Connecticut Office of Higher Education
Academic Affairs

Statement of Work:
Application and Monitoring Software System
(AMSS)

Statement of Work #1-2021

Issued: January 20, 2021
Responses Due: February 18, 2021
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Connecticut Office of Higher Education – Academic Affairs  
Hartford, Connecticut

Standard Instructions, Conditions and Reservations  
Statement of Work for Contracted Services

Subject: Statement of Work No. 1-2021

Issued: January 20, 2021  
Due On: February 18, 2021

Re: Application and Monitoring Software System (AMSS)

The State of Connecticut’s Office of Higher Education, will receive SEALED Statements of Work for performing the services as outlined in the accompanying specifications, in accordance with the following instructions, conditions and reservations:

I. CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION BACKGROUND

A. Statement of Purpose

The State of Connecticut’s Office of Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as the OHE and/or the Office) is seeking qualified software contractors to replace their current software system to process and track the Academic Affairs Division programs. The programs that the software system supports includes:

1. Private Occupational School Authorization (P.O.S.A.)
2. Licensure and Accreditation (L&A)
3. State Approving Agency for Veteran’s Benefits (S.A.A.)

The OHE seeks to procure the following:

1. A cloud based, Applications and Monitoring Software System (AMSS)  
2. Implementation and maintenance agreement for the AMSS

The successful contractor(s) must be able to provide the software solution, project management services, installation services, training, implementation, and data conversion services. The OHE is interested in implementing a hosted (Software as a Service, SaaS) solution.

B. AMSS Vision

The envisioned AMSS will be cost-effective, user friendly, and reflect state-of-the-art technology which will allow the OHE to communicate efficiently with education institutions and postsecondary schools, to allow these organizations to submit and upload their own data and documents, download program and institution/school applications, track all actions taken by the OHE and be able to generate letters to send to these schools. AMSS should provide electronic workflows and the ability to sign off on any key tasks. In addition, the system will provide a dashboarding capability for both members of OHE and external users of the AMSS system.
Connecticut Office of Higher Education – Academic Affairs

Statement of Work: Application and Monitoring Software System (AMSS)

OHE needs the ability for schools to access the system through the AMSS portal to complete key processes, such as entering and updating program data, uploading certification documents. Additionally, the AMSS will provide optimal automation features for the generation of various letters, enable communication and document sharing between schools and OHE, and, offer a flexible reporting capability with ad-hoc functions easily administered at the user level. Additionally, the AMSS must provide the capability to export data from such reporting functions in multiple conventional formats.

The OHE’s preference is for the proposed AMSS to be a web-based, commercial off-the-shelf software solution (COTS) and a Software as a Service (SaaS) solution. The AMSS COTS SaaS software shall be operational, commercially available and generally available by the due date of the Statement of Work (SOW). Operational and commercially available means that a deployed system is in active use by a client of the bidder. Generally available means the software is at the point where all necessary commercialization activities for a software product have been completed and that the product is available for general release and beyond beta testing.

This SOW is intended to describe the minimum level of service for contract award. It describes the services and functional/non-functional requirements for the new AMSS software solution.

The new AMSS software solution needs to be operational by September 1, 2021

C. The OHE Overview

The OHE is an executive level agency under the Executive Branch of the State of Connecticut. The OHE seeks to advance the promise of postsecondary education for all state residents, and to advocate on behalf of students, taxpayers, and the postsecondary schools and colleges which fall under its purview. The OHE carries out its mission by assuring that students have access to postsecondary institutions which meet the highest standards of academic quality, by administering the State’s student financial aid programs, and by serving as an information and consumer protection resource.

OHE’s Academic Affairs division helps to oversee the licensure and accreditation of Connecticut’s independent colleges and universities (programmatic and institutional; non-profit and for-profit), licensure of in-state academic programs offered by out-of-state institutions, regulation of more than 150 postsecondary career schools and operation of the Alternate Route to Certification. The OHE also serves as the portal agency in the administration of the CT-SARA program. Major federal responsibilities include AmeriCorps and Veterans Program Approval.

The OHE, under the division of Academic Affairs, grants approval for schools to operate legally in the State of Connecticut. This includes the following divisions:

1. Licensure and Accreditation (L&A) division provides consumer protection for students through the review and approval of degree-granting independent colleges and universities (both for-profit and non-profit) as well as academic programs offered in Connecticut by out-of-state schools. This work assures that these schools meet high standards of academic quality before they can admit or graduate students.
2. **Private Occupational School Approval (POSA) division** ensures that all occupational training which is offered to the public must meet statutory requirements and be approved by the Executive Director of the Office of Higher Education before operating in Connecticut.

3. **State Approving Agency (SAA) division** approves institutions and programs so eligible veterans and veteran dependents can use the GI Bill educational benefits at that school or training facility.

**D. Project Overview**

The purpose of this project is to implement an Application and Monitoring Software System (AMSS) that supports the aforementioned programs of OHE’s Academic Affairs division. The OHE recognizes that better system integration and improved management tools will enhance the Academic Affair’s abilities to sufficiently process, track and report on the variety of institutions/schools and program data critical to their operations. In addition, due to a lack of integration between the current databases that manage all the OHE programs, there are significant for the OHE to compare programs, review historical data and trends, and create relevant reports.

AMSS will provide the primary foundation for the OHE’s institution and school approval operations. This project entails the identification and implementation of a AMSS that meets the OHE’s operating needs. The software solution should be easy-to-use, comprehensive, and reliable. Ultimately, the goal is to provide all personnel, regardless of location, easy access to complete, timely, and reliable information as required.

