

# Request for Proposal

RFP No. 2024-01-001

**Audit Services for the William Marsh Rice University IT  
Risk Assessment**

Date of Issue  
January 11, 2024

Proposal Submission Deadline  
February 2, 2024, 5:00 PM Central Time

Contact Person  
Adriana Jimenez  
[ABJ2@rice.edu](mailto:ABJ2@rice.edu)

## **Executive Summary**

Rice University is a private, tier-one research university dedicated to rigorous undergraduate and graduate education, research, and professional training in selected disciplines. It is a 300-acre tree-lined campus in Houston and seizes its advantageous position to pursue pathbreaking research and create innovative collaboration opportunities that contribute to the betterment of the world. Rice University is ranked among the nation's top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. Rice has a 6-to-1 undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio, with 4,500 undergraduate students and 400 graduate and professional students. We have a residential college system, which supports students intellectually, emotionally, and culturally through social events, intramural sports, student plays, lecture series, courses, and student government. Developing close-knit, diverse college communities is a strong campus tradition, which is why Rice is highly ranked for best quality of life and best value among private universities. Rice has 3,500 full-time employees, of which approximately 800 are faculty. (Source: [rice.edu](http://rice.edu)).

Rice University Internal Audit Department, mandated by the Board, is an independent, objective, assurance and advisory unit designed to add value and improve University operations. It helps the University accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

Internal Auditing assists the University in maintaining effective internal controls, promotes continuous improvement of controls and operations, and tests and reviews controls/operations for effectiveness and efficiency to mitigate risks to the University.

Internal Audit, in conjunction with the Office of Ethics, Compliance and Enterprise Risk, supports the University's EthicsLine through triage and investigative services to ensure reports are taken seriously, investigated, and brought to the appropriate resolution, including internal control improvements.

## **Background and Purpose**

The University implemented Oracle Cloud, a centralized business platform for human resources and management, in July 2021. We continue to use Ellucian's Banner system for student records. We utilize other supporting systems on-prem and in the cloud for digital and physical access, health records, student judiciary affairs, and other key areas.

The purpose of this RFP is to secure a co-source to augment our existing team by providing IT expertise and input to our IT risk assessment process to inform our FY25 annual audit plan.

## Schedule

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFP Issuance	January 11, 2024
Questions/Clarifications	January 17, 2024
Issuing Answers	January 18, 2024
Proposal Submission Deadline	February 02, 2024 5 p.m. CST
Proposal Evaluation Period Deadline	February 16, 2024
Finalists Interviews/Presentations	February 19-22 2024
Anticipated Award Notice	February 23, 2024
Contract Execution	March 08, 2024
Project Period	March 11- 29 2024

## Scope of Work

The Internal Audit Plan is based upon a comprehensive risk assessment that evaluates and measures risks, including those related to the IT governance infrastructure, applications, and data. This macro-level risk assessment identifies high-risk areas for consideration in the audit plan.

The review will entail an assessment of risks to our systems and data, including an assessment of IT governance, general IT controls, security around key on-prem and cloud systems, network security, key application security and controls, significant IT compliance requirements, incident response activities, and other significant operations and policies as agreed upon.

The deliverable will be a risk matrix using our tool or an agreed-upon tool and supporting documentation for risk identification and rating determination.

## Proposal Submission Requirements

- Please submit questions/clarification electronically via email to [abj2@rice.edu](mailto:abj2@rice.edu) by January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- Please submit your proposals for Audit Services for the William Marsh Rice University IT Risk Assessment by 5 p.m. CST on February 2, 2024. All proposals should be submitted electronically via email to [abj2@rice.edu](mailto:abj2@rice.edu). Please ensure that your proposal is properly identified with the RFP #2024-01-001. It is the respondent's responsibility to ensure that their proposal is received on time. Rice University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all parts of any proposal, waive informalities, and award the contract in the university's best interests. Only proposals received on-time will be accepted.

