contractor shall only assign to work on the University campus those individuals whom it deems qualified and permissible based on the results of completed background checks. Notwithstanding any other provision herein, and to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff and facilities, James Madison University reserves the right to approve or disapprove any contract employee that will work on JMU property. Disapproval by the University will solely apply to JMU property and should have no bearing on the Contractor's employment of an individual outside of James Madison University.

- N. INDEMNIFICATION: Contractor agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Commonwealth of Virginia, its officers, agents, and employees from any claims, damages and actions of any kind or nature, whether at law or in equity, arising from or caused by the use of any materials, goods, or equipment of any kind or nature furnished by the contractor/any services of any kind or nature furnished by the contractor, provided that such liability is not attributable to the sole negligence of the using agency or to failure of the using agency to use the materials, goods, or equipment in the manner already and permanently described by the contractor on the materials, goods or equipment delivered.
- O. ADDITIONAL GOODS AND SERVICES: The University may acquire other goods or services that the supplier provides than those specifically solicited. The University reserves the right, subject to mutual agreement, for the Contractor to provide additional goods and/or services under the same pricing, terms, and conditions and to make modifications or enhancements to the existing goods and services. Such additional goods and services may include other products, components, accessories, subsystems, or related services that are newly introduced during the term of this Agreement. Such additional goods and services will be provided to the University at favored nations pricing, terms, and conditions.
- P. SUBCONTRACTS: No portion of the work shall be subcontracted without prior written consent of the purchasing agency. In the event that the contractor desires to subcontract some part of the work specified herein, the contractor shall furnish the purchasing agency the names, qualifications and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The contractor shall, however, remain fully liable and responsible for the work to be done by its subcontractor(s) and shall assure compliance with all requirements of the contract.
- Q. PRIME CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES: The contractor shall be responsible for completely supervising and directing the work under this contract and all subcontractors that he may utilize, using his best skill and attention. Subcontractors who perform work under this contract shall be responsible to the prime contractor. The contractor agrees that he is as fully responsible for the acts and omissions of his subcontractors and of persons employed by them as he is for the acts and omissions of his own employees.
- R. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION: The contractor assures that information and data obtained as to personal facts and circumstances related to faculty, staff, students, affiliates, and research study participants will be collected and held confidential, during and following the term of this agreement, and will not be divulged without the individual's and the agency's written consent and only in accordance with federal law or the Code of Virginia. This shall include FTI, which is a term of art and consists of federal tax returns and return information (and information derived from it) that is in contractor/agency possession or control which is covered by the confidentiality protections of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) and subject to the IRC 6103(p)(4) safeguarding requirements including IRS oversight. FTI is categorized as sensitive but unclassified information and may contain personally identifiable information (PII). Contractors who utilize, access, or store personally identifiable information as part of the performance of a contract are required to safeguard this information and immediately notify the agency of any breach or suspected breach in the security

of such information. Contractors shall allow the agency to both participate in the investigation of incidents and exercise control over decisions regarding external reporting. Contractors and their employees working on this project may be required to sign a confidentiality statement.

IX. METHOD OF PAYMENT

The contractor will be paid based on invoices submitted in accordance with the solicitation and any negotiations. James Madison University recognizes the importance of expediting the payment process for our vendors and suppliers; we request that our vendors and suppliers enroll in our bank's Comprehensive Payable options: either the Virtual Payables Virtual Card or the PayMode-X electronic deposit (ACH) to your bank account so that future payments are made electronically. Contractors signed up for the Virtual Payables process will receive the benefit of being paid Net 15. Additional information is available online at:

<http://www.jmu.edu/financeoffice/accounting-operations-disbursements/cash-investments/vendor-payment-methods.shtml>

X. PRICING SCHEDULE

The offeror shall provide a pricing structure based on hourly rates for all services included in the proposal. Offers should provide an onsite and offsite hourly rate for the range of personnel to provide labor under any resulting contract. Hourly rates should include all travel, incidentals, and miscellaneous expenses. The Contractor shall not be reimbursed for, nor will James Madison University purchase, any operational needs or expenses of the Contractor, which includes, but is not limited to, office supplies and equipment, computers and accessories, and office furniture.

Specify any associated charge card processing fees, if applicable, to be billed to the university.