**E. Definition of Integration**

By use of the word “integrated,” we mean data records that are shared between modules (or within aid programs) can be entered once into the system and are automatically posted and/or updated in any other module or area where that same data record resides. This is different than “interfaced” data, which is communicated between subsystems, but independent of each other. As part of this Statement of Work, please indicate when a module interfaces rather than is integrated with another part of the system.

**F. Goals & Objectives of Computer Operations**

As previously mentioned, the purpose for this project is to implement a new SaaS solution that will enhance the program operations of the Academic Affairs division while providing management with the tools required to manage the programs, institutions, and data. Within this context, the goals and objectives of this effort are:

1. To implement a system that becomes the full, auditable system of record, replacing all ‘ad hoc” systems, MS-Access databases, and manual processes.
2. Provide a software solution that provides easy modification of existing programs and for future growth and expansion (e.g., adding new programs)
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**Statement of Work: Application and Monitoring Software System (AMSS)**

3. Implement an easy to use, graphical user interface that allows for varying levels of computer expertise and ever-changing technology.

4. Provide a system that allows importing and exporting of information into other applications including but not limited to Microsoft Excel and Word.

The OHE seeks the following key outcomes from the AMSS solution:

1. Enhanced user experience, both internal and external, to support intuitive system navigation, including mobile-first design for students.

2. Quality, security, timeliness, and accuracy of student and institutional data.

3. Flexibility to update, modify, or add new programs on an as needed, timely basis.

4. Additional managed maintenance and technical support services.

G. **Statement of Work Process**

The OHE will receive contractor responses and their respective Statements of Work via email until 3:00 PM on February 18, 2021 to the Division Director of Academic Affairs, Sean Seepersad at the following email address:

**Sean.Seepersad@ct.gov**

The OHE can accept emails no larger than 35MB. If you file(s) is larger than that, please send multiple emails and confirm the number of emails sent.

Any Statement of Work may be withdrawn prior to the above scheduled time for receiving SOWs, or any authorized postponement thereof. Any SOWs received after the date and time specified will NOT be considered. All SOWs shall remain firm for a period of not less than one hundred eighty (180) days from the SOW due date, unless such period is extended, in writing, by both parties. The OHE reserves the right to reject any or all SOWs, or parts thereof.

1. **Statement of Work Inquiries**

Any questions regarding the Statement of Work’s content and intention will be answered and clarifications made by the Division Director, Academic Affairs, Sean Seepersad. No questions or clarifications will be addressed unless received via email. All questions must be received no later than the due date identified within section 3. **Key Project Dates.** Responses to these questions will be posted on the OHE’s website.

2. **Instructions**

Statement of Works must be emailed to the attention of Sean Seepersad, Division Director of Academic Affairs, at the above address. OHE can receive attachments up to 35MB; if the Statement of Work exceeds this file size please break up the file into separate documents and send in separate emails.
3. Key Project Dates

The key dates for this Statement of Work are as follows:

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<td>a. Statement of Work Solicitation</td>
<td>January 20, 2021</td>
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<td>b. Contractor Questions Due</td>
<td>February 1, 2021</td>
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<td>c. Answers to Questions Due</td>
<td>February 5, 2021</td>
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<td>d. Statement of Work due</td>
<td>February 18, 2021</td>
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<td>e. Selection of Finalists</td>
<td>February 26, 2021</td>
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<td>f. Test Drive Presentations</td>
<td>March 1, 2021 to March 12, 2021</td>
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<td>g. Reference Checks</td>
<td>March 1, 2021 to March 12, 2021</td>
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<td>h. Contractor Selection</td>
<td>March 25, 2021</td>
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<td>i. Begin Contract Negotiations</td>
<td>April 5, 2021</td>
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*Items “e to i” are tentative project dates.

4. Method of Award

The goal of this process is to award the AMSS contract to the contractor presenting a software solution that best meets the needs of the OHE. Cost is an important factor but will not be the sole determining factor in the selection process associated with the acquisition of an AMSS.

5. Award Procedure

The OHE is soliciting sealed Statements of Work from all contractors offering services. The Statements of Work need to include line item cost information for: projected module(s) to be purchased, software implementation/consulting services, data conversion, training, and annual maintenance. The contractors SOW will be evaluated based on software functionality, evidence that the offering is a complete and integrated software solution, contractor experience in providing software solutions to similar types of organizations (size, structure, complexity) to the OHE. A complete listing of evaluation criteria is identified in the next section. After this evaluation, the OHE will develop a “Short List” of up to 2-3 qualified software contractors.

Based on this short list, the OHE will invite these contractors to participate in the next phase of the evaluation process, the “Test Drives.” The “Test Drives” provide an opportunity for the OHE – Academic Affairs personnel to review the overall capabilities of the software solution(s). The successful contractor(s) will receive written notice from the OHE and be provided with information for this presentation. Please note: Only the qualified software contractors will be given an opportunity to provide a “Test Drive.”

The OHE may also perform additional due diligence and visit selected client reference sites to gain a better understanding of how their software solution(s) operate. The OHE reserves the right to request detailed responses to follow up questions identified during the “Test Drives.”
Selected contractors will be asked to provide a “Best and Final Offer (BAFO)” for their solution(s) to the OHE. The Academic Affairs Division will select the preferred contractor and negotiate a contract inclusive of final project costs. Ultimately, the OHE will ratify the final contract(s) inclusive of contract cost.

