<h1 style="text-align:center">Request for Information (RFI)</h1>

<h2 style="text-align:center">New Multiple Award Indefinite Quanty Indefinite Delivery Contract for Modern Software Development</h2>

<h2 style="text-align:center">23 May 2024</h2>

What ACC-APG is trying to accomplish: Software is essential to modern military operations. It is a key component in the Army's weapons, business, and training systems and is embedded into the enterprise processes that make the Department function. These systems enable the Army to detect and track adversaries, protect operations from cyber threats, and improve the accuracy and effectiveness of decisions and actions. Software drives improved outcomes and effectiveness in our missions and operations. Consequently, the Army's ability to rapidly develop, deliver, and adapt resilient software is critical to achieving a competitive advantage over adversaries. Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground (ACC-APG) is pursuing a new Multiple Award Indefinite Quanty Indefinite Delivery Contract for Modern Software Development for which task orders will be issued for software enablement efforts in support of Army systems. For the purposes of this action, a "software enablement effort" is defined as: (a) development of a custom software solution; (b) customization, integration, or modification of a software solution; (c) software as a service enablement; or (d) software security and hosting modernization.

How you can help: ACC-APG seeks your input on the proposed contract strategy (Appendix 1), initial Statement of Objectives (Appendix 2), and answers to our targeted questions (Appendix 3). Specifically, we are seeking suggestions on how to establish a phased source selection that will enable the Army to award an effective and expedited Multiple Award contract to the most qualified contractors.

How to Reply: To reply, email the mailbox below with the subject line **MSD MA IDIQ RFI,< Written Responses>, <Company Name>** , by **10 June 2024.**

Utilize the excel sheet attached to this announcement, **MSD MA IDIQ RFI Responses (.xlsx),** to record your responses to the questions. Please provide any other feedback you would like the Government Team to consider in either .docx or .pdf format.

RFI Submission Points of Contact: usarmy.apg.acc.mbx.dc3oe-mailbox@army.mil

Disclaimer: This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes. This RFI is not a solicitation and is not to be construed as a commitment by the Government to issue a solicitation or ultimately award a contract. Responses will not be considered as proposals, nor will any award be made as a result of this request. Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clause 52.215-3, "Request for Information or Solicitation for Planning Purposes", is incorporated by reference. The Government does not intend to reimburse respondents for any costs associated with the submissions of their responses to this RFI; respondents to this RFI are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding. Proprietary information and trade secrets, if any, must be clearly marked on all materials. All information received in response to this RFI that is marked "Proprietary" will be handled accordingly. Please be advised that all submissions become Government property and will not be returned nor will receipt be confirmed. In accordance with FAR 15.201(e), responses to this RFI are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract.

Appendix 1- Contracting Strategy

Background

The Army's contracting strategy is to award a new Multiple Award IDIQ contract vehicle in a streamlined manner to the most qualified contractors, resulting a flexible contract vehicle with the ability to rapidly award Task Orders for Modern Software Development requirements across the Army. The Ceiling of this IDIQ is currently estimated to be greater than $1B, with a 10-year period of performance.

Multiple Award IDIQ Contract Strategy

Basis of Award

The best value basis will be determined by the Highest Technically Rated Offerors with a Fair and Reasonable Price. The Government will review the proposals to determine the Highest Technically Rated Offerors based on non-price factors of the Technical Challenge; Technical Corporate Experience; Management Plan; and Past Performance. Cost/Price will be evaluated on a rates only basis. These non-price factors are listed in descending order of importance. All evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost or price.

CLIN/Pricing Structure

Labor Category rates will be established on the base contract for the duration of the IDIQ period of performance. Labor Category rates will be evaluated for Reasonableness on the IDIQ. Once rates are established on the base IDIQ, there will be considered reasonable for use on Task Order competitions, enabling streamlined execution. To reduce complexity and accelerate task order mechanics, the Army will look to standardize and reduce the total number of labor categories.

Solicitation Factors

Phase 1-

Technical Corporate Experience Self-Assessment assessing each offeror's capabilities and experience executing Modern Software Development Efforts. Through the Technical Corporate Experience Self-Assessment, the Government intends to gather a high-level understanding of the breadth and depth of the Offeror's capabilities and experience as it relates to elements of the PWS.

The Government intends to down select after the evaluation of Phase 1.

Phase 2-

Technical Challenge the Government will assess its degree of confidence in an Offeror's understanding of and experience in performing work of the same or similar nature as that of the elements of the PWS utilizing Modern Software Development concepts.

