Addendum 1 has been issued to answer questions submitted to date

(1) One Flash Drive of the respondents proposal is required in addition to 1 original and 5 copies.

Please let us know if anyone can participate in responding to this RFP?
ANSWER: Yes, CCSU welcomes all solicitors for this RFP.

Are we limited to how many pages our physical proposal can be?
ANSWER: There is no page limit.

We cannot seem to get the Connecticut Contracting Proposal website to load correctly. Are you able to provide us with the full URL?
ANSWER: Please contact the State of Connecticut portal administrator for assistance to register as a vendor. The URL is http://www.CTsource-CT.gov

The scope of work is outside of any state contract and that the state would not be providing any financial assistance for testing program. Is that correct?
ANSWER: Vendor should assume that to the extent the University pays, we would be using federal funds to pay the expense.

We worked with WCSU and the state asked us to bill insurance first for the students and then the state would pick up the remaining charges that were denied by insurances. With this fall program would you do something similar or are you thinking CCSU would pay a cash rate for 100% of tests performed?
ANSWER: Vendors should identify whether or not they can bill student insurance and provide rates assuming that they bill insurance or not bill insurance.

I am a technical writer with Becton, Dickinson and company. Can you please clarify on whether a bid proposing the use of Rapid Antigen Testing be accepted for Central Connecticut State University -CCSU SARS-CoV-2 Testing Program-request for proposal (RFP) NO.2021-24?
ANSWER: As stated in section 2.2-CCSU is seeking a vendor to provide services related to SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR or PCR quality molecular testing.

We offer several PCR rapid molecular test kits where results can be obtained in 30-35 minutes. There is no need for a lab. Can we use this type of test to satisfy the requirement of the entire RFP and not just the home test kits?
ANSWER: If this is in line with the PCR quality molecular testing that is outlined in the RFP, yes.

Since our company is not based out of Connecticut, would this disqualify us?
ANSWER: As long as your company is able to provide the various components listed in the specifications under the Scope of Work it does not matter that your company is based outside of Connecticut.

Do you have a preferred consent form?
ANSWER: We can develop one if the selected vendor does not have one.
Define a media kit?
ANSWER: This means all supplies needed to complete the test, which could include the swab, reagents and any other items that may be needed to collect the specimen.

August 9-13 Will the University be collecting samples from all 100 athletes at one time, or will it spread over the day and week?
ANSWER: The University prefers to do this at one time but likely there will be students who won’t be able to make it on that particular day so we would need to open up alternative days.

Provide the actual dates in August?
ANSWER: These dates are still TBD based on any fourth-coming updated DPH guidance and quarantine protocols set forth for the fall semester.

Will testing be done during a single day or across both days?
ANSWER: Testing will be done across both days since there are always students who are not able to make it the first day.

Will testing take place during the same two days during any given week? Will you publish a schedule ahead of time?
ANSWER: The University will be consistent and have the testing take place the same two days for any given week and the students will receive correspondence via email detailing the schedule, time, location of the testing.

Will collection and shipment occur during a single event at school or spread over multiple days?
ANSWER: We will prefer to minimize testing outside of the two dedicated days each week but in cases of urgency, such as if a student becomes symptomatic, this collection may require a single event.

Would you require on-site presence to support this process, or will you only require courier service and testing?
ANSWER: Either process would be acceptable based on the total package proposed.

Would the school prefer for us to hire, train and use university students for the on-site services; oversight, local support, storage during sessions and arranging for a currier, or would it be best if we provide these services through our own team?
ANSWER: The University requires that the selected vendor provide these services through their own team.

What is the scope of Contractual On-Call requirements and Emergency services? Would this be specifically for rapid response SARS-CoV-2 testing or full Emergency Medical services? (Ambulatory, EMT, etc.)
ANSWER: The University is not seeking full Emergency Medical services. Any emergency calls outside of the scheduled testing periods would be due to the need for an urgent response related to SARS-CoV-2 testing only.

In the scope of services section of the RFP, testing media kits are mentioned. Can you further clarify what this may entail? Are you looking for at-home test kits that can be sent to an individual’s address of choice for testing at home, or test kits that can be administered in front of your personnel and sent in bulk to one or multiple addresses?
ANSWER: This means all supplies needed to complete the test, which could include the swab, reagents and other items that may be needed to collect the specimen. We are not looking to provide home tests. The latter could be possible (test kits that can be administered in front of personnel) as long as it satisfies the type of test requirement outlined in the RFP.

How did you conduct testing in the spring of 2021? Was it in the same manner as you are outlining for the fall of 2021?
ANSWER: Testing in the spring of 2021 was conducted by a vendor contracted by the state of CT using an RT-PCR test. The vendor came to campus twice weekly during the semester and was responsible for overseeing and performing the entire testing process. They provided testing media, staff to conduct nasal swabbing on campus, and transport of the test samples to a lab for analysis. Test results were made available to us and students via a portal. The vendor also provided us with media kits to keep on campus so we could test symptomatic students; In addition, the vendor provided courier services to transport the samples to the lab for analysis.