6. Evaluation Criteria

All Contractor(s) submitting a SOW will be evaluated on the following criteria:

a. Software functionality, as indicated in the responses to the general and functional requirements.

b. Background and experience in providing software solutions to organizations or institutions similar in size, structure, and complexity to the OHE.

c. Financial condition/stability of the company.

d. Accuracy and format of the SOW.

Shortlisted contractor(s) will be evaluated based on the additional following criteria:

a. The contractor’s on-site, hands-on software “Test Drive” (only selected contractors will perform the on-site “Test Drive”).

b. Contractor’s client references and demonstrated record of successful implementations.

c. Complete integrated software solution.

d. Total cost.

The OHE will select the contractors, systems and/or modules it deems as the best possible solution and value for the Academic Affairs Division, which may not be the lowest priced option.

Notice of award will be issued to advise the successful contractor of the intended award of the contract. In addition, the professional individual or firm shall procure and maintain for the duration of the contract insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property, which may arise from, or be in connection with the performance of the work hereunder by the individual or the firm, his agents, representatives, or employees. The cost of such insurance shall be included in the SOW. Until the successful contractor meets these obligations, the contractor is forbidden to proceed with the contract.

H. Conditions

1. Taxes

Since the OHE is exempt from all taxes, no charges for taxes of any kind should be included in your SOW or on any invoices to the OHE.

2. Assignment of Contract
The contract may not be assigned, sublet or transferred without the prior written consent of the OHE.

3. Prices

Prices quoted must be firm, for acceptance by the OHE, for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days. Prices shall include all applicable duties. Contractors shall be required to contract for awarded items at prices quoted in their original SOW.

4. Federal, State and Local Laws

All applicable Federal, State and local laws, rules and regulations of all authorities having jurisdiction over the locality of the project shall apply to the contract and are deemed to be included herein.

5. SOW Responses

The SOW document and responses to this document will become part of the contract between the OHE and the selected contractor.

6. Exception to Specifications

No protest regarding the validity or appropriateness of the specifications or of the Invitation for Statements of Work will be considered, unless the exception is filed in writing with the SOW response. All SOWs rendered shall be considered meeting the attached specifications unless exceptions are noted on a separate page dated and signed by the contractor within their SOW response.

II. SOFTWARE SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

In this section, we have provided a breakdown of the critical functions and features we require on a program by program basis. It is our intention that the selected SaaS system will meet, and exceed, all of the stated criteria. Integration of all these programs within a software suite is required in order to ensure accuracy, timeliness and minimize duplication of effort. The programs and operational functions are identified and detailed below. However, we recognize that each contractor’s software might not be organized in the same fashion as outlined on the following pages. The functionality of the overall software system is critical to the OHE, not the module or program name. As you respond to this request for a SOW please identify the module that contains this functionality if it is not within the designated module. We will be carefully weighing independent application functionality against ease-of-integration issues as we evaluate responses.

A. General & Technical Software Capabilities

These features will be identified in the functions and features checklist.

B. Operational Capabilities and Functions (supporting the programs below:)

a. Private Occupational School Authorization (P.O.S.A.)
b. Licensure and Accreditation (L&A)
c. State Approving Agency for Veteran’s Benefits (S.A.A.)
Below is a brief overview of key programs administered by the OHE - Academic Affairs Division and those that will need to be fully supported by the selected AMSS:

a. **Private Occupational School Authorization (POSA)**

State of Connecticut statute requires that all occupational training which is offered to the public must meet statutory requirements and be approved by the Executive Director of the Office of Higher Education before operating in Connecticut. All private occupational schools and hospital-based schools and, effective July 1, 2013 per Public Act 13-208, hairdresser and barber schools fall into this category.

Postsecondary career schools award either a Certificate of Completion or a diploma but are not authorized to grant degrees. They are required to provide the Office of Higher Education with advance notice of any changes to their programs, tuition charges, change in ownership and intent to close.

Key processes and capabilities of POSA include the following:

**Application Process**

1. OHE is contacted to open a new school.
   i. The same Application process is also completed for a change of ownership. A Proposed sales agreement, demonstration of financial solvency, student protection account, financial statements and insurance information must all be submitted.

2. A School completes an on-line application and obtains a letter of credit.

3. A School visits or talks with OHE about the application and its requirements.

4. An application is electronically submitted with the letter of credit and the application fee is paid.

5. The application is reviewed for completeness by the AMSS system and OHE.
   i. If not complete an email is sent back to the school confirm exceptions.

6. Curriculum specialist and other team members this school is assigned to are identified.
   i. There is a listing of all active curriculum specialists.

7. An automated visit letter is generated; an on-site visit is scheduled.

8. The Curriculum Specialist reviews the uploaded program information and any other materials.

9. Each person on the site visit completes an online checklist.
   i. Program gaps are identified, and guidance documented online.

10. Curriculum specialist is paid after the visit is complete.

11. An evaluation findings letter is generated and sent to the respective School.

12. School submits an online response and makes any necessary changes.
   i. All updated files submitted by the School are stored in the AMSS database.
13. OHE approval is granted and a certificate and approval letter are automatically generated and sent to the School.
14. School approval is posted on the OHE website.

**Components of an Application**

1. A listing of programs is provided by the School that they want approved.
   i. Attachments of all necessary information and their date of expiration are stored in the AMSS database.
2. The full program schedule is uploaded and provided to POSA.
3. All application information is entered into and/or uploaded to the AMSS database.
   a. This includes multiple contact information, program information, main and branch campus information, and classroom sites at each location.