Management Plan: the Government will assess the offeror's plan to manage the program at the IDIQ level, to include qualifications of the proposed team.

Past Performance: The Past Performance evaluation will assess the degree of confidence the Government has in an Offeror's ability to supply services that meet the user's needs, based on a demonstrated record of performance utilizing information from Past Performance questionnaires, CPARS, and other sources.

Past Performance will be evaluated based on the recency, relevancy and quality of the Offeror's past performance.

Cost/Price The evaluation of this factor will be based on how realistic and reasonable the proposed labor category pricing with a focus on the overall value.

Note- Small Business Participation will be assessed at the order level.

Task Order Contract Strategy

Task Orders issued against this MA IDIQ will feature evaluation criteria designed to demonstrate the Offeror's technical capabilities, availability of resources to begin work immediately, and enable task order award rapidly. Offerors are advised that Task Order solicitations may also feature qualifying technical demonstrations and/or challenges.

The Government intends to incorporate flexibility into the ordering process that allows for the ability to award a Task Order to the next highest rated offeror should the Awardee fail certain objectives over the course of a planning interval (8-26 weeks depending on sprint cadence). Performance metrics and objective feedback will be tracked and communicated across every sprint.

The Government intends to classify task orders according to Complexity (Simple, Complex) and Response Timeline (Expedited, Standard). Response times to task orders will follow the below schedule:

Proposal Response Times	Expedited	Standard
Simple	5 Business Days	10 Business Days
Complex	15 Business Days	25 Business Days

Note: Business Days are Government Business Days.

- Each Task Order Request will include the following data points

    o A SOO detailing the work requested.

    o May include the Governments estimated budget for the Task Order

    o The required start date

    o The required level of Small Business participation

    o May require technical demonstration and/or challenge

    o May require written technical volume

    o Performance Metrics for award term options that may be exercised as a result of successful completion of the initial period of performance.

- A proposal response to a Task Order will include:

    o A proposed PWS/ Agile Project Plan

    o The proposed team for the task order, in compliance with rates on the IDIQ, and within the Task Budget.

    o The current Army CAC status for all members of the proposed team

o Confirmation on start date

o SB Participation Plan

o Demonstration/Challenge submission

o Written Technical Volume as required

On/Ramp and Off/Ramp

The Government anticipates awarding to a population of 10 total Contract Holders at the MA IDIQ level throughout the ordering period to include a pool reserved for Small Businesses. It is in the Government's best interest to ensure there is an adequate number of Contractors with the capacity and capability to compete for task orders to meet the Government's mission requirements, and therefore the Government will perform on-ramping procedures as necessary.

The Government anticipates utilizing multiple approaches to identifying new highly rated contract holders to keep pace with changes to the marketplace.

MA IDIQ contract holders who have high rates of unsuccessful TO proposals and/or high no-bid rates may be subject to off-ramping.

Appendix 2- Statement of Objectives

Background

Software is essential to modern military operations. It is a key component in the Army's weapons, business, and training systems and is embedded into the enterprise processes that make the Department function. These systems enable the Army to detect and track adversaries, protect operations from cyber threats, and improve the accuracy and effectiveness of decisions and actions. Software drives improved outcomes and effectiveness in our missions and operations. Consequently, the Army's ability to rapidly develop, deliver, and adapt resilient software is critical to achieving a competitive advantage over adversaries.

To further broaden adoption of modern practices, the Army is reforming key institutional processes related to requirements, acquisition, contracting, test and evaluation, cybersecurity, cost estimation, data management, sustainment, and talent management. The Army is modifying these processes through the reform initiatives and contractual IDIQs like this one. These reforms will enable the Army's adoption of best practices for software development and accelerate the Army's digital transformation to deliver needed capabilities to Soldiers.

Additionally, the Army must build Continuous Integration / Continuous Delivery (CI/CD) pathways that are modern, trusted, secure, industry-accessible, and dependable. This IDIQ vehicle will both enable (build, modernize, integrate) those pathways and then use those pathways for delivery of modern software.

Scope

This action is a Multiple Award Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (MA IDIQ) type contract. Task Orders issued against this MA IDIQ will provide for software enablement efforts in support of Army systems. For the purposes of this action, a "software enablement effort" is defined as: (a) development of a custom software solution; (b) customization, integration, or modification of a software solution; (c) software as a service enablement; or (d) software security and hosting modernization. Efforts resulting from this SOO will feature modern software development practices, including but not limited to, continuous integration/ continuous delivery (CI/CD), agile, lean, and Development, Security, and Operation (DevSecOps).

