

**AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION/MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT**

1. CONTRACT ID CODE

PAGE OF PAGES

1 10

2. AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION NUMBER

91995923R00020001

3. EFFECTIVE DATE

MAY 04, 2023

4. REQUISITION/PURCHASE REQUISITION NUMBER

EDNAGB-23-900002

5. PROJECT NUMBER (If applicable)

6. ISSUED BY

National Assessment Governing Board  
800 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 825  
Washington DC 20002-4233

CODE

NAGB

7. ADMINISTERED BY (If other than Item 6)

CODE

8. NAME AND ADDRESS OF CONTRACTOR (Number, street, county, State and ZIP Code)

9A. AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION NUMBER  
91995923R0002

9B. DATED (SEE ITEM 11)

APR 11, 2023

10A. MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT/ORDER NUMBER

10B. DATED (SEE ITEM 13)

CODE

FACILITY CODE

**11. THIS ITEM ONLY APPLIES TO AMENDMENTS OF SOLICITATIONS**

The above numbered solicitation is amended as set forth in Item 14. The hour and date specified for receipt of Offers  is extended.  is not extended.

Offers must acknowledge receipt of this amendment prior to the hour and date specified in the solicitation or as amended, by one of the following methods:

(a) By completing items 8 and 15, and returning 1 copies of the amendment; (b) By acknowledging receipt of this amendment on each copy of the offer submitted; or (c) By separate letter or electronic communication which includes a reference to the solicitation and amendment numbers. FAILURE OF YOUR ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO BE RECEIVED AT THE PLACE DESIGNATED FOR THE RECEIPT OF OFFERS PRIOR TO THE HOUR AND DATE SPECIFIED MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF YOUR OFFER. If by virtue of this amendment you desire to change an offer already submitted, such change may be made by letter or electronic communication, provided each letter or electronic communication makes reference to the solicitation and this amendment, and is received prior to the opening hour and date specified.

12. ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION DATA (If required)

See Schedule

**13. THIS ITEM APPLIES ONLY TO MODIFICATIONS OF CONTRACTS/ORDERS. IT MODIFIES THE CONTRACT/ORDER NUMBER AS DESCRIBED IN ITEM 14.**

CHECK ONE A. THIS CHANGE ORDER IS ISSUED PURSUANT TO: (Specify authority) THE CHANGES SET FORTH IN ITEM 14 ARE MADE IN THE CONTRACT ORDER NUMBER IN ITEM 10A.

B. THE ABOVE NUMBERED CONTRACT/ORDER IS MODIFIED TO REFLECT THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES (such as changes in paying office, appropriation data, etc.) SET FORTH IN ITEM 14, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF FAR 43.103(b).

C. THIS SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY OF:

D. OTHER (Specify type of modification and authority)

**E. IMPORTANT:** Contractor  is not  is required to sign this document and return \_\_\_\_\_ copies to the issuing office.

14. DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION (Organized by UCF section headings, including solicitation/contract subject matter where feasible.)

This amendment responds to questions received in response to the solicitation. The due date for proposals is unchanged; no later than 12:00 pm ET on May 24, 2023.

Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the document referenced in Item 9A or 10A, as heretofore changed, remains unchanged and in full force and effect.

15A. NAME AND TITLE OF SIGNER (Type or print)

16A. NAME AND TITLE OF CONTRACTING OFFICER (Type or print)

15B. CONTRACTOR/OFFEROR

15C. DATE SIGNED

16B. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

16C. DATE SIGNED

(Signature of person authorized to sign)

(Signature of Contracting Officer)



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 91995923R0002**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES**

**Amendment 1: Responses to Clarification Questions**

**May 4, 2023**

The following responses to clarification questions are provided as an amendment to the Request for Proposals (RFP).

**Attachment A: Statement of Objectives Questions:**

*1. How many assessments and key finding distillations are expected on an annual basis?*

There is not a set number of NAEP assessments released annually. The Governing Board's next release requiring communications efforts will be for results from the 2024 NAEP Reading and Math assessments. The estimated date for release is roughly Winter 2025. The frequency of administered assessments, and their eventual release (6 months after data collection ends for NAEP Reading and Mathematics; 12 months after data collection for other subjects), is based on the [NAEP assessment schedule](#), which the Board sets and approves. Leading up to the 2024 NAEP releases, the Board does have a goal of highlighting and focusing on findings and trends of interest from previous assessments, which could lead to additional data analysis and communications to support that effort.

