

November 21, 2011

**ADDENDUM NO. 1 TO ALL VENDORS:**

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Reference Request for Proposals: | ADM-12-026                                      |
| Title:                           | Advancing the Strengthening Families Initiative |
| Proposals Due:                   | December 5, 2011                                |
| Pre-proposal Conference:         | November 9, 2011                                |

The above is hereby changed to read:

**See Attached Changes to RFP and Questions and Answers**

Note: A signed acknowledgment of this addendum must be received at the location indicated on the RFP either prior to the proposal due date and hour or attached to your proposal. Signature on this addendum does not substitute for your signature on the original proposal document. The original proposal must be signed.

Very truly yours,

Sharon S. Vaughan  
Contract Officer  
(804) 726-7185

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Firm

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Changes to RFP

1. Reference Section I, Purpose: *Change* the first sentence in the second paragraph of this section to read, “Eligible Offerors include state agencies, universities, *for-profit firms*, and non-profit entities.”
2. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Subsection 3.5, Research and Evaluation, Item 3.5.2: *Change* this item to read, “The Contractor shall conduct an evaluation process at least *twice during the contract period to ensure target messages reach target populations.*”

## Questions and Answers

1. Q. Reference Section I, Purpose: How much has VDSS budgeted for this/these projects? What is the budget breakdown for Part I and Part II? Is this part of the \$8.8 million that VDSS has requested?
  - A. **VDSS has budgeted \$1.8 million for both parts of this Advancing the Strengthening Families Initiative solicitation – the budget does not break out the figure for the separate projects. Offerors should keep this in mind when preparing their proposals. VDSS is looking for best solutions to provide the services, at a fair and reasonable price. Awards will be made to the Offerors who submit proposals that represent the best value for what the agency needs. It is VDSS’ intention to award these contracts around the end of January 2012, with the contracts starting February 1. Any additional monies VDSS may receive, as a result of approval from the General Assembly for the Strengthening Families Initiative, will be separate from the funds set aside for this particular solicitation. If VDSS does receive additional monies, other solicitations may be issued, but additional monies will not be made a part of these contracts.**
  
2. Q. Reference Section I, Purpose: Is a publicly-traded corporation considered a private firm?
  - A. **See Changes to RFP. A publicly-traded corporation is eligible to submit a proposal for this solicitation.**
  
3. Q. Reference Section I, Purpose: Will VDSS consider extending the contracts beyond 18 months? Will the Strengthening Families Initiative extend beyond the 18-month contract period?
  - A. **The Strengthening Families Initiative is a system-wide initiative. While the initiative will extend beyond 18 months, these particular contracts will not, as there are no renewal options.**
  
4. Q. Reference Section II, Background: Is there an incumbent for either of these contracts? Was Hampton University performing similar work? Why was the contract with Hampton University cancelled? Does VDSS desire to partner with a college or university in this initiative?

**A. There are no incumbents for these upcoming contracts. On June 29, 2011, VDSS entered into a sole source contract with Hampton University to provide community outreach, research, training, resource development, and public awareness to advance VDSS' Strengthening Families Initiative. It was later brought to VDSS' attention that the work may not constitute a justification for a sole source contract. As a result, VDSS conferred with the Office of the Attorney General who advised VDSS to terminate the contract and proceed with a competitive bidding process. The scope of work was expanded, and this RFP was issued October 27, 2011. VDSS has no preference about the Contractor's entity status. Eligible Offerors include state agencies, for-profit firms, non-profit entities, as well as, universities.**

5. Q. Reference Section II, Background: Did Hampton University supply the data outlined under Section II?

**A. No. The data outlined under Section II is from national resources and information provided by VDSS' Research and Planning unit.**

6. Q. Reference Section II, Background: Was there a Contractor involved in putting together the Northeast Family Strengthening Conference and/or the four community meetings held around the Commonwealth this past summer?