Objective

The breadth of work we are trying to enable through this contract is tied back to "modern software enablement": (a) development of a custom software solution; (b) customization, integration, or modification of a software solution; (c) software as a service enablement; or (d) software security and hosting modernization.

Below are more detailed examples, non-exhaustive, of some of the work projects in each of those four areas:

Modern Software Enablement Area	(a) development of a custom software solution	(b) customization, integration, or modification of a software solution	(c) software as a service enablement	(d) software security and hosting modernization
Programs and Projects	• Building a Data Mesh Governance tier for UDRA	• Continuously Developing an	• Building and modernizing CoE services	• Building Cyber Defense Capabilities

Examples**	using open-source software. • Developing a new app using the MERN stack. • Transforming a COBOL application into a LAMP app. • Integrating a custom AI/RAG feature onto an existing application. • and more!	Enterprise DSO Service. • Developing a Recruiting app leveraging a Low Code platform. • Developing an Agile Metrics Suite using Agile Program Management products. • Running a QA Assessment on a software solution. • Developing an agility layer app for EBS-C. • and more!	(QA, Data, Security) for a Low Code app ecosystem. • Developing and monitoring and a SaaS Gateway Service • and more!	(SIEM, SOAR, SV) around your app ecosystems. • Building an on-prem GPU farm to run AI Model Governance. • Building a modern, mutli-cloud K8S ecosystem. • Purple Team Pen Testing • and more!
Skilled Workforce Examples	• Full Stack Software Developers • UI/UX Designers • Agilists • Data Engineers • Platform Engineers • Data Scientists • and more!	• Application Developers • Data Analysts • Solution Architects • API Developers • QA Analysts • and more!	• Solution Architects • Service Designers • Business Process Designers • FinOps Analysts • Security Analysts • and more!	• Security Engineers • Penetration Testers • Cybersecurity Auditors • Cloud Engineers • Infrastructure Engineers • and more!

**Note: It is important to note that the table above is just illustrative of some of the projects that could be classified under Modern Software Enablement. It is not an exhaustive list.

Achieving Integration Liquidity

Task Orders can include part or the whole of a product team, an agile release train, or program or portfolio work. Often, the pool of IDIQ participants will need to effectively work with the Government and/or with other IDIQ participants to deliver products. This may include hierarchical and/or matrixed duties and responsibilities including quality assurance, testing, portfolio management, release management, etc. There will be specific performance metrics tied to how well we can work together as a team.
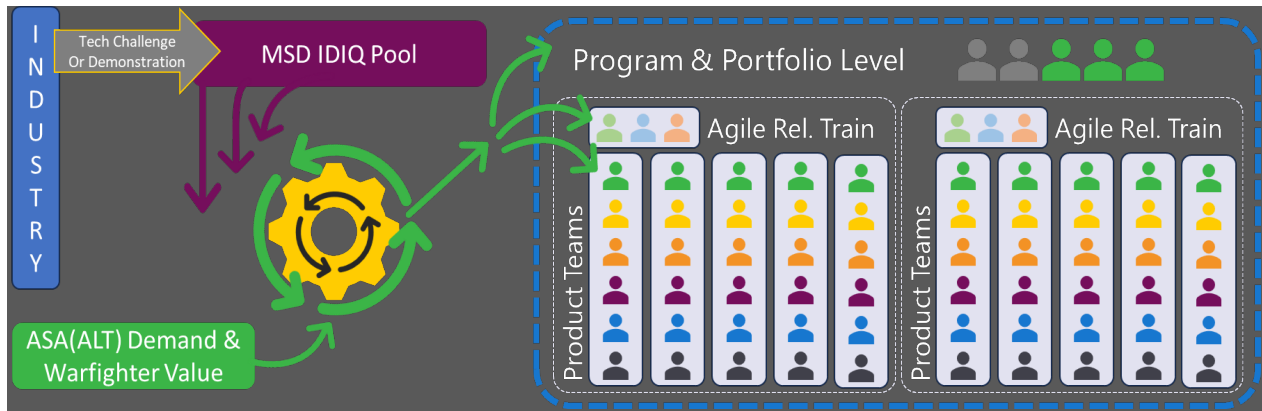
Image 1: Mechanics of Modern Software Delivery through Integration Liquidity.

Agile Performance Metrics

As part of delivery, every task order will use agile methodology (SAFe for all large tasks) and, at a minimum, leveraging a common Agile Program Management suite. Options will be prescribed by the vehicle and selected by task order.