**Site Visit**

1. Site visits require a completion of an online checklist.
   i. There are 5 checklist types: Initial/renewal visit, new program, new location, records review and curriculum specialist.
2. An online Checklist is completed by each person on the site visit.
3. One checklist is submitted and signed off on after it is agreed upon by all parties.
4. A report is generated based on any findings.

**Application Renewal Process**

1. Nationally or regionally accredited schools do not need to renew but only need to submit their accreditation.
2. A letter is automatically generated 6 months prior to the deadline for renewal of approval and sent to schools.
3. Schools have 60 days to complete a new application after receiving the letter.
   i. A payment is made when the renewal is dues and processed by the finance department of OHE.
4. OHE must respond or take action within 60 days of receiving the new application otherwise it is automatically approved.
5. A curriculum specialist is found to attend the on-site visit.
6. OHE schedules the on-site visit with a Curriculum Specialist.
7. Feedback is provided for any changes that need to be made.
8. Application for renewal is approved.

**Notification Process**

1. Schools upload and OHE receives ongoing information and tracks whether Schools are complying.
2. Notifications/emails are automatically sent out to schools 30 days prior to expiration of things like insurance or Fire Marshall approval.
   i. Schools whose information is not updated past the deadline must receive late notices (Via certified letter) and all violations are tracked.
3. A compliance meeting must be scheduled between the school and OHE.
   i. If resolution is reached, process ends.
4. If not in compliance, OHE decides on next actions, like a fine, and if still no
   resolution is reached, their status can be revoked and all actions and
   documents in this process must be tracked.

Financial Statements Information
Institutions must submit/upload financial statements after their fiscal year to
OHE, although the type of statement changes based upon its classification.

1. Schools submit financial information and a management statement to OHE.
   The requirements are different based on school classification.
   i. Accredited schools must provide an audited financial statement.
   ii. Non-accredited schools with 10+ students submit either an audited or
       reviewed financial statement.
   iii. Non-accredited schools with less than ten students must provide a
       compiled financial statement.
   iv. Schools with 0 students must submit an affidavit stating they enrolled 0
       students.
2. Accredited schools must submit financial statements 6 months after the end of
   their fiscal year. Non-Accredited Schools can request a 60 day extension after
   4 months.
3. Financial statements are scored by the OHE Finance division of OHE.
4. Exception are identified and reviewed by management. Notes and dates of
   action taken are tracked.
   i. Notice of violation is generated and sent via certified mail.

School Closure
1. Schools submit a letter to OHE stating their intent to close.
2. OHE sends the School a letter of acknowledgement.
3. A checklist of required actions is provided to the school.
   i. Form between the school and students to receive student records.
   ii. POSA keeps a checklist of where any information exists.
4. OHE sends closure confirmation.
   i. Closure letter is automatically sent to DPH or DOL if applicable.
5. OHE sends back the letter of credit to the bank.

Refunds
1. Initial triage call for a student who requests a refund needs to be electronically
   tracked.
2. Student completes an online application that has expenses, paid tuition
   amount, enrollment agreement and any other attachments.
3. OHE reviews the application for accuracy and completeness.
4. A refund committee in OHE reviews and handles the approval or denial
   process and needs to be tracked in AMSS accordingly.
i. Money is tracked, as well as all dates of actions and comments.
5. Approval or denial letter is automatically generated.

**Verification/Transcript Requests**
1. Form is filled out on the OHE website by a student or institution, or the student verification request form is filled out by an employer.
   i. This is only handled for closed Schools.
2. OHE locates the student records, and generates the transcripts for student requests.
3. Transcript is electronically sent to the student or institution.
   i. If employer is requesting verification, information is sent to them as well.

**Cease and Desist Process**
1. Tips are provided to OHE and tracked that a School may be operating illegally.
2. On-site pre-investigation is performed and tracked.
3. All tasks and activities are tracked in the database and any letters are generated through the AMSS system.
4. OHE creates and sends or hand delivers a cease and desist letter.
5. Institution responds or a resolution is reached.
6. If no resolution is reached, a final letter is sent to the institution and the cease and desist order is sent to the DOL or AG if applicable.

**POSA Complaints**
1. A student fills out a student complaint form on the OHE website.
2. Form is reviewed to see if it falls under POSA purview and information is imported into the AMSS database.
3. The incident is assigned to a POSA representative that handles the Schools’ file.
4. A letter is automatically generated and sent to the school who has 20 days to respond. Letter is also sent to the student.
   i. Formal letters are generated to close out the complaint process if a resolution is reached.
5. Student can submit an attachment to POSA explaining that the complaint is not resolved.
6. School can provide evidence as to why the complaint isn’t valid.
7. POSA members meet to see if anything is violated.
   i. A formal report is generated and stored in the AMSS

b. **Licensure and Accreditation**

The Office of Higher Education – Academic Division provides consumer protection for students through the review and approval of degree-granting independent colleges and universities (both for-profit and non-profit) as well as
academic programs offered in Connecticut by out-of-state schools. This work assures that these schools meet high standards of academic quality before they can admit or graduate students.

