

June 22, 2023

Subject: *Request for Qualifications (RFQ) – Aviation, Aerospace, and Unmanned Aerial Systems Industry Assessment and Positioning*

We are pleased to invite submissions in response to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for consulting services to perform an assessment and provide suggestions to help position the Hampton Roads Aviation, Aerospace, and Unmanned Aerial Systems Industry and its assets as an efficient and dynamic system to meet the region's future aviation demands and opportunities.

The Hampton Roads Alliance is publishing this RFQ on behalf of the cities of Newport News, Hampton, and Norfolk, alongside the Norfolk Airport Authority and Peninsula Airport Commission.

Project Overview: The purpose of this project is to assess the current state of the Hampton Roads Aviation Industry and its assets and provide recommendations to position it as an efficient and dynamic system that can meet the region's future aviation demands and opportunities.

Hampton Roads Regional Assets:

The Hampton Roads aviation industry is comprised of airport facilities, aviation companies, and several aviation assets unique to the region. The region is home to seven airports, two of which are Newport News/Williamsburg International and Norfolk International are categorized as commercial service airports by the Virginia Department of Aviation. The region's two commercial service airports are the most well-known and serve as the primary outlets for residential, business, and tourist travel to/from the region. Several general aviation airports serve private jets and other forms of air travel.

Over 40 businesses operate in the aviation industry within Hampton Roads. The industry currently sustains nearly 2,800 employees, most of whom work in airport operations. This employment suggests that the aviation industry not only supports other industries in the economy but also directly contributes to the economy as a source of employment. Furthermore, the region has experienced an industry expansion in recent years as new aviation-related businesses, such as DroneUp, have been established.

The aviation industry of Hampton Roads also benefits from aviation-related research and education] institutions in the region. For example, the NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA, is dedicated to “make revolutionary improvements to aviation.” Further, the Aviation Institute of Maintenance in Virginia Beach, VA, provides quality academic programs for aviation careers. Hampton University also has a Department of Aviation within its school of engineering, which is one of only 40 aviation programs accredited by the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI) and provides students with a direct pathway to airline employment via partnerships with companies, including Delta and United, among others.

Scope of Work: The selected consultant will be responsible for conducting a comprehensive assessment of the Hampton Roads Aviation Industry and its assets. The assessment should include, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

1. Reviewing the current infrastructure, resources, and capabilities of the airports, military airfields, research and education centers, and businesses mentioned above.
2. Analyzing the existing aviation programs and training facilities provided by Hampton University, the Denbigh Aviation Academy, and the Aviation Institute of Maintenance.
3. Evaluating the research and development activities carried out at the NASA Langley Research Center.
4. Assessing the capabilities and impact of Drone-Up in the region.
5. Conduct a thorough analysis of the 41 aviation companies operating in the area, including their areas of expertise, workforce, and contribution to the regional aviation industry.

6. Identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) of the Hampton Roads Aviation Industry and its assets.
7. Identifying key trends, emerging technologies, and best practices in the aviation industry that can be leveraged to enhance the region's position.
8. Providing recommendations and strategies to position the Hampton Roads Aviation Industry and its assets as an efficient and dynamic system to meet the region's future aviation demands and opportunities.

Proposal Submission: Interested consultants are requested to submit their qualifications in response to this RFQ. The submission should include the following information:

1. Company Overview:
 - Company name, address, contact information, and a brief description of your organization.
 - Relevant experience and expertise in conducting similar assessments and strategic positioning projects in the aviation industry.
 - References from previous clients for similar projects.
2. Project Team:
 - Proposed project team structure, including key personnel and their qualifications.
 - Demonstrated experience and expertise of team members in aviation industry analysis, strategic planning, and recommendations.
3. Approach and Methodology:
 - A detailed outline of your proposed approach and methodology for conducting the assessment and providing recommendations.
 - Timeline and milestones for the project.
4. Cost Proposal:
 - A clear and transparent cost proposal for the entire project, including any anticipated expenses.
5. Timeline: The consultant should provide an estimated timeline for completing the assessment and deliverables. Please include the proposed start and end dates, as well as any key milestones or interim deliverables.

6. References

- The references you provide should demonstrate your capabilities, previous successful projects, and the value you have delivered to clients.

Deliverables: The consultant will be required to deliver the following:

1. Comprehensive assessment report:

- A detailed report summarizing the findings of the assessment, including strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.
- Recommendations for improving efficiency, competitiveness, and collaboration within the Hampton Roads Aviation Industry.

2. Strategic positioning plan:

- A strategic plan outlining actionable steps to position the Hampton Roads Aviation Industry as an efficient and dynamic system.
- Recommendations for leveraging regional assets and fostering collaboration among stakeholders.

Proposal Submission:

Please submit your qualifications in electronic format (PDF) no later than July 21, 2023, to Doug Smith at Dougsmith@hamptonroadsalliance.com. Any questions or clarifications regarding this RFQ should also be directed to Doug Smith.

Evaluation:

A steering committee comprised of the City Managers (or designees) of the three respective cities, the airport Executive Directors of the Norfolk Airport Authority and Peninsula Airport Commission, the Executive Director of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, the Executive Director of the Virginia Institute for Spaceflight and Autonomy, and the Hampton Roads Alliance President & CEO will evaluate the submissions.

When evaluating consultants for the assessment and positioning of the Hampton Roads Aviation, Aerospace, and Air Mobility Industry, the following criteria will be considered:

- 1. Relevant Experience: 20%**
 - Demonstrated experience in conducting similar assessments and strategic positioning projects in the aviation, aerospace, and air mobility sectors.
 - Track record of successfully working with industry stakeholders and delivering actionable recommendations.
- 2. Expertise and Qualifications 20%**
 - In-depth knowledge of the aviation, aerospace, and air mobility industry, including current trends, emerging technologies, and best practices.
 - Familiarity with regulatory frameworks, safety protocols, and industry standards in the aviation and aerospace sectors.
 - Understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities specific to the Hampton Roads region.
 - Qualifications and expertise of the project team members, including their relevant experience in aviation, aerospace, and air mobility projects.
 - Expertise in areas such as market analysis, infrastructure planning, workforce development, technology integration, and strategic planning.
 - Availability and commitment of key personnel to dedicate the necessary time and resources to the project.
- 3. Proposed Approach and Methodology: 10%**
 - Clear and comprehensive description of the consultant's approach to conducting the assessment and providing suggestions.
 - Methodology that incorporates data analysis, stakeholder consultations, benchmarking, and other relevant research techniques.
 - Demonstrated ability to customize the approach to meet the specific needs and objectives of the project.
- 4. References: 10%**
 - Past client references for similar projects, highlighting successful outcomes and client satisfaction.

- Testimonials or feedback from previous clients attesting to the consultant's professionalism, reliability, and quality of work.

5. Cost Proposal: 20%

- Clear and transparent cost breakdown, including details of professional fees, expenses, and any other associated costs.
- Reasonableness of the proposed cost in relation to the scope of work, deliverables, and anticipated project outcomes.

6. Innovation and Creativity: 10%

- Ability to bring innovative and creative ideas to enhance the region's aviation, aerospace, and air mobility sector.
- Demonstration of forward-thinking approaches and strategies that can position the Hampton Roads region as a leader in the industry.

7. Communication and Collaboration: 10%

- Strong communication skills, including the ability to effectively communicate complex concepts and recommendations to diverse stakeholders.
- Willingness and capability to collaborate with regional authorities, industry leaders, educational institutions, and other relevant stakeholders throughout the project.