

REAPS RFP - Questions and Responses

1. Scope boundaries:

Please confirm the exact functional and organizational boundaries for REAPS across SUI, ISU, and UNI. Are auxiliaries, athletics, research administration, extension, online education, continuing education, foundations, real estate, facilities, IT, finance, HR, procurement, student services, and academic administration all in scope? For University of Iowa Health Care, which centralized SUI administrative functions are in scope versus excluded clinical operations?

RESPONSE:

All functional and organizational areas are within scope for SUI, ISU, and UNI. Clinical operations of the University of Iowa Health Care system—defined as how care is delivered—are excluded from the scope of this work. Administrative functions—defined as how the system is supported, governed, and sustained—are included.

2. TIER baseline and non-duplication:

Can the Board provide a complete inventory of prior TIER recommendations, actions implemented, estimated versus realized savings, deferred recommendations, current owners, and remaining gaps? Should REAPS explicitly validate TIER outcomes, or should it only pursue incremental opportunities outside the TIER portfolio?

RESPONSE:

TIER recommendations are available at the website link included in the RFP:
<https://www.iowaregents.edu/plans-and-policies/tier>

There is no expectation that this work will validate TIER outcomes. As stated in the RFP, “The intent of REAPS is not to duplicate the efforts of TIER but to extend and deepen those initiatives into new or under-optimized areas.” No areas addressed by TIER are explicitly excluded.

3. Financial target and prioritization logic:

Does the Board have a target range for annual recurring savings, annual recurring revenue enhancement, one-time implementation investment, payback period, or acceptable ROI? Should opportunities be prioritized by net financial impact, speed to value, political feasibility, student/faculty impact, implementation risk, or strategic alignment?

RESPONSE:

The committee has established a preliminary target of \$35 million over three years; however, bidders are expected to propose and refine a more detailed financial target as part of their approach. The prioritization methodology is at the discretion of the bidder and should be clearly defined within the proposal.

4. Revenue enhancement boundaries:

What revenue categories are acceptable beyond state appropriations, tuition, and federal grant funding? For example, should the study evaluate online programs, noncredit credentials, employer-paid education, corporate training, international enrollment, out-of-state enrollment, differential pricing, summer utilization, IP/commercialization, auxiliaries, real estate, philanthropic alignment, public-private partnerships, or shared systemwide commercialization opportunities?

RESPONSE:

All revenue categories are within scope for this work.

5. Data access and normalization:

What financial, HR, staffing, procurement, enrollment, course, program economics, space, IT, grant, auxiliary, and service-level data will be available to the consultant, at what level of detail, and by what date? Is there a common chart of accounts and data dictionary across the three universities, or should the consultant assume material normalization work is required?

RESPONSE:

The Board will ensure that requested university data is made available to the selected consultant. Definitions and data dictionaries, including charts of accounts where applicable, will also be provided to support interpretation and analysis.

6. Peer benchmarking expectations:

What peer groups should be used for benchmarking: Big Ten, AAU, land-grant institutions, AACSC institutions, state systems, institution-specific peers, or functional peers? Will the Board accept proprietary or anonymized benchmark data where named peer-level data cannot be disclosed?

RESPONSE:

The following peer groups are identified for each of the three universities, but this list can be expanded based on the professional opinion of the selected consultant.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA	IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY	UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
MINNESOTA	MICHIGAN STATE	COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
MICHIGAN	VIRGINIA TECH	MINNESOTA, DULUTH
ILLINOIS	MISSOURI	EASTERN ILLINOIS
MICHIGAN STATE	OREGON STATE	CENTRAL CONNECTICUT
ARIZONA	OKLAHOMA STATE	COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
OHIO STATE	COLORADO STATE	INDIANA STATE
WISCONSIN	KANSAS STATE	MINNESOTA STATE-MANKATO
INDIANA	IOWA STATE	WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE
IOWA	NEBRASKA	NORTHERN IOWA
UTAH	PURDUE	WESTERN WASHINGTON
NORTH CAROLINA	NORTH CAROLINA STATE	WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER

7. Decision rights and implementation authority:

Which recommendations can the Board mandate, which require institutional approval, and which require legislative, collective bargaining, shared governance, or accreditor engagement? How much appetite exists for cross-institution standardization, shared services, outsourcing, organizational redesign, technology consolidation, or policy changes that materially alter local campus autonomy?

