Public Works and Government Services Canada

Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada

Title - Sujet HISS RFP	

Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation EN869-111927/C	**Amendment No. - N° modif.** 002

Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client 20111927	**Date** 2012-03-22

GETS Reference No. - N° de référence de SEAG
PW-$$XL-112-23713

File No. - N° de dossier 112xl.EN869-111927	**CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME**

Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin at - à **02:00 PM** on - le **2012-04-03**	**Time Zone Fuseau horaire** Eastern Daylight Saving Time EDT

F.O.B. - F.A.B.
Plant-Usine: ☐ Destination: ☐ Other-Autre: ☐

Address Enquiries to: - Adresser toutes questions à: Sanford, Phil	**Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur** 112xl

Telephone No. - N° de téléphone (819) 956-3882 ( )	**FAX No. - N° de FAX** (819) 953-3703

Destination - of Goods, Services, and Construction:
Destination - des biens, services et construction:

RETURN BIDS TO:
RETOURNER LES SOUMISSIONS À:
Bid Receiving - PWGSC / Réception des soumissions - TPSGC
Place du Portage, Phase III
Core 0A1/Noyau 0A1
11 Laurier St.,/11, rue Laurier
Gatineau
Québec
K1A 0S5
Bid Fax: (819) 997-9776

SOLICITATION AMENDMENT
MODIFICATION DE L'INVITATION

The referenced document is hereby revised; unless otherwise indicated, all other terms and conditions of the Solicitation remain the same.

Ce document est par la présente révisé; sauf indication contraire, les modalités de l'invitation demeurent les mêmes.

Comments - Commentaires

Vendor/Firm Name and Address
Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur

Issuing Office - Bureau de distribution
Shared Systems Division (XL)/Division des systèmes partagés (XL)
4C1, Place du Portage Phase III
11 Laurier St./11, rue Laurier
Gatineau
Québec
K1A 0S5

Instructions: See Herein

Instructions: Voir aux présentes

Delivery Required - Livraison exigée	**Delivery Offered - Livraison proposée**
Vendor/Firm Name and Address **Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur**	
Telephone No. - N° de téléphone **Facsimile No. - N° de télécopieur**	
Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm (type or print) **Nom et titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/ de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie)**	
Signature	**Date**

Canada

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BID SOLICITATION

FOR A HOSTED INTERNET SEARCH SERVICE (HISS)

FOR SHARED SERVICES CANADA (SSC)

This Amendment # 002 is raised to:

(1) Answer questions raised by the Industry.

Note to Bidders: The below data has been provided to Bidders to assist them in preparing their bids. The inclusion of this data in this bid solicitation does not represent a commitment by Canada that Canada's future usage of the Hosted Internet Search Service will be consistent with this data. It is provided purely for information purposes.

Question # 011

Question:
With less than 2 weeks to the RFP submission date and no response from the Crown to questions from the vendor community, we must request an extension to the RFP timeline to compensate for this lack of clarity. We look forward to providing Canada with a very innovative technical solution and an highly competitive proposal in response to this complex bid solicitation which involves significant level of effort, extensive validation, value-added consultation, legal consideration resolution, and high level organizational and hierarchical approvals. In that regard, we are respectfully requesting a six week extension in order for us to secure the state of the art technical solution and world class proposal for the HISS that will be highly advantageous to the Crown. Would the Crown please extend the RFP submission date to May 15 2012 with the allowance for questions and requests for clarification to be submitted until April 27 2012 and with the commitment of the Crown to respond to all questions and requests for clarification before May 2 2012?

Answer:
Canada will not consider any further extensions at this time.

Question # 012

Question:
Can you provide historical volumetric information for the number of processed queries for the past 1-2 years?

Answer:
Historically, various solutions have been in use throughout the Government of Canada, so complete data is not readily available. Shared Services Canada's existing environment includes 21 Search Engines serving 18 departments, and processes approximately 20 million queries per year. However, Canada feels that this data is not a good predictor of future volume, since the Hosted Internet Search Service could potentially be used by most departments and agencies within the Government of Canada.

Question # 013

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Question:
Can you provide a list of the GC.CA domains that are currently in scope for this project?