*2. How many release events are anticipated on an annual basis?*

As noted above, for the contract period of performance there will be one release in Winter 2025, planning for this release will occur in the base year. Beyond this release other Report Card release dates are not known at this time. The dates depend on when data are available and ready for release. These vary by subject matter and complexity of data analysis. We rely on our partners at the National Center for Education Statistics to give us clearer ideas of when events can occur roughly six months in advance of the events. In the second option year, assume one release event for budgeting purposes only.

*3. What are NAEP's media coverage goals / desired performance metrics?*

The Board does not have a specific number of media citations or amount of coverage expected. The goal is to work with Board staff to develop and maintain a media outreach strategy that (1) provides opportunities for op-eds and other posts in traditional and social media, at external conferences and Board-driven events; (2) fosters relationships with journalists and outlets to encourage coverage of release events and foster use of NAEP data in stories, especially between release events, and (3) promote understanding and use of NAEP results by leaders in a position to improve student outcomes. The Board would welcome discussions about developing and utilizing metrics that make sense for the Board's overall mission and strategic vision, especially for the third goal listed above.

*4. Who are examples of stakeholders that the board would like to maintain/increase its engagement with?*

The Board prioritizes stakeholders who direct and change policy to improve student achievement, including policymakers (local, state, federal), state chiefs, district superintendents, and educators. The Board also prioritizes media because journalists reach a wide audience.

5. *What is the estimated number of presentations, meetings, social media posts, op-eds, etc. that content, messaging and talking points will be needed for on an annual basis?*

These quantities will vary based on what the contractor and the Board mutually agree upon, based on the objectives in the scope, and the potential impact on the education sector.

- Presentations: The Board on average makes about 20-30 presentations per year via conferences, invitations to meetings, etc. The quantity of presentations will depend on stakeholder outreach and partnership building by Board staff and the contractor.
- Meetings: Assume four quarterly meetings per year with likely assistance on 1-2 presentations per meeting
- Social Media Posts: Currently the Board posts nearly daily on multiple social media platforms but is open to a lesser frequency based on what the contractor determines can produce the maximum amount of impact in the landscape.
- Op-eds: The Board has historically produced an average of two op-eds per month since last fall. An exact number will depend on opportunities and outreach efforts so there is not a set number required.

For budgeting purposes, please provide your cost assumptions per unit (i.e., price per presentation (less than 10 slides), per meeting, price per op-ed, etc.).

6. *Given offerors are expected to provide a firm-fixed price quote for labor, can NAGB please provide the quantity and frequency of deliverables associated with section 4: Scope? The current level of detail provided here and in section 9: Deliverables is insufficient to provide FFP labor costs.*

Section 4 calls for offerors to develop a work plan based on the objectives presented, so proposed labor costs should be based on what the offeror is recommending for continued outreach based on that proposed plan. Section 9 does list concrete deliverables and required efforts, such as strategic communications plan, a contractual kick-off meeting, regular calls, and attendance at Board meetings as necessary.

7. *Which social media channels does the Department utilize and what are the handle(s) used?*

The Governing Board's social media channels include Twitter (@GovBoard), Facebook (National Assessment Governing Board), and LinkedIn (National Assessment Governing Board). Please note the Board runs its own platforms independently from the Department.

8. *Can you clarify expectations regarding social media support? The scope references "use of the Board's social media channels and email distribution lists effectively and strategically with content that amplifies appropriate messaging clearly." It also references proactive monitoring of social media. Will the contractor be expected to post on behalf of the Governing Board team and manage its social media channels? Will the contractor be expected to make recommendations about platform use, compile social media metrics, provide reporting and analysis of social media results?*

The contractor is expected to post on behalf of the Governing Board and manage its platforms. The contractor is also expected to make recommendations about platform use and, when requested, suggest metrics and analysis of social media use to continuously improve and inform social media strategy. The frequency of these reports will depend on the Contractor's outreach plan and what would be needed to inform communications work.

9. *Should offerors include graphic design support, for social media, reports, and other communications materials?*

The contractor would not be required to produce graphics to depict data. However, the contractor must ensure posts translate accurately to the social media platforms and are aesthetically adequate and visually appealing, requiring at least a basic use of visuals. Graphics and other more detailed visual needs will be met through other contracting avenues.

10. *Are graphic design services and expertise a part of this scope of work for creating content for social media, presentations, and meetings?*

No. See response to question #9, above.

11. *The scope calls for content for presentations, social media, etc. but does not specify that the contractor will need to provide multimedia services. Will the contractor be responsible for developing and producing content in video, podcast, or other media formats beyond text?*

No, the contractor will not be responsible for content beyond text.