RESPONSE:

Iowa Code Chapter 262 defines the role and authority of the Iowa Board of Regents. The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder.

8. Stakeholder engagement and change management:

Which constituencies must be engaged directly: Regents, presidents, CFOs, provosts, deans, faculty senate, staff councils, students, unions, institutional research, IT, HR, finance, procurement, and campus communications? What level of transparency does the Board expect during the work versus after recommendations are ready for Board action?

RESPONSE:

The decision on who to engage directly is the decision of the bidder. The proposal should specifically state the bidders' plan for engagement. As the RFP document states, "considerable time must be spent on communications with the REAPS Committee." There is also an expectation that the consultant will "update the Board at their scheduled meetings with regular activity reports relevant to the agreed upon scope of work."

9. Deliverable depth and implementation role:

Does the Board want a diagnostic report with business cases, or an implementation-ready roadmap with owners, timelines, policy changes, KPIs, governance model, risk register, benefits-realization dashboard, and PMO support? Should the selected firm support implementation after the February 2027 Board presentation and final report?

RESPONSE:

The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder. There is no expectation of selected firm support after the February 2027 Board presentation and final report.

10. Performance-based pricing and value attribution:

If the Board is open to value-sharing or performance-based pricing, how will "realized financial outcome" be defined, measured, validated, and attributed? Specifically, how should the contract treat avoided costs, recurring savings, new revenue net of cannibalization, implementation costs, baseline periods, Board-controlled versus institution-controlled actions, and benefits that materialize after the contract period?

RESPONSE:

The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing

proposed strategies from each bidder. Any proposal focusing on value-sharing or performance-based pricing should propose how these elements will be addressed.

11. The TIER initiative resulted in significant system-wide changes. Are there certain functional areas to be explicitly excluded from the REAPS scope based on implementation of TIER opportunities?

RESPONSE:

As stated in the RFP, “The intent of REAPS is not to duplicate the efforts of TIER but to extend and deepen those initiatives into new or under-optimized areas.” Nothing covered in TIER is explicitly excluded.

12. Are you able to share the two representatives from each university that will serve on the REAPS Committee (their roles / functional areas are sufficient)? Should the REAPS Committee be treated as the working group for the engagement or could we create specific working groups with a narrowly focused charge to feed into the REAPS Committee?

RESPONSE:

REAP Team		
Iowa State University	Jason Keith	SVP and Provost
	Sean Reeder	SVP Ops and Finance
University of Iowa	Laura McLeran	AVP Admin Affairs & Sr Advisor to President
	Barry Thomas	Associate Provost for Faculty and Strategic Operations
University of Northern Iowa	Michael Hager	VP Facilities and Operations
	Oksana Grybowych Hafermann	Chief of Staff

The selected consultant will be given latitude into how they would like to set up their working groups, but the REAPS committee and the Board will be the initial point of contact.

13. We note that the focus of revenue enhancement efforts should be “outside the normal funding sources of state appropriations, tuition, and federal grant funding.” Therefore, we understand that opportunities to enhance tuition revenue from improvements to core or “traditional” academic offerings and enrollment strategy are out of scope. Can you confirm we are interpreting this correctly? Would the Board of Regents consider other potential opportunities that drive tuition revenue from net new sources and audiences as in-scope?

RESPONSE:

The Board would consider other potential opportunities that drive tuition revenue from net new sources and audiences as in-scope.

14.) Please confirm the expected start and end dates for on-site campus visits at each Regent institution.

RESPONSE:

The timing of the onsite visits is at the discretion of the selected consultant with coordination through the REAPS committee. It is anticipated that the starting date of this contract would be approximately July 15, 2026, with the requirement that the selected consultants present their cumulative findings to the Board at the February 24-25, 2027, meeting.

15.) Please clarify whether the Board has predefined focus areas (e.g., administrative functions, auxiliary services, academics) that should receive priority during the REAPS review.

RESPONSE:

There are no predefined or priority focus areas.

16.) Please confirm the expected level of engagement and time commitment from institutional leadership, faculty, and staff during interviews and workshops.