At a minimum the following metrics will be required to be tracked across each sprint:

| Required Software Metric |
Metric Name	Category	Description	Importance	Measurement	Trend Over Time
Velocity	Software Process Metrics	Amount of work the team completes during a given period. Note: Due to the variation of relative size (story) estimates, Velocity is team specific and should not be used to compare one team against another or for contract progress and incentives.	Key planning factor for estimating the amount of work that can move through the CI/CD Workflow	$= \dfrac{\text{\# of Story Points [Complete]}}{Sprint}$	Normalize to steady state
Defect Rate	Software Quality	Number of defects created during a set interval	Improve the quality processes in the delivery flow	$= \dfrac{\text{\# of Defects}}{\text{\# of Deployments}}$	Decreases
Recidivism Rate	Software Quality	Percent of work returned to the developer	Indicates effectiveness of execution and adherence to acceptance criteria	$= \dfrac{\text{\# of Story Points [Returned]}}{\text{\# of Story Points [Completed]}}$	Decreases
Root Cause Analysis Accuracy	Software Process Metric	the percentage of identified issues where the root cause is correctly identified in the first attempt without causing additional issues.	Higher accuracy indicates that the root cause analysis process is robust and reliable.	$= \% \ Root \ Causes \ ID \ first \ attempt$	Increases
Delivery Frequency	Software Development Progress	The frequency that changes are delivered to production/ Operationally Relevant Environment (ORE)	Reduce the size of delivered change, improve the feedback loop on quality and increase the speed of value delivery.	$= \dfrac{\text{\# of Deployments to Production}}{Quarter}$	Increase to steady state
Mean Time to Remediate	Cybersecurity	The average time it takes to repair/restore a module, component, system to functional use after a security incident	Time to respond cyber threats is critical to the security and protection of the system/data	$= \dfrac{Time \ to \ Resolve}{\text{\# of Incidents}}$	Decreases
Cost Per Release	Cost	Shows the cost per release to trend over time and to compare against the value delivered per release	Provide insight into cost per delivery of a feature / capability	$= \dfrac{Total \ Cost \ To \ Date}{Total \ Delivered \ Features}$	Decreases to steady state
Level of User Satisfaction	Value Metrics	This metric represents the degree of user satisfaction based on the value delivered by the product or solution.	Ensuring the user wants to use the product	$= \dfrac{Sum \ of \ Satisfaction \ Scores}{\text{\# of Respondents}}$	Increases

Appendix 3- Questions

Question 1

The Army is considering a multi-phased source selection approach, with the first phase focused on corporate experience and/or past performance executing modern software development efforts.

What key discriminators should the Army evaluate in order to identify the vendors best suited to proceed to phase 2?

Question 2

The Army is considering a flexible contract vehicle utilizing multiple contract types to best execute this mission.

What contract types would you recommend the Government utilize and/or not consider utilizing?

Question 3

The Army is strongly considering tech challenges over demonstrations as the focus of the phase 2 evaluation for the IDIQ award.

What information/process would you recommend the Army utilize to determine the contractors best suited for an IDIQ award?

Question 4

Do you have recommendations for innovative on-ramping procedures for the Government to consider?

Question 5

Would your company have the ability to set up or conduct development in a Government Owned, Contractor Operated Development Ecosystem that includes a CI/CD pipeline comprised of a Government customized list of tools and test bed capability of employ robust test automation?

Question 6

The Governments intent is to establish Labor Category pricing on the base IDIQ to expedite the TO award process. Please provide the list of labor categories including certifications/qualifications that your company believes to be necessary.

Question 7

As an alternative to certifications and proposals do you have experience with utilizing coding challenges to establish employee qualifications? If so, can you provide examples or recommendations?

Question 8

The Government's expectation that Task Order execution under the IDIQ results in expedited staffing so projects can begin quickly.

Part 1- What time do you anticipate being necessary to fully staff a team to begin executing a Program Increment (PI)?

Part 2- If you had the ability to obtain Army CACs and/or GFE VDI/laptops in advance of a TO award, how would that change your timeline to fully staff?

Question 9

Are there additional areas of Modern Software Development that should be considered as part of this IDIQ?

Question 10

The Government is intending to use Agile Performance metrics as a means of performance feedback (CPARS-like) and as an evaluation point for continued work.

Which agile performance metrics, in lieu of or in addition to the ones identified, should be used as a basis for this IDIQ?