XI. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Offeror Data Sheet

Attachment B: Small, Women, and Minority-owned Business (SWaM) Utilization Plan

Attachment C: Standard Contract Sample

ATTACHMENT A

OFFEROR DATA SHEET

TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFEROR

1. **QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFEROR:** Offerors must have the capability and capacity in all respects to fully satisfy the contractual requirements.
2. **YEARS IN BUSINESS:** Indicate the length of time you have been in business providing these types of goods and services.

Years _____ Months _____

3. **REFERENCES:** Indicate below a listing of at least five (5) organizations, either commercial or governmental/educational, that your agency is servicing. Include the name and address of the person the purchasing agency has your permission to contact.

CLIENT	LENGTH OF SERVICE	ADDRESS	CONTACT PERSON/PHONE #
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4. List full names and addresses of Offeror and any branch offices which may be responsible for administering the contract.

5. **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA:** Is any member of the firm an employee of the Commonwealth of Virginia who has a personal interest in this contract pursuant to the [CODE OF VIRGINIA](#), SECTION 2.2-3100 – 3131?

[] YES [] NO

IF YES, EXPLAIN: _____

ATTACHMENT B

Small, Women and Minority-owned Businesses (SWaM) Utilization Plan

Offeror Name: _____ **Preparer Name:** _____

Date: _____

Is your firm a **Small Business Enterprise** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, certification number: _____ Certification date: _____

Is your firm a **Woman-owned Business Enterprise** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, certification number: _____ Certification date: _____

Is your firm a **Minority-Owned Business Enterprise** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, certification number: _____ Certification date: _____

Is your firm a **Micro Business** certified by the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, certification number: _____ Certification date: _____

Instructions: *Populate the table below to show your firm's plans for utilization of small, women-owned and minority-owned business enterprises in the performance of the contract. Describe plans to utilize SWAMs businesses as part of joint ventures, partnerships, subcontractors, suppliers, etc.*

Small Business: "Small business " means a business, independently owned or operated by one or more persons who are citizens of the United States or non-citizens who are in full compliance with United States immigration law, which, together with affiliates, has 250 or fewer employees, or average annual gross receipts of \$10 million or less averaged over the previous three years.

Woman-Owned Business Enterprise: A business concern which is at least 51 percent owned by one or more women who are U.S. citizens or legal resident aliens, or in the case of a corporation, partnership or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51 percent of the equity ownership interest in which is owned by one or more women, and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of such individuals. **For purposes of the SWAM Program, all certified women-owned businesses are also a small business enterprise.**

Minority-Owned Business Enterprise: A business concern which is at least 51 percent owned by one or more minorities or in the case of a corporation, partnership or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51 percent of the equity ownership interest in which is owned by one or more minorities and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of such individuals. **For purposes of the SWAM Program, all certified minority-owned businesses are also a small business enterprise.**

Micro Business is a certified Small Business under the SWaM Program and has no more than twenty-five (25) employees **AND** no more than \$3 million in average annual revenue over the three-year period prior to their certification.

All small, women, and minority owned businesses must be certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) to be counted in the SWAM program. Certification applications are available through SBSD at 800-223-0671 in Virginia, 804-786-6585 outside Virginia, or online at <http://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/> (Customer Service).

RETURN OF THIS PAGE IS REQUIRED

ATTACHMENT B (CNT'D)
Small, Women and Minority-owned Businesses (SWaM) Utilization Plan

Procurement Name and Number: _____

Date Form Completed: _____

Listing of Sub-Contractors, to include, Small, Woman Owned and Minority Owned Businesses
for this Proposal and Subsequent Contract

Offeror / Proposer: _____

Firm

Address

Contact Person/No.

Sub-Contractor's Name and Address	Contact Person & Phone Number	SBSD Certification Number	Services or Materials Provided	Total Subcontractor Contract Amount (to include change orders)	Total Dollars Paid Subcontractor to date (to be submitted with request for payment from JMU)

(Form shall be submitted with proposal and if awarded, again with submission of each request for payment)

RETURN OF THIS PAGE IS REQUIRED

ATTACHMENT C



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STANDARD CONTRACT**

Contract No. _____

This contract entered into this _____ day of _____, 20____, by _____ hereinafter called the "Contractor" and Commonwealth of Virginia, James Madison University called the "Purchasing Agency".