**A. VDSS did not hire a contractor for the 2011 Northeast Family Strengthening Conference or for the four community meetings held this summer. The conference was co-sponsored by VDSS and the Administration for Children and Families Region's I, II, and III. VDSS was responsible for planning and hosting the four community meetings that took place in June and July of 2011. The meetings took place in various public and state-supported spaces.**

7. Q. Reference Section II, Background: Is this RFP and this initiative the same as what the agency advertised for this past summer?

**A. This RFP is different than the RFP that was released this summer. While both solicitations relate to VDSS' Strengthening Families Initiative, the purpose of the RFP that was released this summer was to support local programming efforts related to responsible fatherhood, healthy marriage and relationships, and youth programs through grant awards.**

8. Q. Reference Section II, Background: Has VDSS prioritized the goals of the initiative?

**A. No, the goals are not prioritized.**

9. Q. Reference Section II, Background: Has VDSS already determined demographics or regions of the state in which to focus its efforts? What is the rationale for a statewide initiative? May the Offeror narrow its focus to a region of the state? Is there a specific focus on any particular demographic or region?

**A. VDSS provides services to individuals and oversees programs across all demographics and regions throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and desires the initiative be a statewide one; however, Offerors are free to propose their own solutions to the requirements outlined in the RFP. Contracts will be awarded based on evaluation criteria, and with consideration of price, and to those Offerors who offer the greatest benefit(s) in meeting the needs of VDSS.**

10. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs: Does the scope of work under Part I precede the work outlined under Part II? Does the agency want one contractor for both parts? If awarded a contract for Part I, does the work cross over to deliverables outlined under Part II?

**A. Contractors for Part 1 and Part 2 will conduct their work concurrently. The sequencing of work to be performed under each contract is not contingent upon one part occurring before the other part. Contractors for Part I and Part II must work closely with VDSS staff in order to make sure that work is aligned. A Contractor will be selected for both Part I and Part II and from separate proposal evaluations. VDSS will select the Offerors, in its opinion, that have the best proposals and represent the best value, and will award contracts to those Offerors. Contracts for both Part I and Part II could be awarded to the same agency, university, for-profit firm, or non-profit entity dependent upon the opinions of separate evaluation teams.**

11. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs: How creative can the proposals be?

**A. VDSS encourages creativity. Offerors should propose solutions that are also realistic and attainable.**

12. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs: Is the Contractor expected to pay expenses for paper copies for documents outlined in Part I or Part II of the RFP?

A. No.

13. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I: Do the deliverables that fall under Part I of the Statement of Needs section define the scope of the initiative? Does VDSS have best practices it already recognizes? Will this work begin the acquisition of best practices or will we be building on work that has already taken place?

A. **The scope of the initiative is defined in RFP Section II, Background. Part I includes several deliverables that make up various key strategies of the initiative. VDSS recognizes many best practices and promising practices on a federal, state, and local level in the responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage and relationship fields. This work will build off of work that has already taken place within VDSS.**

14. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I: Are there particular constituency groups with whom VDSS wants Offerors to work?

A. **Yes – those stakeholder groups are outlined in the RFP.**

15. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I and Part II: How is the call-to-action, outlined in 3.1.6, different than the overall marketing campaign?

A. **It is up to the Offeror to propose its solutions for supporting VDSS in issuing the call-to-action. Similarly, it is up to the Offeror to propose its marketing campaign. If an Offeror chooses to respond to both parts of the RFP, it is up to that Offeror to differentiate between the call-to-action and the marketing campaign.**

16. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part 1, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Item 3.1.1: How many experts/leaders should the Advisory Panel include? Will the Contractor be expected to provide stipends and/or pay travel expenses for Advisory Panel members? Will VDSS provide space for Advisory Panel meetings or is the Contractor expected to secure space? How many meetings and days should the Contractor budget for? Does VDSS expect that Advisory Panel members serve

in that capacity for the entire 18 month period? Will VDSS have final authority over the make-up of the Advisory Panel?