Connecticut is home to 18 non-profit and two or-profit independent institutions, and to programs offered by eight out of state institutions. State statute requires that both programs and institutions be reviewed and approved before they can operate in Connecticut. For new academic programs, the review process consists of two steps:

1) Licensure - permits a college or university to offer the program; typically lasts for three years.
2) Accreditation – permits a college to confer a degree in a program and, therefore, graduate students. The period for accreditation is concurrent with institutional accreditation. Programs are typically licensed for three years before being considered for accreditation.

SARA Application Process
The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements, commonly known as SARA, provides a voluntary, regional approach to state oversight of postsecondary distance education. When states join SARA, they agree to follow uniform processes for approving their eligible institutions’ participation. They also agree to deal with other states’ SARA institutions in a common way when those institutions carry out activities in SARA states other than their own.

1. The Institution completes a form produced by NCSARA.
2. Invoices are generated from AMSS and payments are made annually.
   i. They are received and processed by OHE.
3. OHE approves of the application.
   i. Rolling deadlines for approval are tracked, as well as key dates and all tasks/activities in AMSS.
4. Institutions apply for membership renewal each year.

Out-of-State Institutions
The OHE only handles the approval process for SARA member institutions within the State of Connecticut. Out of State institutions go through a similar but separate process than those within Connecticut. Their process is as follows:

1. The Institution completes a form produced by L&A.
2. Invoices are generated from AMSS and payments are made annually.
   i. They are received and processed by OHE.
3. OHE approves of the application.
   i. Rolling deadlines for approval are tracked, as well as key dates and all tasks/activities in AMSS.
4. Institutions apply for membership renewal each year.
Institution Program Inventory Reconciliation
Each institution or school must keep the OHE updated on any changes to the programs they offer. Once a year L&A must conduct an inventory reconciliation to assure they have the most updated information for each program for each institution/school.

1. Each school program is tracked on the AMSS database.
2. Public and independent institutions/schools may update their own programs throughout the year through the AMSS.
3. Each Institution of Higher Education (IHE) is sent an inventory reconciliation each year for them to update. This update should be performed online and allow OHE to review/approve all changes institutions make.
   i. Updates or changes to programs are input by each institution.
   ii. Institutional officers are confirmed in case of any changes.
4. Information is reviewed and updated annually.

New Institution and New Program licensure
1. Electronic applications are submitted to L&A
   i. Circulation documents are sent to all current institutions who can provide comments
2. Applications are checked for completeness by the AMSS and Academic Affairs personnel.
   i. Feedback is electronically provided if incomplete.
3. OHE internally reviews the application to see if it meets their standards.
   i. If the standards aren’t met, a report is provided to the institution for their response. Negotiations then occur between the institution and OHE.
4. Once the standard is met, a quality assessment is performed.
5. A letter of licensure is generated and given to the institution that is good for 1-3 years.

Exempt Institutions
While OHE handles the licensure and accreditation of many programs of institutions throughout the State of Connecticut, there are certain exempt institutions that do not need to follow the same review process that all others do. The process for these exempt institutions is as follows:

1. Selected institutions are allowed to introduce 12 new programs a year without needing to be reviewed.
2. The number of these programs is tracked to determine if they are over 12.
3. A new program form is completed online by the exempt institution if they surpass 12 new programs in a year and the standard review process of licensure is started.

Accreditation
1. Applications are electronically submitted to L&A.
   i. A new program application for each program must be completed.
2. Circulation documents are sent to all current institutions who can provide comments.
3. Applications are checked for completeness via the AMSS system and OHE.
   i. Feedback is provided if incomplete.
4. OHE internally reviews the application to see if it meets their standards.
   i. If the standards are not met, a report is provided to the institution for their response. Negotiations then occur between the institution and OHE.
5. Once the standard is met, a quality assessment is performed.
6. Other state approval is required if necessary.
7. Accreditation is obtained for up to 5 years.Expiration of accreditation is tracked.

Program Modifications
1. Institution update a program and its respective information electronically.
   i. Exempt institutions do not need approval but must update L&A on any changes.
2. Quality assessment is performed of each new program by OHE.
   i. Feedback is provided if need.
3. Program modification is approved.

Program phase out/Termination
When an institution decides it wants to end offering a program, they must provide notification to OHE. The process is as follows:
1. Institution informs L&A (electronically) that they want to phase out a program.
2. A teach out plan is proposed to L&A for the remaining students.
3. L&A confirms the plan is appropriate.
4. L&A closes out the program once no more students are in the program.

c. State Approval Agency (SAA)

As one of its Federal responsibilities, the Office of Higher Education serves as the Connecticut State Approving Agency (SAA) for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Under Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, the SAA approves institutions/Schools and programs so eligible veterans and veteran dependents can use the GI Bill educational benefits at that school or training facility. The State Approving Agency conducts compliance surveys to determine if the institution is in compliance with all Federal academic and financial requirements. SAA staff provide technical assistance to the School Certifying Officials throughout the year to resolve problems and provide support.

Application Process
1. The SAA identifies and discusses programs with an institution to inform them of the application process.
2. Schools fill out an electronic application that contains their biography, school policies and any eligible programs for the VA.
3. Schools have the ability to upload documents to the AMSS database to be stored. These files should be easily exportable for SAA to upload to the VA database.
4. The SAA reviews the application for completeness.
   i. Feedback is provided if incomplete in which SAA requests more information from the institution
5. An letter is generated to be sent to the school notifying them of their approved program(s).
6. Schools undergo a publication review every 2 years. The timing of these reviews is tracked in the AMSS database.
7. The SAA generates a new letter asking for updated catalogues/publications.
8. Schools upload updated catalogues, handbooks and any other program changes/materials.
9. The SAA approves programs (or provides feedback for any changes needed).
   All updated materials are sent to Veterans Affairs.