12. *The scope calls for content for presentations, social media, etc. but does not specify that the contractor will need to provide design services. Will the contractor be responsible for designing materials for the Governing Board such as one pagers, PowerPoints, and social media graphics? If such design services are needed, will 508 compliance services be required?*

Design of materials and publications, and 508 compliance services for website posting would be done through other contracting vehicles

*13. What are NAGB's expectations for timeliness of social media monitoring (e.g., daily, Monday - Friday during business hours, or other)? Are social listening reports expected? If so, on what frequency?*

Regular monitoring of social media channels should occur only during business hours. Social listening reports will be required as they inform strategy. The frequency will depend on what is recommended in the strategic communications plan that the Board ultimately approves.

*14. What is the frequency of media coverage and placement reports desired by the Board?*

The Board does not have a specific number of media placements or amount of media coverage expected at any given time. However, the Board does expect the contractor to maintain a list of successful media placements and, when requested, report on media coverage of NAEP to inform ongoing outreach efforts.

*15. The scope calls for a wraparound media strategy, including pitching media placements for op-eds, interviews, etc. Will the contractor be responsible for media list development and distribution of press releases and advisories? If so, does the Governing Board have media contact information or a media outreach platform or tool it uses to compile reporter contact information or to broadly distribute media content or should the contractor be prepared to use its own media contact and outreach systems?*

The Board currently uses Salesforce to develop and maintain stakeholder and media contact lists, and the contractor will have access to those as needed. But the contractor should be prepared to supplement that list with its contacts and assist the Board in updating contacts on an ongoing basis. Regarding mass dissemination of press releases, advisories, and other notices, the Board will oversee that aspect through a different contract.

*16. The scope calls for using the Board's "email lists effectively and strategically." Will the contractor be responsible for disseminating emails on behalf of the Governing Board? If so, does the Governing Board have an email platform it will give the contractor access to, or will the contractor need to provide the Governing Board with a platform?*

See response to #15 regarding dissemination.

*17. The scope indicates the contractor will be responsible for assisting Board staff in "strategic identification of influential organizations and individuals in targeted outreach that would provide the Board highly qualified and diverse nominees for its annual solicitation of nominations for open positions... Efforts would include assisting Board staff in messaging and content for website and print materials that promote the Board's uniqueness and significance in education and builds awareness and interest." Will the contractor also be responsible for compiling contact information for the targeted organizations and individuals as well as proactively engaging in outreach to those parties on behalf of the Board?*

The Board will conduct proactive outreach for its annual nominations campaign but will consult with the contractor on messaging and overall strategies. The contractor will be expected to assist in identifying organizations, and as needed, find or supply contact information for those individuals the Board does not have in its database or cannot readily find.

*18. The work by contract year section outlines annual project management expectations including "ongoing overall project management including check-in calls, work summary reports, and ad hoc reports requirements." As part of this expectation, will the contractor be required to collaborate with other NAGB consultants that may be supporting different scopes of work, such as the release events?*

Yes, the contractor shall be prepared to collaborate with the Board's logistics contractor, which will support NAEP release events. There may be additional special efforts conducted by other contractors or consultants that will require collaboration if the work has direct implications for communications and outreach.

*19. Is NAGB primary seeking earned media strategies, or integrated earned, owned, and paid strategies?*

The Board is seeking earned media strategies as it does not pay media outlets for placement.

*20. For social media, does NAGB seek an earned media strategy only, or paid social media strategy as well?*

The Board seeks an earned social media strategy. The only exception in current practice is a limited number of paid ads on social platforms like LinkedIn for the Board's annual nominations campaign. The Board is open to limited paid social in the future if that method manifests a significant, cost-efficient advantage to fulfill outreach goals.

*21. Based on the scope, we anticipate the need for a team of contributors that have the following roles/skill sets: project management, media/policy strategic advisor, earned media execution and writer, graphic designer, social media strategy/execution, communications support (list building, media and social media analysis and reporting, etc.). Would the Board consider a team of five people if it does not exceed 1.25 FTEs in labor?*

The Board would consider any number of people in a response as long as the staff presented can meet all the requirements of the scope. To clarify, a graphic designer is not mandatory as graphics and detailed visuals will be handled through another contractor. The only related expertise would be basic visuals in relation to social media posts.

**Attachment C: Instructions to Offerors Questions:**

*22. Will the government allow the font size for text within tables/exhibits to be reduced in the page restricted proposal sections?*

The required font size is a 12-point font. The Governing Board is not planning to amend the solicitation to change any font size requirements.