- A. The Advisory Panel should be a small representative group of prominent leaders in the community including members of the faith and business communities and other community organizations from around the state. VDSS prefers the Advisory Panel consist of no more than 20 members; however, consideration will be given to an Offeror's alternate recommendation. Advisory Panel members should expect to pay their own travel expenses and should not expect stipends, however Offerors may make the decision to pay these expenses. VDSS will work with the Contractor to provide meeting space, at no cost to the Contractor, for Advisory Panel meetings at its Home Office or at alternative sites as long as the Contractor notifies the VDSS contract administrator in time for appropriate arrangements to be made. VDSS is not stipulating a specific number of meeting days for the Advisory Panel meetings. It is up to Offerors to propose how they plan to form and oversee the Advisory Panel, but VDSS desires to consult with the Contractor regarding decisions about the Advisory Panel and who its members will be.**

17. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Item 3.1.2: Are the leaders outlined in 3.1.2 the same as leaders in the Advisory Panel?

- A. The leaders outlined in 3.1.2 should include, but are not limited to, the Advisory Panel members.**

18. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part 1, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Item 3.1.4: Is the statewide Summit different than a meeting of the Advisory Panel? How many are expected to participate in the statewide Summit? Is the Contractor required to pay the travel expenses for Summit participants and/or presenters? Is the Summit a one-day event? Does the statewide Summit replace the VDSS statewide conference that they have held in previous years related to fatherhood and healthy marriage and relationships? Does VDSS prefer a specific timeframe for the Summit to take place? Will VDSS pay for the Contractor's travel costs?

- A. The statewide Summit is different from the Advisory Panel meetings. The statewide Summit is a conference of numerous officials from the fatherhood and marriage movements, the faith-based community, the business and philanthropic sectors, and community-based organizations, and should also include Advisory Panel members. The Contractor should engage as many officials as possible in order to obtain as much information as possible, in**

**order to identify needs, to share strategies and obtain commitments. The Advisory Panel should be a small representative group of individuals selected from prominent leaders in the community. The Contractor is not expected to pay travel expenses for Summit participants – Summit participants should expect to pay their own travel expenses. VDSS is not stipulating whether the Contractor should pay for travel expenses for presenters. A one-day Summit event is acceptable to VDSS if the Contractor can meet the requirements as stated in Item 3.1.4. VDSS has not made a decision about whether it plans to hold a statewide conference in 2012, similar to those held in previous years. That decision is incumbent upon available resources and other events that may be scheduled. VDSS does not have a preference for a specific time for the Summit to take place, but the Contractor must work closely with VDSS when planning the date and location of Summit. The Contractor must pay any travel costs it incurs to convene the Summit.**

19. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Item 3.1.5: Can you clarify the phrase, “to mobilize members of the community to advance SFI beyond the scope of VDSS.” As we work with other organizations, such as the faith community, are there any limitations to conducting outreach in the community because this work is associated with a state agency?

**A. VDSS can impact its programs and its policies, but community outreach and engagement efforts are aimed to involve other organizations in this initiative so they will help advance the work beyond the scope of Virginia’s social services system. VDSS is limited to the kinds of outreach it can conduct, but sees no limitations to the outreach a Contractor might conduct. State agencies partner with various community organizations in many different capacities, including the faith community.**

20. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part 1, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Items 3.1.6 through 3.1.10: Does VDSS envision the “support, mentoring and information dissemination” in tasks listed in these items to be individualized (e.g., meetings/phone calls with individual organizations) or more wholesale (e.g. webinars, conference calls)? If individualized, approximately how many organizations should the Contractor work with?

**A. It is up to Offerors to propose their solutions for how they will provide these services.**

21. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Item 3.1.6: Is VDSS' call-to-action with leaders in key sectors the same as the community forum meetings sponsored by VDSS last summer?