Answer:
All public domains relating to Shared Services Canada and its potential Clients (as defined in Section 7.1(b) of the Resulting Contract Clauses) are in scope for this project.

Question # 014

Question:
Based on Annex A, Section 9 - Functional and Performance Requirements (Req # 5), Page 59 of 81, can the SCC confirm how many SSC Clients would potentially use the HISS?

Answer:
At this time, the exact number of SSC Clients is unknown. There is the potential that the Hosted Internet Search Service could be used by most potential SSC Clients. Please refer to Section 7.1(b) of the Resulting Contract Clauses.

Question # 015

Question:
Can Search Engines be shared between SSC Clients? If each SSC Client require descrete Search Engines, how many SSC Clients and Search Engines should be assumed for the purpose of completing the Price Table in Annex B?

Answer:
Each SSC Client requires their own Search Engine(s), as detailed in Mandatory Requirement #18. Canada does not require discrete index(es) for each Search Engine if the Hosted Internet Search Service is architected in such a way that it meets all other mandatory requirements while making use of shared index(es).

Please note that payment is based on the number of Processed Queries. The Contractor must not limit the number of Search Engines that Canada can create under the Hosted Internet Search Service.

Question # 016

Question:
For the Pricing Tables in Annex B - Can you please confirm that the Firm Price for each Year and Each Tier is intended to be the annual price applicable for that Year/Tier and not the Per Processed Query Price.   For example, if the annual volume of Processed Queries is 130,000,000 in Year 1 then the Year 1 Licensed Software Subscription Service fees are the sum of the Firm Price Year 1 in Tiers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Answer:
The Firm Prices included in Annex B - Pricing Tables are not "Per Processed Query" prices.   If the Number of Processed Queries was 130,000,000 in Year 1, Canada would pay the Contractor the Firm Price for Year 1 for Tiers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, in accordance with Section 7.9 of the Resulting Contract Clauses.

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Question # 017

Question:
The wording of Part 2, Section 3.3 a) and Part 7, Section 7.9 a) i) and ii) appear contradictory:

3.3 a) "...bidders must include a single, firm, all-inclusive price quoted in Canadian dollars in each cell requiring an entry in Annex B - Pricing Tables....."

7.9 (a)(i) B"...Annex B - Table 1, FOB destination, including all customs duties, GST/HST extra..."

7.9 (a)(ii) B"...Annex B - Table 2, FOB destination, including all customs duties, GST/HST extra..."

We respectfully request, with respect to Part 2 Section 3.3 a) above that the words "all inclusive" be replaces by "all inclusive except excluding applicable taxes"

We respectfully request, with respect to Part 7 Section 7.9 (a) (i) B and Section 7.9 (a) (ii) B above that the words "including all custom duties," be struck from these sections. We are not registered to charge duties. It is solely the responsibility of Canada Customs to do so. Therefore, any duties would be captured in our inputs and reflected in its fees charged to the client.

Answer:
Canada does not believe that the clauses are contradictory and does not believe that any change is required to the clauses outlined in this question.

Question # 018

Question:
What are the expected ranges for SSC Clients in terms of: number and types/formats of the files to be indexed, the average files sizes, what is the frequency of updates to the content?

Answer:
The file formats are listed under Mandatory Requirement #38. The average file sizes were estimated in the response to Question # 005 in RFP Amendment # 001. For frequency of updates please refer to Mandatory Requirement #5(c).

Question # 019

Question:
What are the expected/maximum number of SSC Clients that might request hosted search services?

Answer:
Potential SSC Clients are defined in Section 7.1(b) of the Resulting Contract Clauses.

Question # 020

Question:
What is the expected sizing (in terms of content and usage) that should be scoped for the initial operating capacity?

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Answer:
The average file sizes and formats were estimated in the response to Question # 005 in RFP Amendment # 001. Canada estimates that the Number of Processed Queries will be approximately 100 million Processed Queries in Year 1.

Question # 021

Question:
Will the hosting service provider be given advanced notice as to when/how much additional space might be required for oncoming new SSC Clients?