What features of your current SARS-CoV-2 Testing Program process do you want to continue with?
ANSWER: CCSU wants to continue to have the vendor provide all aspects of the testing as outlined in the RFP.

Are there any elements of your COVID SARS-CoV-2 Testing Program that you would like to improve?
We are interested in a process that meets all the requirements outlined in the RFP, provides consistently high quality service and we also would prefer to receive test results within 24 hours.

Would CCSU consider testing strategies that are unmonitored by medical staff? If not, can you provide more insight as to why CCSU is leaning towards a staff monitored testing strategy?

ANSWER: We are not leaning toward a staff testing strategy. It can be done with non-medically trained individuals authorized to perform the test, or monitor it in case of self-swatting, that is acceptable as long as it meets the requirements outlined in the RFP.

Would you be interested in a proposal that includes pre-arrival testing? In this example, students would receive a testing kit before arriving on campus and would swab themselves.

ANSWER: The swab would have to be witnessed by someone at the University or on behalf of the vendor to make certain the sample belongs to the student.

Can you share how you are determining the volumes of tests going forward? For example, can you elaborate on how the university arrived at the "up to 250 students" to be tested for Aug-Dec 2021? Would this number of students change between Aug-Dec, either more or less?

ANSWER: The volume is determined based on the testing requirements and guidance set forth by the state’s DPH and CDC for higher education. As of when the RFP was written it was at the direction of the DPH to mandate surveillance testing on 25% of all residential students. As we go forward likely that number may change in either direction based on community transmission and related CDC and DPH guidance as CDC has advised that vaccinated individuals do not require surveillance testing. This will continue to change through the summer depending on COVID vaccination rates in our communities, and the number of COVID cases.

Can you please explain why CCSU is requiring to get results within 48 hours of testing?

ANSWER: The testing strategy in place is to mitigate the spread of COVID in case of an outbreak and to isolate a positive individual as soon as possible with surveillance. If the reporting time of a test goes beyond 48 hours it decreases our ability to mitigate the spread on campus from COVID and individuals.

On page 10 you mention needing emergency services. Can you please clarify what kind of emergency services will be needed? Are you anticipating more software/program based for troubleshooting support or medical emergency services?

ANSWER: Emergency services refers to the need for urgent SARS-CoV-2 testing outside of the 2 days a week regularly scheduled service. This may require a stat pick up of a student sample.

Regarding formatting of the proposal, on the 8 x 11’ paper, would you be requiring the formatting to be more like a word document or would a power-point presentation style format make sense?

ANSWER: Please submit a PDF or Word document.

With the State of CT department of Administrative services (“DAS”) issuing a solicitation for the same testing requirements that includes Connecticut higher education staff and student populations, is there a reason why CCSU is soliciting its own proposals?

ANSWER: The University can follow state protocol or operate as an independent entity

With CCSU having a previous testing program and testing partner, what changes or improvements would CCSU like to see for the new testing period starting in August?

ANSWER: We are interested in a process that meets all the requirements outlined in the RFP, provides consistently high quality service and we also would prefer to receive test results within 24 hours.

What is the desired testing times for the initial surveillance testing scenarios in the detailed specifications located in section 2.2?

ANSWER: 10AM-4PM
Would CCSU consider a shorter testing period over the requested 10am to 4 pm?
ANSWER: No. We need to ensure that the testing timeframe is wide enough to accommodate student schedules.

Will CCSU provide staffing to assist with traffic flow?
ANSWER: Yes

Will all CCSU testing participants have the ability to sign patient consents either hard copy or digitally?
ANSWER: Yes

Will CCSU provide pictures of the proposed testing site prior to testing for selected partner’s infection control planning purposes?
ANSWER: Yes, we can provide pictures and will schedule a walkthrough with the selected vendor.

Will CCSU be sharing all of the questions and answers once completed?
ANSWER: All RFP processes require that all questions be answered as an addendum and be posted on the State of Connecticut Web Site for Bids.

Is the University willing to consider mutually negotiated redline edits to the documents within the RFP?
ANSWERS: No

Will any of the participants to be COVID tested under 18 years of age?
ANSWER: Yes

On page 1 under required forms, SEEC form 11 is listed but I do not see that form included in the RFP?
ANSWER: Pages 34 and 35 is the SEEC form 11. Please initial and date.

2.1 says one vendor, but 1.13 says not inclusive. Can you please clarify?
ANSWER: The University will select one vendor to perform the requirements of this RFP. If COVID conditions worsen and one vendor cannot accommodate testing requirements, then it is at the discretion of the University to proceed with other vendors.