Compliance Survey Process
1. The Federal Veterans Affairs sends SAA a listing of schools to survey
2. SAA plans and schedules survey visits for the year within the AMSS system.
3. Letters are generated to be sent to Schools surveyed with a checklist for what they need to provide.
4. On-site or remote visits are conducted within 30 days.
5. The School provides the requested information, which is stored in the AMSS and VA databases.
6. Information is manually input into the VA system for quality review and grading (The VA currently has no upload or integration capabilities).
7. If there are any findings, a referral form is generated and sent to VA.
   i. SAA communicates with Schools for each referral, all actions are tracked.
8. SAA closes out the survey after all actions are completed.
9. SAA produces a narrative of the survey in the AMSS database. A drop down menu is available for SAA to prefill the narrative with common language or actions taken
   i. This information is sent to VA.
10. A letter is sent to the School describing the results of the survey.

C. All Programs Refund Process

Payment refunds from institutions to the OHE occur for a variety of reasons, many related to student enrollment changes. The OHE seeks to better automate this process in order to more accurately account for returned funds.
D. Reporting Requirements

Developing new and more meaningful reports is a critical component of the integrated system. The OHE requires an easy to use, yet sophisticated report generator that will allow Academic Affairs to create their own unique set of reports. The report writer should allow personnel to extract information and summarize on any piece of data captured in the system.

The report writer should provide drag & drop capabilities and allow for:

- Multiple report formats (using column heading and line descriptions)
- Sorting on any selected field
- Computations based on selected fields or constant values
- Selections of records using Boolean logic
- Sub-totals and summary information on any selected field
- Data Visualization capabilities

In addition, the OHE should have the capability to extract information from the integrated system and directly import it into Microsoft Word, Excel, PDF or Access. It is also critical that the software support the import and export of data to common file format standards, including popular spreadsheets and word processing applications (e.g. Excel and Word). It would be preferable if the system could directly import and export to existing Excel and Access data files using DDE/OLE technology to simplify this process.

E. On-line Search Capabilities

Access to information directly from displays is an important component of the integrated system. The OHE requires a comprehensive on-line inquiry capability for all identified modules and programs. These displays should allow users access to both summary and detail information within the system in a “drill-down” fashion to support the “data mining” concept so critical to the OHE’s operations. Search capabilities should be extensive, including, but not limited to, partial text, phonetic, and field specific criteria. The displays should also allow users to sort information by a variety of pre-defined criteria.

F. Security

The integrated system needs to allow for various levels of security. This includes the following:

- Assign security level requirements by user profile or user group for all applications.
- Assign security by menu, screen and field option level.
- Assign independent security levels for creating, modifying, inquiry only and deleting information.
- Approval authorities can be assigned to individual users.

Having a secure system is of utmost importance. As such, please confirm how the AMSS will be secured. We assume a SOC-1 or SOC-2 and Multi-Factor Authentication for the AMSS is in place.
G. Content/Document Management (Preferable)

The OHE is highly interested in implementing a content/document management solution to capture, manage, and archive electronic files. Ideally, the Content/Document Management system can be used to streamline processes and create efficiencies for the OHE. This module is not required of contractors in order to respond to this request for a SOW. In addition, contractors are encouraged to respond with any proposed Content/Document Management systems that are stand-alone (but integrate with) the proposed SaaS system.

III. PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. The AMSS procurement shall address the following goals:

- **Functionality:** First and foremost, this initiative aims to implement a application and activity processing software system which is cloud-based.
- **System training and support:** Capacity to train Office staff and to provide ongoing technical support services including user desktop manuals.
- **Electronic manuals:** Manuals or other forms of support are necessary to train internal staff and external users

B. System Platforms

The OHE has standardized on the Microsoft Windows Server network operating system. The OHE has also adopted the Microsoft Windows 10 desktop operating system as their standard as well. The OHE would require a software solution that is web-based and implemented through a SaaS model.

The database for the integrated system should be based on a currently available and standard relational database product. A relational database will help satisfy the online queries and ad-hoc reporting requirements already identified.

C. Technical Requirements

Configuration and implementation of the AMSS shall include related activities, such as drafting and executing project management plan, work schedule planning, implementation, quality assurance and risk management, implementing technical change management plans, reviewing SOW and/or business requirements, supporting stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle, including data migration, cut-over from the legacy systems and post go-live support. All of these activities should be shared between the OHE representatives and the contractor.

D. Training and Contractor Support

We will be evaluating the depth and quality of peripheral services, such as user training, contractor support and system maintenance. The extent to which these services are offered and managed will be considered heavily in our decision.
E. “Test Drives”

After all SOWs have been evaluated and reviewed, the OHE may select two to three contractors to move into the next phase of evaluation. The “Test Drive” is the phase of evaluation that allows the OHE to see the proposed system firsthand. The Project Team will develop and provide the selected software contractors in advance with operational scenarios in order to confirm that the software will meet the organizational needs. It is our goal to “Test Drive” the contractor’s software system to confirm its ease of use, flow of information entered, and ability to report on and extract information.

IV. RESPONSE GUIDELINES

To assist contractors in successfully responding to this document, we have developed a SOW outline and several documents that must be completed and submitted with the SOW. Please format your responses as outlined below:

A. Contractor Information
B. SaaS Package Profile
C. Report Writer
D. Other Services
E. Cost Summary
F. Software Functionality and Features List

THE DESIGN AND FORMAT OF THESE DOCUMENTS ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION. Use of these formats without the express permission of the OHE is prohibited. If additional space is necessary to complete your response, please indicate this on the respective form and provide the additional documentation.