*23. I am writing to see if this contract opportunity may be considered for an 8(a) set-aside.*

The Governing Board is not planning to amend the solicitation to change any business size/type requirements. The RFP posted on SAM states that "The U.S. Department of Education (Department) seeks to award a contract to a qualified small business vendor to provide Strategic Communications Services, as detailed in the Statement of Objectives, as a total (100%) small business set-aside".

*24. The Forecast of ED Contract Opportunities website has two opportunities listed for communications work for the National Assessment Governing Board. The estimated value for a contract vehicle that included strategic communications along with other deliverables related to campaign management that are not part of this RFP was greater than or equal to \$1 million and less than \$2 million. Can you share a more precise budget range for this RFP given that it does not match the scope of deliverables in the forecast?*

The information on the ED Forecast of Contract Opportunities page is currently undergoing updates. For this requirement, as noted in the Instructions to Offerors, the yearly anticipated level of effort is not to exceed 1.25 FTE. Since this is a Statement of Objectives, offerors may propose activities that could be funded on an ongoing basis as needed. Depending on the proposed Performance Work Statement, opportunities for additional funding may be funded separately if the Board decides the proposed solution meets the Governing Board's stated objectives.

*25. The requirement states: "For budgeting purposes, the yearly anticipated level of effort is not to exceed 1.25 full time employees (FTE) in total, or 50 labor hours a week on average." The scope of work as written does not appear achievable with 1.25 FTE. This level of effort would have to be spread across project management, strategic communications planning, social media outreach, release support, Board recruitment, and Board outreach; all activities which are important and will be occurring in each year, except for planning. Would the government consider funding additional FTE's to be proposed by the bidder? Alternatively, would the government reduce the scope of work to be more in line with budget?*

Please see responses to #21 and #24.

*26. To ensure offerors propose comprehensive ODC expenses, can NAGB provide a list of ODCs, in addition to travel that it expects to be required to fulfill the scope?*

All ODCs will be priced as cost reimbursable so there is no risk to vendors. Sufficient detail has been provided to budget for requirements, see also all responses in this document that provide

clarifications. Travel is the only anticipated ODC, but please also see the response to #20 above regarding a limited number of paid ads on social platforms

*27. Does the Department use paid media? If so, is the offeror expected to purchase these services and submit expenses as ODCs?*

No. Please see answer to questions #7 and #20 in the previous section, and question #26 above.

*28. Does the \$19M size standard cover one year or three years (base year plus two option years) overall?*

A size standard, which is usually stated in number of employees or average annual receipts, represents the largest size that a business (including its subsidiaries and affiliates) may be to remain classified as a small business for Small Business Administrations (SBA) and federal contracting programs. The \$19M size standard is based on annual receipts per company, as dictated by SBA in deciding if you are eligible to receive government contracts as a small business. For more information on SBA and small business size standards, please visit <https://www.sba.gov/document/support-table-size-standards>.

*29. Does the \$19M "size standard" contract listed include media buying, if applicable? If so, what has been an average monthly spend?*

Please see response to #28 above. The \$19M size standard does not relate to the government's requirements for this contract, rather, your company's size and eligibility to receive federal contracts.

*30. Does a GSA Professional Services schedule satisfy as an approved audited by a cognizant government agency?*

Yes. Vendors who have been awarded a GSA Schedule contract have met these requirements, based on the GSA Contracting Officer's determination. This assumes that the offeror is proposing to use GSA negotiated rates (with discounts).

*31. Is having an estimating and purchasing system a must for an award?*

As noted in the Instructions to Offerors, offerors shall describe their accounting system, estimating system, and purchasing system. The Government reserves the right to not award a contract to a company that does not have an approved accounting, estimating, and purchasing system. It is required that the business proposal contain enough information for a cost realism determination to be made. Offerors are expected to use their best business judgement in submitting the necessary information to allow the Contracting Officer to review the Business Proposal.

*32. Can the offeror provide relevant past performances information/forms for one prime and two subcontract contracts? Alternatively, can the offeror provide two relevant past*

*performances as a Prime with one that is beyond the first year of the contract current and the other that is within the first year of the contract?*

The Governing Board is not planning to amend the solicitation to change any requirements. Attachment C to the RFP provides all the requirements for the submission of past performance information, and states that “Offerors shall submit narrative information on three contracts, completed in the last four years or currently in process but beyond the first year of the contract, which are of similar size, scope, complexity and relevant to the effort required by this solicitation.”

*33. Can the offeror provide one relevant past performance information/reference form from a subcontractor?*

The Instructions to Offerors states that “Past performance information from offerors as subcontractors may be provided and may be counted as no more than one of the three past performance reference forms.”