**A. No. The community forum meetings sponsored by VDSS last summer were designed to begin initial outreach efforts with community leaders in key sectors. The purpose of the meetings was to share information and garner support for the Strengthening Families Initiative among targeted elected official business leaders, faith-based representatives, and community/civic organization representatives. It is up to Offerors to describe how they plan to support VDSS in issuing the call-to-action; however, VDSS envisions that the call-to-action will include specific action items and commitments from various organizations to carry the work forward.**

22. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Items 3.1.7 and 3.1.9: What is meant by providing "support" versus "mentoring"? Can you differentiate between the two?

**A. While Offerors are free to interpret "support" and "mentoring," VDSS envisions "support" to be more general in nature and applying to a larger audience of individuals and/or organizations. VDSS envisions "mentoring" to mean one-on-one or targeted technical assistance and trouble-shooting with select individuals and/or organizations.**

23. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I, Subsection 3.1, Community Outreach and Engagement, Items 3.1.7 through 3.1.11: For work outlined in Items 3.1.7 through 3.1.11, how does VDSS envision this work taking place?

**A. It is up to the Offeror to propose its solutions for providing support, mentoring, and information dissemination to various stakeholder groups.**

24. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part 1, Subsection 3.2, Research: What data collection method does VDSS prefer (phone call, online, paper survey)? Does VDSS want state-wide data or data that can be broken down regionally (e.g. compare Northern Virginia to the Hampton Roads area) or by subgroup (e.g. attitude differences by race, gender, marital status, etc.)?

- A. VDSS has no preference for data collection methods or how the state-wide data is presented at this time. It is up to Offerors to propose their solutions for how they plan to conduct its research and the survey.**

25. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part I, Subsection 3.2, Research: Does VDSS have an Institutional Review Board (IRB) process that guides considerations on research design? Is it expected that the Contractor will survey both adults and children? Are you recommending a minimum number of respondents for the survey?

- A. Go to <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/about/irb.cgi> for information on the IRB process. Appendix A of the IRB manual provides clarity on Virginia law and regulations regarding human subject research. Offerors should make their own determination as to the research process/design needed to fulfill requirements as stated in the RFP. Offerors should be aware that the research described in Subsection 3.2 is closely linked with resource development, as described in Subsection 3.3. VDSS is not specifying a minimum number of respondents needed.**

26. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part 1, Subsection 3.4, Training, Item 3.4.1: For how many training sessions should the Contractor budget and pay expenses, and for how many people? Is food allowable?

- A. It is up to Offerors to propose their solutions for how they will provide training and cover the topics outlined in the RFP. The number of people who will attend training sessions is unknown; however VDSS will work closely with the Contractor to ensure training sessions are well-attended. VDSS will also provide appropriate space for the sessions. Food is an allowable expense, but it is up to Offerors to include any associated costs in their budgets. There are five regional VDSS boundaries – Central, Eastern, Northern, Piedmont, and Western. For a map showing the regional boundaries, go to [www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/regional\\_offices/map\\_boundaries.pdf](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/regional_offices/map_boundaries.pdf).**

27. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part 1, Subsection 3.4, Training, Item 3.4.2: Should the training be in-person, online, or on the phone? Will the training be only for Advisory Panel members or for their staff or other recommended community members?

- A. VDSS has no preference for how the session(s) should be held. The Contractor must hold at least one training session with Advisory Panel members. There is no requirement for training for Advisory Panel members' staff or other community members.**

28. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II: What marketing materials have been developed thus far? Does VDSS have their own library of images that the Contractor must use, or can the Contractor develop their own concepts and materials? Has a branding concept been developed?