- Format: Word format no more than three (3) pages highlighting competencies and history with Annual Plan Risk Assessments and any dependencies to consider. Please also include four exhibits –
  1. Company and expected project team member profiles (with CVs available upon request) and client references for which risk assessment services were provided recently.
  2. Scope of work proposal
  3. Proposed fee details based on the scope of work and resource level applied
  4. Additional anticipated expenses. *Note: Travel not reimbursed*
- Please refer to the [Rice Suppliers Basics for Business](#) for further details on current rules and guidelines through this RFP process

### Key Contact

All questions concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing via email to Adriana Jimenez [abj2@rice.edu](mailto:abj2@rice.edu). Please include **RFP Number 2024-01-001** in your communications.

### Evaluation Criteria and Award

- Firm and team experience and qualification
- Availability
- Recent experience with Rice and similar institutions/operations
- Rice Professional Services Agreement Redlines
- Proposed Pricing
- Supplier Diversity
- Overall proposal and completeness

### Terms and Conditions

- **PREFERRED CONTRACT:** The preferred form of the contract between Rice University and the successful Respondent is the Rice Professional Services Agreement (copy attached). The submitted proposals shall impose no liability or obligation on the University. The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals in full or in part and further reserves the right to request future quotations at its discretion. The University also reserves the right to condition the award on successful additional clarification and/or negotiations of scope and fees.
- **SINGLE AWARD:** The University aims to award a contract to one Firm through this solicitation. The agreement will commence upon signing the University Contract and end March 29, 2024. The University has included a renewal option, which is subject to its discretion. The University's Sample Contract (Professional Service Agreement), found in this solicitation's "Files" section as Attachment II, will govern the services provided under this award. Suppliers must submit any proposed edits or exceptions to this contract and a detailed reason for each requested modification. The University may not accept standalone supplemental agreements from the

Supplier and will negotiate with the awarded Supplier in good faith on a final contract. The University suggests that the Supplier propose minimal edits and may use it as an additional means to determine the final award. It is crucial to note that the contract resulting from this solicitation will not grant the successful Supplier an exclusive privilege to furnish the University with any or all of the services subject to this contract.

- **READ, REVIEW AND COMPLY:** It shall be the Respondent's responsibility to read this entire document, review all enclosures and attachments, and any addenda, and comply with all requirements specified herein, regardless of whether appearing in these Instructions to Respondents or elsewhere in this RFP document.
- **LATE PROPOSALS:** Late proposals, regardless of cause, may not be considered, and can be automatically disqualified from further consideration. It shall be the Respondent's sole responsibility to ensure the timely submission of proposals.
- **HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS:** Rice University is committed to retaining vendors from diverse backgrounds. It invites and encourages participation in the procurement process by businesses owned by minorities, women, disabled, disabled business enterprises, and non-profit work centers for the blind and severely disabled. In particular, Rice University encourages participation by Vendors certified by the State Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses, as well as the use of HUB-certified vendors as subcontractors.
- **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:** To the extent permitted by applicable statutes and rules, Rice University will maintain as confidential trade secrets in its proposal that the Vendor does not wish disclosed. As a condition to confidential treatment, each page containing trade secret information shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL" by the Respondent, with specific trade secret information enclosed in boxes, marked in distinctive color or by similar indication. Cost information shall not be deemed confidential under any circumstances. Any material labeled as confidential constitutes a representation by the Respondent that it has made a reasonable effort in good faith to determine that such material is, in fact, a trade secret. Respondents are urged and cautioned to limit the marking of information as a trade secret or as confidential as possible. If legal action is brought to require the disclosure of any material so marked as confidential, the university will notify Respondent of such action if feasible to allow Respondent to defend the confidential status of its information.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:** Any gender-specific pronouns used herein, whether masculine or feminine, shall be read and construed as gender-neutral. The singular of any word or phrase shall be read to include the plural and vice versa.
- **INFORMAL COMMENTS:** Rice University shall not be bound by informal explanations, instructions, or information given at any time by anyone on behalf of the university during the competitive process or after award.
- **COST FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION:** Any costs incurred by Respondents in preparing or submitting offers are the Respondents' sole responsibility; Rice University will not reimburse any Respondent for any costs incurred or associated with the preparation of proposals.

- **NON-DISCRIMINATION:** The Successful Respondent will take necessary action to comply with all Federal and State requirements concerning fair employment and employment of people with disabilities, and concerning the treatment of all employees without regard to discrimination on the basis of any prohibited grounds as defined by Federal and State law.
- Submission of proposals indicates acceptance of all conditions contained in this RFP.