Q1: How many agencies were invited to submit proposals?
A1: Five companies where originally invited; however, more companies have expressed interest after seeing the public posting.

Q2: Who will be our primary contact, and who will be the decision maker?
A2: MSU Procurement will be the primary contact for the RFP. Contact information is contained on the RFP coversheet. Selection will be made by a selection committee comprised of Procurement and the sponsoring department.

Q3: Confirming that this is not an MSU-branded site, despite the fact that the RFP is coming through MSU’s procurement channels.
A3: The primary ‘brand’ for the site will be the regional Center for Great Lakes Literacy (CGLL) is a collaborative effort led by Sea Grant educators throughout the Great Lakes watershed. Sea Grant is a university-based program funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and so each state Sea Grant program is connected with a different university in each Great Lakes state. Michigan State University (Michigan Sea Grant) is the lead university in managing this website development process. The CGLL website, while a brand of its own, will need to be positioned for co-branding/cross-branding with collaborative suite of agencies, university and partners that make up the CGLL network.

Q4: Are there any microsite/pieces of content that are not already represented on the current cgll.org site?
A4: Yes, and a couple examples to clarify. The current temporary site does not provide access to the collected set of educational lessons/resources that will need to be curated, searchable, and easily accessible for users – this might be a primary function of the website or accomplished through a microsite. There are currently between 100-200 teacher lessons in our inventory that have been pulled from the current temporary CGLL site; and are being currently reviewed and updated, including digital accessibility, for eventual inclusion in this CGLL website project.

Additionally, multiple projects exist across state programs that could currently or in the future thread into the website. Some of these may simply be bridging with existing sites that ‘live’ within state Sea Grant program website, and in other cases, we hope to offer additional capacity for microsites as a way for curriculum projects to ‘live’ more directly within this CGLL website project. An example of each scenario included here:

1. Integrating project as a microsite: One example of a curriculum project that we would like to thread into CGLL educational resources is the current online Teaching Great Lakes Science curriculum (https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/) managed by Michigan Sea Grant. Given this curriculum has its own identity, it may require a microsite to appropriately incorporate into the CGLL website. As a proof of concept, we are prioritizing integration of this project within the CGLL educational resources structures.

2. Bridging to projects on other sites: The IL-IN Sea Grant “Weather and Climate Explorer” curriculum toolbox (https://iiseagrant.org/education/weather-climate-explorer/). This would NOT be re-designed as a microsite in the CGLL website, but rather included as an example of how CGLL website might align, link, and cross-share these educational resources from one of our state Sea Grant program teams.

If you have any questions, please contact MSU Procurement at (517) 355-0357.
Q5: **Who will be maintaining and updating site content after go-live, and do they have prior experience with content maintenance?**

A5: Current CGLL education team has a ‘website council’ or committee that has been meeting for a couple of years now to think toward a CGLL 2.0 website. This team would be responsible for reviewing and managing website content. The current Michigan Sea Grant website manager (staff from University of Michigan) provides the technical expertise for managing CGLL website updates. The expectation is that a short term maintenance plan (3-4 years) will be included as part of the initial website project contract.

Q6: **Has CGLL, or project leaders, worked through a web development project before?**

A6: Yes – both for the original CGLL website, developed nearly 10 years ago and which has now been taken offline due to accessibility concerns. Our current CGLL education team has a ‘website council’ or committee that has been meeting for a couple of years now to think toward a CGLL 2.0 website; and this team has been responsible for helping to design our current cgll.org site as a temporary site.

Q7: **Does CGLL do any marketing or outreach outside of the website?**

A7: Yes – a regional newsletter; and a variety of in-person conferences and teacher workshops/trainings.

Q8: **Will the microsites be separate subdomains with independent menus, headers, footers, etc?**

A8: This is yet to be determined. Some microsites, if going this route, may request these features (subdomains, independent menus, headers, footers) but not necessarily a foregone conclusion. Expecting this to be determined in the design process. One possible microsite example would include “Teaching Great Lakes Science” curriculum site (https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/).

Q9: **Does Google Analytics meet the needs for evaluation and usage analytics capabilities?**

A9: Possibly. The team would like to be able to track access and downloads of educational resources over set periods of time. Not sure if this can be accomplished through google analytics.

Q10: **Would you be open to the CMS being either Drupal or Wordpress?**

A10: Open to exploring options. The original CGLL website was developed in Wordpres.

Q11: **Is the HECVAT Full or Lite version required?**

A11: The RFP has been revised and a HECVAT will not be required.