**A. Information that has been developed for SFI thus far is posted on [www.dss.virginia.gov/about/sfi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/about/sfi). In addition, VDSS secured Coach Frank Beamer, head football coach at Virginia Tech, and Coach Mike London, head football coach at the University of Virginia, as public spokespersons for the initiative. As a separate project, VDSS filmed both coaches in a public service announcement on the importance of responsible fatherhood. VDSS has images from previous events related to the Strengthening Families Initiative that it is willing to share with the Contractor; however, VDSS envisions that the Contractor will develop its own concepts and material. A branding concept has not yet been developed.**

29. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II: Can the Contractor use the VDSS logo? Does VDSS have guidance in place for use of its logo by others or is this something that would need to be developed? If so, how quickly can a decision be made?

**A. The Contractor can use the VDSS logo. VDSS can grant permission to use the logo once awards are made. If the Contractor wants to use other images, such as the state seal, VDSS must obtain approval and consideration will be given on a case-by-case basis.**

30. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II: What percentage of the marketing campaign should be devoted to traditional advertising?

**A. VDSS has not determined a percentage that should be devoted to traditional advertising, as it is up to Offeror to determine the components of their marketing campaign.**

31. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II, Subsection 3.6, Marketing Campaign, Item 3.6.2: Is the Contractor permitted to secure funds from other sources or organizations as sponsorship?

**A. Yes, any arrangements the Contractor makes to secure funds is between it and other sources; however, any sponsor of the VDSS' Strengthening Families Initiative must be vetted through VDSS.**

32. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II, Subsection 3.6, Marketing Campaign, Item 3.6.4: Can you clarify the term “test messages?” Can Offerors use previous market research to offset costs?

**A. It is up to the Offeror to determine the method and the types of test messages they will use with various test groups. For example, this could include a basic messaging concept related to the importance of being an involved father, or a near final cut of a public service announcement. Offerors can use previous market research, if applicable, to offset costs.**

33. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II, Subsection 3.6, Marketing Campaign, Item 3.6.7: Does VDSS have a preference for using Facebook or Twitter?

**A. It is up to the Contractor to determine the use of social media; however, Offerors should note that VDSS has an existing Facebook and Twitter account. The Offeror may wish to propose strategies related to social media in conjunction with VDSS' existing accounts.**

34. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II, Subsection 3.6, Marketing Campaign, Item 3.6.8: Does VDSS prefer that a new website be developed, or should the Contractor expect to work with the site that has already been developed?

**A. The requirement is that the Contractor develop a website, not to work with VDSS' website.**

35. Q. Reference Section III, Statement of Needs, Part II, Marketing and Public Awareness: Is VDSS including media buys and creative development in its \$1.8 million budget? Is the Contractor responsible for media placement?

**A. Yes, VDSS' budget includes media buys and creative development. The Contractor is responsible for furnishing the goods and services described in Section III and as stipulated in the Pricing Schedule, for a firm fixed price, to include media placement. Item 3.6.9 requires the Contractor be responsible for all interactive media planning.**

36. Q. Reference Section IV, Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions, Subsection A, General Instructions, Item 3, Oral Presentation: Will Offerors be required to make oral presentations?
- A. At this time, VDSS does not think oral presentations will be necessary.**
37. Q. Reference Section IV, Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions, Subsection B: Is there guidance on page limits and spacing?
- A. No.**
38. Q. Reference Section IV, Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions, Subsection B, Specific Proposal Instructions, Item 3, h: Does VDSS have a preferred format or template for the line item budget?
- A. No, VDSS does not have a preferred format for the required Budget.**
39. Q. Reference Section IV, Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions, Subsection B, Specific Proposal Instructions, Item 3 h: Does VDSS allow indirect costs? Is the indirect cost amount included in the overall budgeted amount?
- A. Indirect costs are allowed; however they should be reasonable and justifiable. Indirect costs must be factored into the Offeror's budget and shall be included in the grand total project cost as indicated on the Pricing Schedule.**
40. Q. Reference Section V, Evaluation and Award Criteria: Who will make up the panel of individuals that evaluate the proposals?
- A. There will be two separate evaluation teams – one team for Part I and one team for Part II. Each team will be made up of three state employees. For Part I, planned evaluation team members are Ms. Jones of Research and Planning in VDSS, Mr. Stratton in VDSS' Division of Child Support Enforcement, and Ms. Inge of Community and Volunteer Services in VDSS. For Part II, the planned evaluation team members are Ms. Perdue of VDSS' Public Affairs, Ms. Relaford of Community and Volunteer Services, and Ms. Larson, Organizational Development in VDSS. The evaluation team members are subject to change if unforeseeable events occur that prevent any one of them from serving on the panel. Offerors are not to contact individual evaluation team members at any time.**