WITNESSETH that the Contractor and the Purchasing Agency, in consideration of the mutual covenants, promises and agreements herein contained, agree as follows:

SCOPE OF CONTRACT: The Contractor shall provide the services to the Purchasing Agency as set forth in the Contract Documents.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: From _____ through _____

The contract documents shall consist of:

- (1) This signed form;
- (2) The following portions of the Request for Proposals dated _____:
 - (a) The Statement of Needs,
 - (b) The General Terms and Conditions,
 - (c) The Special Terms and Conditions together with any negotiated modifications of those Special Conditions;
 - (d) List each addendum that may be issued
- (3) The Contractor's Proposal dated _____ and the following negotiated modification to the Proposal, all of which documents are incorporated herein.
 - (a) Negotiations summary dated _____.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Contract to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

CONTRACTOR:

PURCHASING AGENCY:

By: _____
(Signature)

By: _____
(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Printed Name)

Title: _____

Title: _____



October 24, 2023

ADDENDUM NO.: One

TO ALL OFFERORS

REFERENCE: Request for Proposal No: RFP# FDC-1189
Dated: October 2, 2023
Commodity: Sponsored Programs Evaluation Services
RFP Closing On: November 2, 2023

Please note the clarifications and/or changes made on this proposal program:

1. May offerors submit resumes for key management personnel requested under Section IV.H (page 2) as an annex?

Answer: Yes.

2. May offerors submit sample work products requested under Section IV.I (page 2) as an annex?

Answer: Yes.

3. Is the requirement of adding the heading to the top of each page expected for the sample work product? Should annexes be permissible, is the expectation to include the heading at the top of each page if the content carries over multiple pages?

Answer: It is not a requirement but it would be helpful.

4. Per Section 4 in the RFP, areas A and C require firm information, experience, and qualifications, and section H requires staffing information. Can you please confirm that these areas are separate sections or does JMU want these areas combined?

Answer: These are two separate questions and should have a separate response for each

5. What is the average value and duration for JMU evaluations and studies under this contract?

Answer: JMU does not have enough data to provide an answer to the value question. Most grants which utilize professional external evaluators are multi-year, 3 being average, however some projects run as long as 5 years.

6. Will JMU kindly share how many studies it expects to procure per year on average under this contract?

Answer: This is unknown and variable but probably fewer than 20 per year.

MSC 5720
752 Ott Street, Room 1042
Wine Price Building
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
Office of
PROCUREMENT SERVICES 540.568.3145 Phone
540.568.7935 Fax

7. Can JMU confirm if travel expenses included in the hourly rates should be for travel to JMU?

Answer: Most work is done remotely so travel to JMU or other locations would normally be minimal.

8. Should offerors expect travel to anywhere besides JMU and, if so, how will those costs be covered?

Answer: All costs for the contractor should be rolled into the hourly rate. Travel is not paid separately. Most work is done remotely so travel to JMU or other locations would normally be minimal.

9. At what point is the Contractor brought into the process? To what extent will the Contractor and faculty member submitting the proposal be working together in the planning phase?

Answer: Ideally with the use of pre-vetted contractors, the faculty or staff member would contact the contractor in the planning stages of the funding application to receive guidance on the evaluative aspects of the project in order to incorporate those elements into the proposal.

10. Is the evaluation ever considered a turn-key relationship, where the Contractor is acting as an independent third-party evaluator (or will the Contractor always be working with and/or advising a faculty)?

Answer: Ideally with the use of pre-vetted contractors, the faculty or staff member would contact the contractor in the planning stages of the funding application to receive guidance on the evaluative aspects of the project in order to incorporate those elements into the proposal.

11. Is there a time where the University would contract the Contractor without having had them involved with the development of the evaluation plan?

Answer: It is conceivable that a Contractor could be approached to provide services once a project is designed and funded.

12. What is the percentage of implementation program grants vs. research grant submissions?

Answer: Based on historical data this would break down to approximately 70% implementation or services projects and 30% projects which are categorized as research. Notably many implementation grants also have a research component.

Signify receipt of this addendum by initialing “*Addendum #1*” on the signature page of your proposal.

Sincerely,

Doug Chester
Buyer Senior
Phone: 540-568-4272