Are there requirements on how testing will be billed? Will CCSU look to bill students third party insurance or bill directly to the University?
ANSWER: Vendors should identify whether or not they can bill student insurance and provide rates assuming that they bill insurance or not bill insurance.

For “Non-Vaccinated Resident Student Testing” in August of up to 200, can this be accomplished in one day of on-site collections or are you requesting multiple days of testing?
ANSWER: We are requesting testing on the days specified in the RFP- August 16, 2021 and ending August 17, 2021

If multiple, how many days of testing would this entail? We see the maximum of up to 200, is there a minimum amount expected?
ANSWER: The amount expected will depend on the number of students who do not get fully vaccinated prior to arriving on campus.

For “Initial Surveillance Testing August 24-August 25”, we see the maximum of up to 200, is there a minimum amount expected?
ANSWER: The amount expected will depend on the number of students who do not get fully vaccinated prior to arriving on campus.
For the twice weekly surveillance testing, are there specific days of the week you are expecting testing or can the collection team determine the standard days for testing (i.e. every Tuesday and Thursday)?

**ANSWER:** The University strongly prefers that testing take place early in the week, but we are flexible as to which days.

We see the maximum of up to 250, is that up to 250 for the week or up to 250 for the day of testing meaning up to 500 for the week?

**ANSWER:** It is 250 for the week.

Is there a minimum amount expected?

**ANSWER:** The amount expected will depend on the number of students who are fully vaccinated at any given time during the academic year.

If there are minimums expected and the actual testing volume does not reach the minimum amount expected, are we able to invoice up to the minimum amount regardless of the number of patients actually tested?

**ANSWER:** The vendor’s proposal should address how they will structure their budget. If a vendor requires a minimum, details should be addressed in the proposal and reflected in the proposed budget; conversely, if a minimum is not required by a vendor, this too should be stated in the proposal and reflected in the proposed budget.

Are you planning to test your vaccinated and unvaccinated students or only your unvaccinated students?

**ANSWER:** At this time, it is understood that unvaccinated students will need to be tested. The University awaits guidance from CT DPH as to whether or not vaccinated students will be included in the testing pool. In addition, guidance from DPH may change over the course of the academic year based on the State’s positivity rate and other factors.

What would the expectation be if collection volumes fall below a certain amount? Would there be consideration to mutually terminate the agreement?

**ANSWER:** There would need to be a mutually agreed upon dissolution of the contract for any reason.

For the consent forms, will CCSU staff gain consents from the students or will the vendor be required to consent the students during the testing process?

**ANSWER:** The University will work with the vendor to draft a consent form that works for both the University and the vendor and will assist with the collection of these forms in either a paper or electronic format.

For the “Ability to access test results”, can you please clarify what this means for CCSU?

**ANSWER:** The University requires an electronic process in which we can access all test results at any given time once completed, as well as for students who have been tested to do the same. The manner in which this is to occur should be detailed in the proposal. This may include the use of a portal, other secured technology.

Will the on-site collections be intended only for asymptomatic individuals or is there an expectation that the on-site collections could collect asymptomatic and symptomatic at the same time?

**ANSWER:** The on-site collections could be for both asymptomatic and symptomatic students. However, it is important to note that the University would not knowingly co-mingle these populations during on-site testing hours.

Are the maximums listed true maximums or could there be the potential for the weekly maximums to increase in the event that public health or testing needs change?

**ANSWER:** There is a potential for these maximums to increase based on CT DPH guidance in response to the state’s positivity rate and other related factors.

What would be the time frame expected to increase collection and testing volume?

**ANSWER:** That will depend upon the urgency of the situation, the Governor’s orders and/or CT DPH guidance.

The RFP mentions swabbing. Does the University prefer nasopharyngeal swabs or anterior nares swabs?

**ANSWER:** Both are acceptable.

Will the University accept saliva-based test collection?

**ANSWER:** Yes, provided that all requirements of the RFP are met.
The RFP mentions the University will provide space for the testing center. Will the space be indoors?

**ANSWER: Yes**

Will the University provide on site parking availability for the test administrator?

**ANSWER: Yes**

Would CCSU be willing to waive the notarization and wet signature requirements on several of the required Forms?

**ANSWER: No**

Would CCSU accept electronic signature and email submission of the proposal?

**ANSWER: The instructions within the RFP document must be followed.**

In connection with the referenced RFP, will the university entertain only proposals covering all aspects contained in “section 2.2 Detailed Specifications”? or, would you accept a proposal that addressed the lab work, test kit provision and results communication tasks, and did not include the onsite test administration?

**ANSWER: All requirements of this RFP must be submitted by the bidder.**

All other terms, conditions and specifications in the RFP remain the same.

**END OF ADDENDUM 1**