Answer:
The Technical Authority expects to maintain regular communications with the Contractor. However, Canada requires that the Hosted Internet Search Service be rapidly scalable to accommodate additional Clients within very short lead times. Canada may not be able to provide data on content sizing for additional Clients. The Contractor will need to manage its own hardware requirements so that the Hosted Internet Search Service works at all times in accordance with the specifications set out in the Contract and the Statement of Requirements.

Question # 022

Question:
The Relevance test procedures mention that the testing personnel will subjectively determine the expected results for their test queries – is the expectation that the results should be weighted using a popularity/citation type of model (aka PageRank) rather than on pure relevance to the query terms? The procedures state that the system should be set to use the Bidder's recommended settings, however our solution allows for several modes of operation and weighting to accommodate customer preferences.

Answer:
As stated in Annex C, depth of crawl and field weighting should be set to the Bidder's recommended settings.

Question # 023

Question:
We have a question on the definition of "Processed Query".

The RFP definition indicates that "Processed Query": This includes, but is not limited to: receiving the Search Query from Shared Services Canada, retrieving the Search Results using the Licensed Software Subscription Services products (including the applicable Development, Staging or Production Search Engine), and delivering the Search Results Page to Shared Services Canada via Internet connection.

Question: Search results pages are sometimes constructed by submitting multiple concurrent queries to the search engine in response to one keyword. For example if a user enters a keyword "Tax Forms" the search results page will display returned results from the main collection but may also include "Tax Forms" related news items on the right margin that comes from a different collection and "Tax Forms" related content spotlights or banners from yet another collection. Can you clarify how Canada would like to count "Processed Query" in this case? (Would this be counted as one query or three queries?)

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Answer:
In the example outlined in the question, Shared Services Canada sends only 1 Search Query to the Contractor, therefore this would be considered 1 Processed Query.

Question # 024

Question:
This question is related to Question # 23. In some cases search result RSS feeds from Client's websites maybe picked up by external users. Can you clarify how Canada would like to count "Processed Query" for RSS feeds?

Answer:
Canada does not require the Hosted Internet Search Service to produce an RSS output stream(s). If the Contractor's solution natively produces an RSS output stream, Canada must be able to disable this functionality and prevent the RSS output stream from being exposed to Search Users.

Question # 025

Question:
The RFP indicates that "Processed Query" is the primary metric that will be used for billing purposes. However, for a hosted search service; the total volume of content that has been indexed, the volume of content that is updated on daily basis, the desired "freshness" of returned results, response time performance and level of fault tolerance that is included as part of the solution will all have significant implication on what kind of infrastructure must be deployed to meet your requirements.

Given all of these are not being included as factors that will be explicitly rated; how does Canada plan to perform "apples-to-apples" comparison of proposed service offerings?

Answer:
Bidders must incorporate any other pricing considerations into the pricing model described in the RFP. Financial bids will be evaluated in accordance with Section 4.3 of the RFP.

Question # 026

Question:
In view of Question # 25, and considering that the RFP indicates up to 200 Million documents may need to be indexed, would Canada be willing to consider a metric that uses Volume of Indexed Content as the basis for billing in addition to Processed Query count?

Answer:
Canada has reviewed your request and the requirement remains the same.

Question # 027

Question:

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With regard to Section 9 Functional and Performance Requirements, item # 5 and item #38, would the Crown provide an estimate on the volume of content that will be indexed and the number of Clients expected to use HISS during the first then second year?

Answer:
The average file sizes and formats were estimated in the response to Question # 005 in RFP Amendment # 001. Please refer to the response to Question # 014 for information on the number of Clients.

Question # 028

Question:
With regard to SSC clients that are users of HISS in year 1 and year 2, would the Crown provide an estimate on the total processed queries that are expected each year?

Answer:
This is largely unknown, however Canada estimates that the Number of Processed Queries will be approximately 100 million Processed Queries in Year 1.

Question # 029

Question:
We respectfully ask that the deadline for the above RFP be extended to April 10, 2012 in order for our firm to provide a more fulsome response and to accommodate the many questions that we will be submitting shortly, many of which require research by the end user. Can the Crown please accommodate this request?

Answer:
Canada will not consider any further extensions at this time.