Towards Resiliency: An overview of National Resources avaiLable to Small BUsInesses

project Proposal

Prepared for: DR. MICHELLE L. KAARST-BROWN, CLIENT REPRESENTATIVE, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Prepared by: Enterprise IT Consultation (EITC) TEAM 4

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| **Vedika Shenoy**  Email: [veshenoy@syr.edu](mailto:veshenoy@syr.edu)  Business Analyst | **Aditi Shrivastava**  Email: adshriva@syr.edu  Data Analyst |
|  |  |
| **Russell Stein**  Email: rustein@syr.edu  IT Security Specialist | **Andrew Mauch**  Email: akmauch@syr.edu  Project Manager |

Project Lead: Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown, Ph.D. (mlbrow03@syr.edu)

V. 6 Dated: October 21, 2019

**To:** Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown at Syracuse University

**Prepared by** Enterprise IT Consultants (EITC) Team 4

**Date:**10/21/2019

**Subject:** Towards resiliency: An overview of national resources available to small businesses - Project Proposal.

This proposal describes EITC Team 4’s understanding of the goal of the project. It defines our proposed approach, the deliverables to be generated and any assumptions that we have made in preparation of the proposal or work plan to produce the deliverables.

The purpose of this document is to confirm (1) our understanding of the proposed project, (2) accuracy of information presented here and (3) agreed upon deliverables so that we may proceed further. This proposal is based on the information gained from the client representative, Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst Brown, Syracuse University. Due to the client’s tight time-line, approval of this document via email is requested from the client by end of day October 21, 2019, in order for our consulting team to move forward with this project.

# Background

There are several small businesses in Syracuse who face various risks constantly. Due to lack of awareness of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) practices among these smaller businesses, there may be poor response in cases of severe risks. Many small businesses are not prepared to deal with risk events and so struggle to recovery, which may even lead to catastrophic failures in these businesses.

Syracuse University has long been teaching ERM or other risk courses at the iSchool and in other schools, under various departments and contexts. They have proposed to develop an Advanced ERM course that will provide student developed and led workshops directed at small businesses in the Syracuse area. The goal is to increase their ERM awareness, consideration of business preparedness and continuity, and ultimately, increase overall community resiliency. The future course (as yet undeveloped) will hopefully generate data for research and case examples for a special textbook.

The project proposal presented here is a foundation project to help develop materials and insights for the new course, but also that may serve as resources to be shared with student and small business participants.

# Project Objectives and success criteria

Based on the information provided by Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst Brown, Syracuse University on October 13, 2019 and the initial client meeting with Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst Brown on October 15, 2019, our consulting team has identified several key project objectives. The EITC team 4 has been asked to develop a well-researched list of national resources that are available to small businesses to assist them with increasing awareness of ERM practices, support better preparedness planning, and aid in recovery after a crisis. Relevant information could supplement later inter-disciplinary course development. In summary,

* The project will identify relevant national level resources of value to small businesses in Syracuse and Central New York (CNY) region.
* These resources will provide foundational data to aid in the design and development of a new inter-disciplinary course that would engage the students and faculties across campus.

In the interest of clear communication and mutual understanding, we have enumerated in this section the priorities and success criteria for this engagement. As identified, critical success criteria include the following:

* Sources and procedures should be specific to small businesses.
* Resources may cover the range of the ERM cycle, including risk identification, how to manage risks, preparedness planning, and disaster recovery.
* The focus is on national level resources such as those from .gov, the Small Business Administration (SBA), and other national associations or states other than New York State.
* Resources should focus on smaller enterprises but should not be industry specific so as to address the multi-sector nature of local small businesses and the inter-disciplinary nature of the new Advanced ERM course.
* Ideally, these materials will be suitable for sharing in the new Advanced ERM course.
* The gathered information should contain resources that can accessed and retrieved by the small businesses with minimum or no cost.
* Deliverables will be in a format that enables re-use by the client.
* The engagement will be completed, and all documentation provided to the client or client representatives by Tuesday, November 19, 2019, with any revisions or clarifications provided no later than Tuesday, December 3, 2019.

# Project Stakeholders

This project will involve or impacts the following stakeholders:

* Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown, client representative and Team Lead, Syracuse University
* The EITC Team 4 (names and contract information on cover of this proposal), including Project Lead, Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown
* The iSchool and Syracuse University
* Small businesses in Syracuse and CNY
* The broader Syracuse and CNY community
* Future instructors of the proposed new Advanced ERM course
* Doctoral students interested in working on risk and smaller businesses

The EITC Team 4 is composed of undergraduate and graduate students from the Enterprise IT Consultation course at the School of Information Studies (iSchool) at Syracuse University. The professor of the EITC course, Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown, serves as the project lead for the team, and will review all team deliverables prior to distribution to the client.

# Our Approach

The project requests include assessing what national resources are available to small businesses. The project does not include detailed implementation plans or specific vendor selection, although national resources available for increasing awareness of ERM will be considered. This schedule is conditional on approval of the proposal by end-of-day October 21, 2019.