Q12: **We would like to inquire about the requirement for experience with NOAA clients. We want to know if the evaluation also considers experience in other relevant fields or sectors.**

A12: Experience with NOAA clients is preferred, but MSU will consider experience in other relevant fields at its sole discretion.

Q13: **We request information regarding the budget range for the project.**

A13: MSU is electing to not share this information at this time.

Q14: **You state that respondents will be evaluated on “examples of design utilized in content and templates.” Does this mean examples of designs we have done for *other* clients?**
A14: Yes, project is seeking design elements that deliver content in appealing and easily accessible formats. Looking for examples of experience in creating web design structures and templates that accomplish these goals.

Q15: You mention that the project may include original logo and design work. Can you please elaborate on what this might be?
A15: Design work will largely focus on the overall website ‘look and feel’. However, considering that original logo and design artwork might be required in a couple of scenarios. First, considering variety of partners and how to co-/cross-brand site to accommodate needs. Second, some specific educational projects that will be integrated into this website may require additional logo or design work to both retain some individual identity while also weaving in seamlessly as part of the CGLL website. Example or test case of this could be the Teaching Great Lakes Science website (https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/) and may require consideration/use of microsites to accomplish. Third, expecting development of some icons to be part of the conversation, as a means of sorting and searching educational lessons more easily.

Q16: Are you looking for a vendor who will do all content porting of lessons, or will the MSU team handle content porting?
A16: Yes, looking for vendor to coordinate with website development team to do the initial content porting of lessons. Seeing a system/structure/process by which CGLL education team can contribute new/revised lessons iteratively into the future.

Q17: Can you please share a project budget including maintenance through 2027?
A17: See A13.

Q18: Will you please share/distribute Q&As from other respondents?
A18: Yes, all questions and answers will be shared.

Q19: I would like to confirm if you are open to proposals from India based agency.
A19: In consideration of Intellectual Property requirement, MSU prefers a US based agency and US based developers; however, companies are free to proposed non-US based agencies or developers.

Q20: What is your anticipated budget for this project?
A20: See A13.

Q21: Should an estimate for a new logo design be included in our quote?
A21: No – the current CGLL logo/colors have been recently updated for accessibility. However, some original logo or design may be necessary for sub-elements of this project in addressing co-/cross-branding with partners, incorporating already ‘branded’ curriculum/lesson packages, and/or icons developed to aid users in searching/accessing content (see also A15).

Q22: What factors will determine if an original logo is needed and when will this final decision be made?
A22: See A21 – anticipating that the website developer/contractor will explore needs with the CGLL website development committee (as well as a cost/benefit tradeoff discussion). Expecting factors of co-branding with partners, integration of existing and already branded curriculum packages, and possible need for icons to enhance user experience. Teaching Great Lakes Science (https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/) will be an example of one curriculum package that is currently branded and separate of CGLL website. Would like to integrate this site...
Q23: Can you provide access to any existing examples of web-based educational resources, lessons, and curricula?
A23: Primary catalog of lessons from original CGLL website include 150+ educational lessons. One example included here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/14RX8Y16TgplbQh_yVO8jVC6VBPxm1DKE/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/14RX8Y16TgplbQh_yVO8jVC6VBPxm1DKE/view?usp=sharing)

Note that these lessons were pulled offline and are going through review, updates and revision, largely to accomplish digital accessibility (see A4). Additional web-based educational resources will include collections of packaged/branded curriculum from various state Sea Grant programs or partners. An example of this type of curriculum includes the Teaching Great Lakes Science online curriculum site ([https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/](https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/)) – acknowledging this might require the use of microsites to accomplish (see also A4).

Q24: 5. Are these microsites that may be developed in the future, or are they microsites that exist today? If the latter, could you provide a full listing of the existing site with URLs?
A24: Teaching Great Lakes Science ([https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/](https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/)) is the only identified example (per A4) of a microsite that might be built into the CGLL website project. This would be a priority for this current CGLL website redesign. The goal is that this serves as a proof of concept of how other Sea Grant programs or partners might integrate packaged/uniquely branded curriculum projects as part of the CGLL website delivery platform. These would be ‘developed in the future’ projects.

Q25: 6. Is this the url of the microsite: [https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/about/great-lakes-literacy/](https://www.michiganseagrant.org/lessons/about/great-lakes-literacy/)
A25: Yes, this is one site that we seek to integrate as part of the CGLL website; anticipating this might be best accomplished as a microsite (see also A4 and A8). A goal of this would also be to model how other education curriculum packages (such as from other state Sea Grant programs) could integrate into CGLL website eventually (see A24).