RESPONSE:

The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder. The proposal should define the expected level of engagement and time commitment needed from institutional leadership, faculty, and staff during this work. The REAPS committee will support coordination and scheduling to ensure participation is sufficient and provides meaningful engagement without overburdening participant's time.

17.) Please clarify whether the Board will provide access to existing data sets (financial, staffing, operational) or expects the consultant to independently collect and normalize this information.

RESPONSE:

The Board will ensure any data collected by the university's and requested will be available for the selected consultant. Definitions and dictionaries of charts of accounts and data will be provided for this data.

18.) Please confirm whether recommendations may include policy or governance changes at the Board level, in addition to institutional-level actions.

RESPONSE:

Recommendations provided may include policy or governance changes at the Board level.

19.) Please clarify expectations for benchmarking comparisons, including whether the Board has preferred peer institutions or systems for comparison.

RESPONSE:

The RFP states “The Consultant will include any benchmarking comparisons that may be available with comparable public universities on administrative staffing, costs, functional performance, and resource optimization. “The Board will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder.

The following peer groups are identified for each of the three universities, but this list can be expanded based on the professional opinion of the selected consultant.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA	IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY	UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
MINNESOTA	MICHIGAN STATE	COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
MICHIGAN	VIRGINIA TECH	MINNESOTA, DULUTH
ILLINOIS	MISSOURI	EASTERN ILLINOIS
MICHIGAN STATE	OREGON STATE	CENTRAL CONNECTICUT
ARIZONA	OKLAHOMA STATE	COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
OHIO STATE	COLORADO STATE	INDIANA STATE
WISCONSIN	KANSAS STATE	MINNESOTA STATE-MANKATO
INDIANA	IOWA STATE	WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE
IOWA	NEBRASKA	NORTHERN IOWA
UTAH	PURDUE	WESTERN WASHINGTON
NORTH CAROLINA	NORTH CAROLINA STATE	WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER

20.) Please confirm whether interim deliverables or draft findings are expected prior to the February 24–25, 2027 Board presentation.

RESPONSE:

The selected consultant will present cumulative findings at the Board meeting on February 24–25, 2027. While there is no formal requirement for interim deliverables or draft reports, the RFP emphasizes the need for ongoing communication, including regular activity updates to the Board and significant engagement with the REAPS Committee.

Accordingly, the consultant is expected to maintain close and frequent coordination with the REAPS Committee and Board staff to ensure continual alignment with project scope and objectives. This includes providing regular draft, deliberative written updates throughout the engagement—and upon request—so that there is consistent visibility into progress, areas of focus, emerging insights, and the development of recommendations.

21.) Please confirm whether alternative pricing models (e.g., performance-based or value-sharing) may be proposed alongside a traditional time-and-materials not-to-exceed structure.

RESPONSE:

The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder. Any proposal focusing on value-sharing or performance-based pricing should propose how these elements will be addressed.

22.) Will the agency use artificial intelligence to analyze or evaluate any information companies submit in response to this solicitation? If so, please specify what information, the tool to be used, and how it will be evaluated.

RESPONSE:

The review committee will not use artificial intelligence to analyze the RFP submissions.

23.) Can the Board provide a summary of TIER implementation outcomes, including which of the original business cases were fully implemented, partially implemented, or deferred?

RESPONSE:

TIER recommendations are available at the website link included in the RFP, along with updates about the implementation of the recommendations. The link is below.

<https://www.iowaregents.edu/plans-and-policies/tier>

24.) The RFP notes that UIHC clinical operations are out of scope but that certain centralized administrative operations within SUI that support UIHC are in scope. Can the Board provide additional guidance on how to distinguish in-scope centralized administrative functions from out-of-scope clinical operations?

RESPONSE:

Clinical operations of the University of Iowa Health Care system—defined as how care is delivered—are excluded from the scope of this work. Administrative functions—defined as how the system is supported, governed, and sustained—are included.

25.) Does the Board have a preferred or expected range of revenue enhancement categories to be explored?

RESPONSE:

The Board would consider any potential opportunities that drive revenue from new or existing sources as in-scope.

26.) What institutional data will be made available to the selected firm (e.g., financial statements, budget detail, HR/staffing data, procurement spend data, enrollment analytics), and what is the expected timeline for data provision after contract start?