41. Q. Reference Section V, Evaluation and Award Criteria: Will both evaluation teams have a full understanding of both parts of the RFP?

**A. Both evaluation teams will be asked to read the RFP in its entirety. During the evaluation process, the separate teams will focus on the portion of the RFP that they are evaluating.**

42. Q. Reference Section V, Evaluation and Award Criteria: Will VDSS deduct points based on whether Offeror's are located in another state? Does VDSS prefer for organizations to have experience on a state or national level?

**A. Offerors will be awarded contracts using the Best Value Acquisition method of evaluation. Points are not assigned for evaluation criteria listed in this solicitation. Rather, the evaluations will be adjectival and rated according to the descriptions listed in this section. An Offeror will not be penalized if it is based in another state, but must meet requirements stipulated in the RFP, to include registering in eVA if applicable and obtaining pertinent authorizations to conduct business in Virginia (Section VIII, General Terms and Conditions). VDSS is not stipulating a preference for Offerors' experience on a state or national level as it is up to the members of evaluating teams to decide ratings for experience of the Offerors and the staff assigned to do the work.**

43. Q. Reference Section V, Evaluation and Award Criteria: How does an Offeror qualify for the "Exceptional Rating" for Evaluation Criteria No. 4, Participation of Small, Women-Owned, and Minority-Owned Business?

**A. Only Offerors who are certified as small businesses through the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) will be rated Exceptional for this criteria. No Offeror or subcontractor will be considered a small business unless certified as such by the due date for receipt of proposals. Offerors who are not certified as a small firm must submit a Small Business Subcontracting Plan (Attachment F), and will be rated according to the plan submitted.**

44. Q. Reference Section V, Evaluation and Award Criteria, and Section IX, Special Terms and Conditions: Do these contracts require that 40 percent of the budget go to a small business?
- A. **There is no requirement that 40 percent of the Contractor’s budget be expended on small business subcontracting. The objective is to include small business participation.**
45. Q. Reference Section V, Evaluation and Award Criteria and Attachment F: How do Offerors locate vendors to use as subcontractors?
- A. **Go to [www.dmb.virginia.gov](http://www.dmb.virginia.gov). Click on [National Institute of Governmental Purchasing \(NIGP\) Commodity Codes](#) (under Quick Links on the right side of the Home Page). Find the commodity code for the services you wish to purchase (for instance a search using “office supplies will show several codes including 61500). Click on SWaM Vendors Search (left side of the Home Page), then click on “To search for currently approved SWaM businesses, please [click here](#).” Click on NIGP Code/Description and enter the applicable NIGP Code. Select Small Business (or a combination to include small business). Click on Search. The search will reveal the vendors who are certified through DMBE that provide the applicable commodities.**
46. Q. Reference Section VIII, General Terms and Conditions, and Section IX, Special Terms and Conditions: Are terms and conditions negotiable at the time of award?
- A. **During negotiations, VDSS will consider an Offeror’s request for minor changes to certain terms and conditions. VDSS recognizes that state agencies, for instance, do not comply with the Vendors Manual and a proposal modification is generally made to remove that requirement. An Offeror selected for negotiations should be prepared to present its rationale for requesting any minor changes to any term and condition.**