Q26: Could you describe the current makeup of the staff team that is responsible for content development and maintenance of the current website? Do you anticipate that this team will change in the future?
A26: CGLL Website committee involves several Sea Grant educators from multiple states, representative of a broader regional education team. Working alongside this team is a curriculum team that has been reviewing and updating CGLL education lessons and resources, which will eventually integrate into this website project. Michigan Sea Grant (MSU) provides leadership for these working teams, and leadership for the website design contract/project. Michigan Sea Grant’s communications team, including our website manager, provide communications support and technical website support for our temporary website and eventual website revised through this project. This team structure has been in place for the past year (the website committee for several years) and anticipate these teams will remain in place both through the design process and beyond.

Q27: Is being a Michigan-based business weighted within the scoring of the proposal?
A27: Michigan based business was not included in the weighting of the scoring criteria; consequently, it will not be considered in the evaluation matrix.

Q28: You mention that the new website must support microsites, and include the
development of the microsite for Teaching Great Lakes Literacy. Can you give more details about what this would need to include? (How much content, how many microsites, would it follow the same brand identity, audiences, any specific functionality, etc.)

a. If these microsites already exist, are you able to share URLs?
A28: See A4, A8, and A24

Q29: Can you give us details regarding your current tech stack? (CMS, integrations, etc.)
A29: Not sure exactly what this means, but CMS= Content Management System, which is basically what most vendors would set up for us - and yes, that is what we are currently using via Wordpress.

Q30: Is there a budget and timeline you can share with us to help inform our recommendations?
A30: MSU is electing not to share budget information at this time. Timeline is negotiable, but roughly seeks to develop and launch a fully functional website within 12-18 months. Team training, technical support, and website hosting and maintenance can span over 3-4 year period (grant supporting work through 2027).

Q31: Do you have any user feedback you can share about the current site experience/are there any specific pain points that have been brought to your attention by your users or web admin?
A31: Primary audience using this website is educators. Primarily they are accessing to find professional learning opportunities (typically time-specific trainings or events) and to access educational lessons and resources (noting again that lessons are not available currently in our temporary site). Our team is prioritizing design that enhances the user experience – including friendly and inviting design appeal, easily accessible and navigable, and ability to search and find relevant content. Envision that a more modern, user-friendly organization/search function will be necessary for the educational lessons and content.

Q32: You cite the need for ‘possible logo and design work’. Can you give us more detail around what your needs are in terms of branding?
A32: See A15, A21, and A22

Q33: When you say "should include a system for dynamically organizing an education library, including sorting, filtering, and navigating resources" do you already have preferred terms you’d like to be able to sort/filter by? We will of course bring our own expertise and recommendations based on what we see in your content and site performance, but it is helpful to know what is important to the organization.

a. Are we correct that this library doesn’t exist on the current site?
A33: Yes, the CGLL website team has organized some thoughts and ideas about overall website organizational framework, as well as for prospective search/navigation terms for organizing/searching educational lessons and resources. However, we do anticipate this being an important and iterative process that still needs to be accomplished in the contracted web design process. See also A31

Yes, correct that the current educational lessons/activities (~150 lessons) are not currently available on the temporary CGLL website. These are currently under review and updates, primarily for ensuring web accessibility. This process is being led by the CGLL curriculum committee. See also A23.
Q34: How many resources, lessons, and curricula do you imagine launching with?
A34: Examples of educational programs/training offered are available on the current cgll.org website. These are more time-oriented and added/archived as offered and delivered. The educational lessons/activities/resources serve as more of a permanent library of resources. Currently, we have approximately ~150+ lessons. These are being revised in parallel timeline with web development project, so as to be ready for porting into new site. The expectation is that the new site will have capacity to receive and incorporate new curriculum or lessons that may be developed in the future by CGLL educators or other education partners.

Q35: For “evaluation and usage analytics capabilities” are you looking for the vendor to set up custom tracking or will the regular Google Analytics setup suffice?
A35: See A9

Q36: For “evaluation and usage analytics capabilities” are you looking for the vendor to set up custom tracking or will the regular Google Analytics setup suffice?
A36: See A9

Q36: It looks like you’re using a Google Analytics Morningstar plugin would you like to be migrated and set up on Google Analytics 4?
A36: See also A9. Our temporary CGLL website serves as a baseline for improvement; and so definitely expecting to explore multiple options/opportunities for improving analytics and evaluation of website performance. Most important is understanding how educators (primary users) navigate/find/utilize educational programs and lessons/activities.