RESPONSE:

The Board will ensure any data collected by the university's and requested will be available for the selected consultant. Definitions and dictionaries of charts of accounts and data will be provided for this data. This information will be provided within a reasonable time frame upon the request.

27.) Can the Board describe the expected level and format of engagement with campus stakeholders (e.g., faculty senate, staff councils, student government) beyond the REAPS Committee? Are there any stakeholder groups that the selected firm should plan to engage directly?

RESPONSE:

The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder. The proposal should define the expected level of engagement and time commitment needed from institutional leadership, faculty, staff, or any other groups during this work. The REAPS committee will support coordination and scheduling to ensure participation is sufficient and provides meaningful engagement without overburdening participant's time.

28.) The RFP references action plans with metrics and a savings tracking methodology. Does the Board expect the selected firm to support implementation of recommendations beyond the final report, or is the scope limited to the diagnostic and action plan through the February 2027 Board presentation?

RESPONSE:

The scope is limited to the requirements in the current RFP. There is no expectation of selected firm support after the February 2027 Board presentation and final report.

29.) The RFP encourages performance-based and value-sharing pricing models. Can the Board provide additional guidance on how "realized financial outcomes" would be measured and over what time horizon for purposes of value-sharing arrangements?

RESPONSE:

The Board is seeking proposals from qualified consultants and will be open to hearing proposed strategies from each bidder. Any proposal focusing on value-sharing or performance-based pricing should propose how these elements will be addressed.

30.) Are there any active cost efficiency or revenue enhancement initiatives currently underway at the individual universities (beyond TIER) that the selected firm should be aware of and coordinate with?

RESPONSE:

Each university is consistently researching, exploring, and implementing continuous improvement strategies. This information can be shared with the selected consultant upon the implementation of this work.

31.) Can the Board provide the schedule of regular Board meetings between the anticipated contract start date (July 15, 2026) and the final presentation (February 24–25, 2027)?

RESPONSE:

2026

Date	Type	Venue
February 25-26	Mid-Year Evaluations/Committees/Board Meeting	University of Iowa
April 22-23	Committees/Board Meeting	Iowa State University
June 15-16	Committees/Board Meeting	University of Iowa
July 29	Annual Evaluations/Board Meeting	Board of Regents Office
September 16-17	Committees/Board Meeting	University of Northern Iowa
November 11-12	Committees/Board Meeting	Iowa State University

2027

Date	Type	Venue
February 24-25	Mid-Year Evaluations/Committees/Board Meeting	University of Iowa

32.) Will the Board share the evaluation criteria and/or weighting used to assess proposals?

RESPONSE:

The review committee will review and evaluate qualifications, experience, fee structure, and proposal documentation. One or more proposals will be selected for a final presentation to be held on June 25, 2026.

33.) Are there change management lessons learned from the prior TIER initiative, including areas of stakeholder resistance or adoption challenges, that should inform our engagement and communications approach for REAPS?

RESPONSE:

Staff remain at each of the universities and within the Board office that have experience of working on the TIER initiative. That information can be provided to the selected consultant at the beginning of the project if requested.

34.) Can the Board provide additional expectations regarding the requested communications plan, including desired stakeholder engagement approach, key audiences, and anticipated level of internal change management messaging throughout the engagement?

RESPONSE:

The decision on who to engage directly is the decision of the bidder. The proposal should specifically state the bidders' plan for communication and engagement. As the RFP document states, "considerable time must be spent on communications with the REAPS Committee." There is also an expectation that the consultant will "update the Board at their scheduled meetings with regular activity reports relevant to the agreed upon scope of work." Internal change management messaging will be the responsibility of the universities and the Board.

35.) Beyond identifying cost efficiencies and revenue opportunities, how does the Board define success for the REAPS initiative (e.g., recommendation adoption, implementation readiness, realized financial outcomes, stakeholder alignment)?

RESPONSE:

We cannot speak for the Board, but the Board office staff would define success for the REAPS initiative as maximizing the efficient use of existing resources, identifying and implementing cost efficiencies, and pursuing new revenue opportunities—resulting in streamlined operations, reduced administrative costs, and increased overall cost effectiveness across all Regent institutions.