PennState
Physical Plant

Office of Physical Plant
Physical Plant Building
University Park, PA 16802-1118

DATE: June 6, 2018

SUBJECT: **Request for Letters of Interest – Architecture/Engineering (A/E) Team Selection**
James Building Demolition and Replacement
State College, PA

TO: Architectural Firms

The Pennsylvania State University is excited to begin the Architecture-Engineering Team Selection process for the James Building Demolition and Replacement project. The project site is located in Downtown State College at 121-123 S. Burrowes St. on University-owned property. The **$52.8M (total project cost) project** will support the Invent Penn State initiative by developing a multi-use Innovation, Making and Learning facility that will become the cornerstone of our entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The existing 29,910 square foot James Building was completed in 1920 and currently houses the Daily Collegian operations, administrative offices of the College of Communications, and the College's Media Effects Research Labs (MERL), all of which will relocate elsewhere. The project will include demolition and hazardous abatement of the existing building. The University has conceived of this project as a full building replacement, as the existing building and infrastructure are at the end of their useful life. The replacement building is currently envisioned to maximize the allowable build out of the current ~90 foot by ~190 foot site. Additionally, onsite parking will be provided as a part of this project, as required by zoning.

Due to the prominence and visibility of the location, thorough site analysis and design options will be required by the successful team, to establish options for entry sequence, building orientation/ massing, campus connections, and aesthetic impact. The replacement building will support new occupants including an existing University-sponsored "Launch-Box 2.0" program with additional provisions to develop a state-of-the-art Makerspace/Entrepreneurial Hub that contains workshops, collaboration & lecture areas designed to facilitate innovation through peer learning and knowledge sharing.

The goals of the project include the following:

- Realize the vision and goals of the University Leadership in developing a multi-use Innovation and Learning facility that would become the cornerstone of our University entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Create a new building in State College that will help create a "hub" of activity and enhance the existing aesthetic and character of the urban site and tie into downtown at the adjacent UP Campus.
- Create a well-designed, unique, destination building that functions as a center for innovation and knowledge sharing
- Serve community businesses and start-ups as well as PSU students
- In keeping with our commitment to environmental sustainability, this facility will be a high performance building and will, at a minimum, attain LEED Certification.
- Create flexible/adaptable building, including modern office space, learning areas, and collaboration spaces in support of evolving educational pedagogies, technologies, and research initiatives
- Efficiency. Delivering a highly space efficient building is critical to the success of this project as the completed program expects to achieve up to a 65% efficiency. We are seeking architecture and programming consultants that can drive our decision making on the optimal grossing factor and also seek ways to find efficiencies in the planning and design of the completed facility.
- Replace deteriorated building, infrastructure systems, including the site utility services

The University has completed a strawman program, which will be shared in the next phase of the selection process. The program will consist of approximately 99,000 to 119,000 gross square feet, made up of: 29,000 GSF Makerspace/Innovation space; 6,000 GSF Retail; and upper levels of at least 65,000 GSF of flexible/adaptable floor plates that can support office, learning activity spaces, and other spaces. The first step of the final selected A/E Team will be the creation of a detailed program document, followed by the typical steps PSU project. Given the prominence of the facility and high aspirations, it's critical that the selected design team have proven expertise programming and designing similar projects, especially makerspaces, innovation spaces, and entrepreneurial/accelerator environments.

We anticipate the Architect-Engineer contract award following the team selection at the **September 2018** Board of Trustee meeting. We anticipate final plan approval by **September 2019** with construction to start in **November 2019**, and the potential for an early demolition as appropriate. The expected construction completion date is **December 2020**. The project will be executed with a Construction Manager at Risk.

Site tours are not necessary at this step in the selection process, as this can overwhelm the occupants. We will arrange for scheduled visits with the long-listed teams.

If your firm is interested in pursuing this project, please submit the following within your Letter of Interest:

1. A brief statement detailing your firm's unique qualifications for programming and designing facilities of a similar type, and size – including makerspaces, student entrepreneurial/ accelerator spaces and flexible floor plates. Convey your firm's expertise programming, planning, designing and delivering buildings with similar programs.
2. Your firm's vision of what, beyond purely functional issues, constitutes the essence of this type of facility. To indicate to the Screening Committee your understanding of the uniqueness of this project, discuss some of the key issues that are important in the design of a project of this type.
3. Within your document, include a sampling of your previous relevant experience and illustrative examples representative of your architectural designs.

Please submit to my office eleven (11) hard copies of your response by **Noon on 6/25/2018** and please limit your submission to five (5) total, single-sided, 8-1/2 x 11 pages. If a cover letter is included, it must be within the five (5) pages. Send a PDF of the submission electronically to gak21@psu.edu and smw139@psu.edu by the submission deadline. Include the name and email address of your team's main contact for this project within the submission. Contact myself or Sean Walker (smw139@psu.edu or 814-867-5085) with any questions.

The University will use a qualifications-based selection process for selecting the A/E team. The Screening Committee will select a long-list of firms from the respondents to this letter. The long-list and a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be posted to this website by **7/6/2018**. Proposals will be due in my office at **Noon on 7/27/2018**. Three firms will be chosen from the RFP respondents and interviewed on **8/30/2018**. The results will be announced at the Board of Trustees meeting on **9/14/2018** and posted to this website.

Greg Kufner, AIA, NCARB

University Architect
The Pennsylvania State University
206 Physical Plant Building, University Park, PA 16802
Phone: 814-865-4402 | Email: gak21@psu.edu

CC: Screening Committee