A. Contractor Information

The first section of your SOW should include the following:

1. Company Information (first page):
   a. Company Name, Address, Phone Number, Fax Number, E-Mail Address and web site (if applicable).
   b. Name and title of the individual(s) authorized to make representations for the contractor.

2. The contractor shall represent and warrant in the SOW that:
   a. The software proposed shall conform to the contractor's written specifications.
   b. The software proposed shall function according to published manufacturer specifications at the acceptance date for such software.
   c. The contractor shall also modify, adjust, repair and/or replace said software as the OHE deems it to be necessary or appropriate to have it perform in
full accordance with the contractor’s written specifications.

3. Provide a "Statement of Qualifications" that contains the following:
   a. Historical, financial, sales, and organizational information for the past three (3) years.
   b. Briefly describe the most relevant (installed) project(s) of the software solution of similar size and scope as is proposed. Details of other relevant system experience that would be valuable in the completion of this project may be provided. If applicable, provide relevant experience and qualifications for all proposed subcontractors.
   c. All personnel that will manage the project, as well as their qualifications and experience in similar projects.

   NOTE: Any personnel assigned to this project may not be substituted with other personnel unless approved by the OHE in writing. Any SOW to substitute shall be in writing and include the substitute's qualifications. The OHE reserves the right to reject any substitute.

4. Four (4) references from unrelated projects. Although references from similar client types like the Office of Higher Education are preferred, they are not required. All four references must be a client for whom an implementation has been performed in the past two (2) years. The systems installed at the reference sites must be comparable to that being proposed. References must include the following information:
   a. Customer name and address.
   b. Date of installation.
   c. Configuration.
   d. Contact information and phone number(s) of functional system users.

5. Client Reference Worksheet: Please list the number for each in the appropriate column to the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A All Installations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Office of Higher Education Installations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Other Quasi-Government-type Installations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D New Clients added in calendar year 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Existing Clients lost in calendar year 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H New Clients added in calendar year 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Existing Clients lost in calendar year 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. A realistic sample implementation plan for all modules proposed that contains the following information:
Connecticut Office of Higher Education – Academic Affairs
Statement of Work: Application and Monitoring Software System (AMSS)

- Tasks, resources, and milestones for all items proposed in the SOW.
- A number of days base, rather than actual dates.
- Clearly identify the OHE’s obligation for the implementation.

7. Project deliverables, including a list of major tasks, resources, milestones, and criteria acceptance for each proposed module for training, consulting, and data conversion.

8. A sample training plan identifying:
   - Contractor and client responsibilities.
   - Training styles and techniques.
   - Expected number of client employees to be trained.
   - Expected results after training session.
   - Training handouts.
   - Retraining/follow-up training policies.
   - Training room requirements.

**B. SaaS Package Profile**

Please answer the following questions for each proposed application package. If more than one software suite is proposed, please complete this information for all suites. You may respond to this section separately by referencing section and number.

1. Name and Release of proposed software suite:

_____________________________________________________________________

2. Date of first release of proposed software suite:

_____________________________________________________________________

3. Last major release date of proposed software suite:

_____________________________________________________________________

4. Next planned release date of proposed software suite:

_____________________________________________________________________

5. Next release version number:

_____________________________________________________________________

6. Frequency of:

   Major releases ______________

   Minor releases ______________
7. Please indicate major enhancements made to the software over the last 2 years (by version/release and date):

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

8. Programming languages and/or development tools for your software:

_____________________________________________________________________

9. Identify the data architecture and database for your software (please give name and contractor).

_____________________________________________________________________

10. Describe the report writing feature of your software. Is it a 3rd party solution or a proprietary application? Do you provide table views and joins to develop reports or must users define them? Do you facilitate the ability of your customer base to develop and share reports with one another?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

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11. Hardware and operating systems your software runs on:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

12. Please confirm where the SaaS solution is hosted in the cloud and the type of security audit performed (SOC-1, SOC-2, etc.) to validate the hosting environment.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

13. Please identify the minimum and recommended requirements for workstations:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
14. The OHE may require connectivity to the application from multiple different physical locations. Please identify the minimum and recommended connection speeds for accessing the system from these locations. Please provide information the contractor-hosted, (SaaS) solution.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

15. Warranty period (included in purchase price):

_____________________________________________________________________

16. Please explain your policy on applying customizations for clients and the effect of these changes on warranty agreements, ongoing support and software upgrades. Include pricing structure:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

17. Please explain your policy on creating interfaces (on-line or batch) to other contractor packages. Are you willing to support interfaces that you create? Is there any effect on software warranty agreements? Describe your pricing policy/hourly rate for such work.

_____________________________________________________________________

18. Please indicate any other applications that may meet the OHE’s needs for which:
   − Your company has built a custom interface to (please describe):
     ___________________________________________________________________
   − A third party built a custom interface to your software (please describe):
     ___________________________________________________________________
   − Any application you are aware of that may integrate well with your system:
     ___________________________________________________________________

19. Software support services/options:

_____________________________________________________________________

20. Disaster Recovery services/options & Business Continuity Planning Options:
21. Additional modules available (not part of proposed solution)

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

22. Do you provide the source code with software delivery? If not, can the source code be purchased and what is the cost?