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| **Work Breakdown Structure with Anticipated Dates:** | |
| **Milestone Tasks** | **Estimated Completion Date** |
| Initial and weekly follow-up meetings with client representative to review status, discussion for prioritization of findings, and addressing questions | 10/18/2019 – 11/19/2019 |
| Identification of potential sources of relevant information and conducting complete search for major national sources available to smaller businesses | 10/22/2019 – 10/31/2019 |
| Prioritization of resources gathered according to best quality of the resources | 11/01/2019 – 11/05/2019 |
| Synthesis of resources gathered along with the viability and applicability of these resources for small businesses | 11/06/2019 – 11/09/2019 |
| Finalization of relevant and most useful resources | 11/10/2019 – 11/14/2019 |
| Preparation of an annotated bibliography of sources with summary and the value of the sources | 11/15/2019 – 11/18/2019 |
| Delivery of digital copies in PDFs, or MS Word format in flash drive along with a PDF copy of all source documents referenced in annotated bibliography and URLs for relevant websites | 11/19/2019 |
| Delivery of a physical binder with hard copies of the documents for the client | 11/19/2019 |
| A PPT presentation and a reusable slide deck to the client with informative notes will be provided along with Q&A session to address any final doubts | 11/19/2019 |
| Provide the client with suggestions for next steps | 11/19/2019 |
| Final revisions to the materials and delivery of revised materials to client followed by project closure | 12/03/2019 |

Sources for research will come from publicly available online sources as well as private or subscription databases available to EITC through Syracuse University. No interviews will be conducted, other than clarification meetings with the client or client team. Our team will use a structured procedure to research and collect national resources available for small businesses from national government sites to identify the existing resources and whether they need to be paid for access or are free of cost. Other data sources will be drawn upon as available, such as national level industry documents. We will also look for national resources that demonstrate best practice examples of companies within and outside Syracuse that have been successful in working with and implementing ERM strategies.

An advantage of engaging Enterprise IT Consultation Teams is that we bring a unique and diversely experienced staff, along with having resources of Syracuse University. We are highly motivated to serve our clients in an effective and efficient way.

# Deliverables

Deliverables include the following four items:

* **An Annotated PowerPoint Presentation**: All the consultants of Team 4 will deliver a presentation with Q&A session on November 19, 2019 at a time to be set between 2:00 pm to 4:45 pm EST. In addition to the client sponsor or contacts, any member of the client team or their representatives is invited to join us in Syracuse, based on their availability.
* **PowerPoint Slide Deck**: The PowerPoint slide deck will be provided for future reuse by the client and will include additional details in the notes section for each slide.
* **Annotated Bibliography**: The annotated bibliography will provide citations, a brief summary, and explanation of the value of sources used.
* **Digital and Hard Copies of Sources Documents**: A binder will be provided with hard copies of all deliverables and source documents. In addition. a flash drive will be provided (and an emailed zip file) with all deliverables in MS Word or PPT format, along with PDF files of all source documents referenced in in the annotated bibliography. Exceptions include web sites, where only a URL will be provided.

# Assumptions

Below is a list of assumptions made during the development of this project proposal and its related work plan.

**Client Participation:** Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown has agreed to serve as Client Representative for the larger project and Project Sponsor to oversee the direction of this particular sub-project. It is our understanding that other members of the client team may also participate. It is expected Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown or her designate will,

* Attend the initial meeting and Q&A session to discuss the projects objectives and client team needs (October 15, 2019 completed).
* Read over, comment on, and clarify the proposal document to confirm the goals of the project and/or to discuss other deliverables.
* Be available to meet regularly and/or to respond to questions within 24-36 hours, via either email, Skype/Zoom or telephone. (Examples of such questions include, but are not limited to, confirming Team 4’s interpretations of some of the publicly available or proprietary information shared by client or resources identified in execution of the project).
* Provide one or more representatives to attend the final presentation on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at a time to be set between 2:00 pm to 4:45 pm EST in Syracuse, NY.

The client team is not constrained to the responsibilities above, and we encourage active engagement with all client members throughout the project.

**Single Assignment**: The team assigned to this project is only available for this single project. Some team members may remain on the SU campus for another year or two and can be contacted separately for ongoing “for fee” or internship work with the client or their representatives.

**Quality Management:** All deliverables, tasks, and interactions performed by Team 4, will be performed to the highest standards. However, there may be some variation due to team composition, experience, and knowledge levels. Overall, the goal is a high quality research analysis that adds value to the client. To implement quality assurance checks, our efforts will be monitored by our project lead, Dr. Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown.

**Fee Structure:** This is a *pro bono* project, and as such, there will be no exchange of fees between the client and the EITC project team. Given the *pro bono* nature of the project, the client has agreed to provide a Certificate of Completion as confirmation of work performed. We estimate this project would normally involve between 100 and 140 billable hours.

**Post-Engagement Projects**: There may be follow-up projects that develop from the products of this consulting project, leading to assignments suitable for future Enterprise IT Consultation teams, however, a different team would be involved. You may contact the future team lead for discussion about future opportunities with EITC.

**Proprietary Information**: Any private material received from the client as part of this project will be treated as confidential to the client and/or their representatives, will be returned at the end of the engagement at the client’s request, and will not be shared outside of this project. Team members and the Team Lead retain the right to use anonymized portions of materials developed for the client in other non-competitive settings (e.g. as examples of projects with potential clients or future student teams.)

# Accepting the Proposal and Confirming Approval to Proceed with Project:

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| **Name** | **Role** | **Email** | **Approval Date** | **Signature** |
| Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown | Client Representative | mlbrown03@syr.edu |  |  |
| Vedika Shenoy | Business Analytics Consultant | veshenoy@syr.edu |  |  |
| Aditi Shrivastava | Data Analytics Consultant | adshriva@syr.edu |  |  |
| Andrew Mauch | Project Management Consultant | akmauch@syr.edu |  |  |
| Russell Stein | IT Security Consultant | rustein@syr.edu |  |  |

*This section will be updated (Date sent, sender name, email address), and a final copy of the approved project proposal will be re-distributed.*