_____________________________________________________________________

23. Please explain your major functional plans for the software modules/applications you are proposing on. Please explain any future plans in the areas of user interface, platform (hardware and operating system), source language, etc., including dates:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

24. Are products offered as an integrated package or as a series of modules?

_____________________________________________________________________

25. What must a customer do to receive a new version or release of a product for which they are licensed? How is a user notified of updates and the contents of those updates?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

26. Describe the extent of the user, system and program documentation provided with the system. Also, identify documentation that accompanies upgrades and enhancements. Include samples with your proposed materials.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

27. Outline the number of personnel within your organization including:
   - Number of support personnel __________
   - Number of sales personnel __________
   - Number of R&D personnel __________
   - Number of other personnel __________
28. Average response time for fixing software bugs for live clients and for clients during implementation and go-live:

_____________________________________________________________________

29. Describe your approach to technical support and what your guaranteed response time is. Is it any different during the implementation and testing of the software?

_____________________________________________________________________

C. **Report Writer**

As indicated in Section II. D. – Reporting Requirements, the OHE requires the capability to automatically generate key reports for the State of Connecticut. Please provide additional detail on the capabilities of the proposed report writer and/or how these report requirements will be fulfilled.

D. **Other Services**

1. **Conversion**
   a. Describe conversion services provided.
   b. Include a description of the tasks required to load or build the databases and the party responsible for completing the tasks.
   c. Describe any conversion aids that may be available.
   d. Provide a timetable of the conversion process.
   e. Describe responsibilities for validating converted data.

2. **System Implementation**
   a. Estimate the overall duration and effort required implementing the system.
   b. Include a brief description of the implementation and estimated time for each task.
   c. Provide information on your recommended sequence of implementation for modules/groups of modules.
   d. Estimate the amount of time you typically dedicate to implementing the recommended system at an organization comparable in size and complexity to the OHE.
   e. Please specify what the client responsibilities would be.
   f. What are your recommended testing methods for software during the implementation phase?
3. Training
   a. Identify the amount of time you would devote to training system users by application area and what, if any, follow-up training is available.
   b. Detail the training method(s) available.
   c. Detail the Information System (IS) personnel training requirements.
   d. Specify how much of the above user and IS training is included in the proposed software cost and where the training would take place.
   e. Include a sample list, if applicable, of training materials that would be provided.

4. Annual Maintenance
   a. Identify how annual maintenance fees are calculated.
   b. Will you delay the beginning of the annual maintenance period until the first day of the fiscal year?
   c. What services are included in the annual maintenance program?
   d. How much is annual maintenance expected to increase over the next five (5) years?
   e. What have the historical increases in maintenance costs been over the past five (5) years?

E. Cost Summary

   Cost summaries have been provided for contractor-hosted solutions.

   This price should encompass the entire Scope of Services in the SOW. The OHE reserves the right to negotiate costs, scope of services, and key personnel based on contractor SOWs.

   For pricing and sizing, please assume the following user roles needed with varying levels of access:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USER ROLE</th>
<th>CURRENT</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OHE staff with system administrator status (6)</td>
<td>6 staff from OHE. These users designated with system administrator status shall have the ability to perform all administrative tasks and to configure features for user interfaces, reports, alerts, notifications, auditing, data management, imports, exports, uploads, downloads and balancing.</td>
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</table>
Institution Administrators (400) | Each institution’s administrative team has professional staff to handle the approval and certification process. There are approximately 200 individual colleges/universities with an average of two logins per school

- **a. Software and annual maintenance costs** – There are two sections, one for required software and another for optional software the OHE may consider.

- **b. Implementation services** - There are two (2) sections, one for costs related to the required software modules and another for costs related to optional software. These services should include consulting, training, and conversion costs. Be sure to include all associated travel costs.

- **c. Custom/Enhancement costs** – Be sure to identify the module, feature, and cost. Use the comment field to provide the date the enhancement will be available.

- **d. Hardware and operating system software** – Provide a description of all standard hardware and/or system software required to operate the system (i.e. Database, report writer costs, etc.).
Contractor Hosted (SaaS)

Software and Annual Maintenance Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Software Module</th>
<th>Software Price</th>
<th>Annual Maintenance Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application and Monitoring Software</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report Writer</td>
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<td>Document/Content Management (preferable)</td>
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Optional Software and Annual Maintenance Price

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Software Module</th>
<th>Software Price</th>
<th>Annual Maintenance Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
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## Contractor Hosted (SaaS)

### Implementation Costs

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<th>Software Module</th>
<th>Consulting Days</th>
<th>Consulting Amount</th>
<th>Training Days</th>
<th>Training Amount</th>
<th>Conversion Cost</th>
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</table>
Contractor Hosted (SaaS)

Custom/Enhancement Costs

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<tr>
<th>Application Software Module</th>
<th>Number of Days</th>
<th>Total Amount</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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Total

Travel cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Software Module</th>
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Total

Travel cost
F. **Software Functionality Analysis and Features List**

In determining whether your system fits the OHE’s business needs, we are providing you with a Software Functionality Analysis Matrix for all software suites. This series of documents are provided to you on the following pages. This section identifies the details of the functions and features on a module by module basis. We ask that you identify the availability of each function according to three defined categories for each module using the attached forms:

1. Currently Available – The software currently has this function/feature.
2. Future Modification – This function/feature will be available in 6 months.
3. Not Available – The software does not provide for this function/feature and/or it will NOT be available within 6 months.