

**RETURN RESPONSES TO:
RETOURNER LES
ANSWERS À :**

Solinda Phan
Specialiste d'approvisionnement |
Supply Specialist
Services partagés Canada | Shared
Services Canada

Email Address | Courriel:
ConsultationSPC.SSCConsultation@
ssc-spc.gc.ca

**AMENDMENT TO INVITATION TO
QUALIFY
MODIFICATION DE L'INVITATION
À SE QUALIFIER**

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
This document contains a Security
Requirement
Ce document contient des exigences
sécuritaires

**Issuing Office – Bureau de
distribution**

SSC | SPC
Procurement and Vendors Relationships | Achats et relations avec les fournisseurs
Transformation Initiatives | Initiatives de transformation
180 Kent St, 13th floor
Ottawa, ON
K1G 4A8

Title - Sujet Data Centre Server and Storage Infrastructure Infrastructure de serveur et de stockage pour les centres de données	
Solicitation No. – N° de l'invitation 10040747/A	Amendment No. - N° modif. 010
Client Reference No. – N° référence du client : 14-20384-0	Date 29 October 2014
Solicitation Closes – L'invitation prend fin on – le November 12, 2014 at – à 11 :59 PM	
F.O.B. - F.A.B. Plant-Usine: <input type="checkbox"/> Destination: <input type="checkbox"/> Other-Autre: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address Inquiries to : - Adresser toutes questions à: Solinda Phan	Buyer Id – Id de l'acheteur CAC
Telephone No. – N° de téléphone : 613-302-6895	
Email - Courriel ConsultationSPC.SSCConsultation@ssc-spc.gc.ca	
Delivery required - Livraison exigée See Herein / Voir aux présentes	
Destination – of Goods, Services, and Construction: Destination – des biens, services et construction : See Herein / Voir aux présentes	

THIS SOLICITATION AMENDMENT IS ISSUED TO:

Publish Canada's Responses to Respondents' questions.

NOTE: Respondents' clarification questions are numerically sequenced upon arrival at SSC. Respondents are hereby advised that questions and answers for this solicitation may be issued via BuyandSell.gc.ca out of sequence.

** Please be advised that:

- in Amendment 008, Question 20 was noted as withdrawn, however it was responded to in Amendment 006.
- in Amendment 008, Question 91 was noted as withdrawn, however it is responded to in this Amendment

Question 22:

This question has been withdrawn.

Question 33:

Reference

Attachment 4.1.3. Category 3: Cloud Management Platform Evaluation Criteria

Page 42 of 48, Requirement M02

(i) Question: For the list of functions listed in Mandatory 2 for Category 3, can the Crown please detail which functions that SSC already have licenses for.

(ii) Question: Can the Crown please detail which vendors / products and quantity that are owned by SSC for each one of the functions listed for Category 3.

Answer 33:

(i) No, Canada will not disclose this information.

(ii) No, Canada will not disclose this information.

Question 55:

Mandatory Experience Requirement M04

The Respondent and/or its Core Team Member(s) must have continuously provided onsite support, including maintenance and break fix, operating 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year with a 4 hour or better response time, dedicated bilingual toll-free support, over the past 2 years. This support must have been provided to at least one organization with a minimum of 5,000 employees with a nationwide presence in at least 4 of the 6 main geographical regions across Canada as defined in Annex

C – Definition of Terms.

The requirements of M04 imply hardware support. Specifically “onsite support including maintenance and break fix”. As category 3 is to provide a Software Cloud Management Platform that runs on Category 1 Hardware, onsite and break-fix support should be addressed in Category 1.

Will Shared Services consider amending M04 so on-site and break-fix support is addressed in Category 1?

Software support is generally provided by Telephone and or Web based support. Most Software manufacturers cannot guarantee bilingual telephone support. Will Shared Services consider amending M04 to align with Software based maintenance and support and change bilingual to a non- mandatory requirement?

Answer 55:

Please refer to Amendment 006 Modification 009.

Question 79:

For Mandatory Experience Requirement M01 (page 37 of the ITQ) – The last line in that requirement states “Of these 5 customers, at least 3 must be located in Canada, and 3 must be from the public sector.” Are these descriptors mutually exclusive? Must the 3 located in Canada also be public sector? I.E. Will Shared Services Canada accept 3 customers 5,000+ employees in Canada that are not in the public sector, and 3 customers 5,000+ employees in the public sector in the United States?

Answer 79:

Yes, these descriptors are mutually exclusive; however the request is for 5 customers. Therefore at least one must be from the public sector and in Canada.

Question 82:

Category 1: Can SSC provide further clarification around the definition of a Referenced Architecture?

Answer 82:

Please refer to the Definition on Page 32, Annex C – Definition of terms.

Question 91:

Attachment 4.1.3 – Category 3: Cloud Management Platform Mandatory Evaluations Criteria

M01The Respondent and/or its Core Team Member(s) must demonstrate 10 Customer deployments of functioning Cloud Management Platforms as defined in Annex C – Definition of Terms, in the past 3 years prior to the closing date of this ITQ based on Category 1 defined infrastructure as described in this ITQ.

Would Shared Services Canada please confirm that the Mandatory Experience Requirement M01 for Category 3 may apply to any or all of the three infrastructures listed (Converged Infrastructure, Standalone Servers and Storage) in M01 of Category 1?

Answer 91:

Please see Canada's response to Question 54.

Question 93:

p40, Sect 4.1.2, re: Cat2-M02.

With the continued optimization and enhancements to Virtual Server platforms, the value indicated in the ITQ of '5000' VMs aligns more realistically with a network 150,000+ users. Typically our clients with 8,000 to 10,000 users are running in the 500 to 650 VM range for use with Mission and Office Automation Virtual Servers. Today with higher MHz processors, with multiple Cores, the quantity of VMs needed has reduced significantly. N.B. this value of course is dependent on the actual workloads against the VMs, but seems to be within the industry average of 400 to 600 VMs / 5000 user.

Question: Will SSC adjust the quantity of mandatory VMs for 3 clients each having 5000+ users to a more industry reflective lower number of VMs for 5000+ users?

Answer 93:

Please Refer to Amendment 009, Modification 018.

Question 100:

p9, Sect 2.3.2 re: Periods for Submitting Questions.

Period 1 – Initial Question Period is stated as “Initial question period for Respondents begins following the initial ITQ posting date and ends 10 calendar days later at 23:59 EDT.”

Question: Would SSC change the end date of the Period 1 to “7 calendar days before the date of response submission”? As per Amendment 001, this request is based on the 7 day question window that would have Period 1 ending 15 days after posting; therefore it would have been 21 October, with the submission close date of October 28, which is 7 calendar days.

Answer 100:

Please refer to Canada's response to question 59.

Question 102:

Page 15, Section 4.3 b) states that:

“the Contractor and /or its employees must EACH maintain a valid Secret clearance issued by CISD, Public Works and Government Services Canada.”

Could SSC please confirm that the Response Lead and its Core Team Members personnel are not required to have a Secret security clearance in order to participate in the RRR phase?

Answer 102:

Confirmed. Please refer to Canada's reponse to Question 31.

Question 106:

Page 9, Part 2 Respondent Instructions, Enquiries and Comments 2.3.2

Would SSC change the end date of the Period 1 – Initial Question Period to “7 calendar days before the date of response submission”?

This request is based on the 7 day question window that had Period 1 ending 15 days after posting (per Amendment 001) which would have been 21 October, with the submission close date of October 28, which is 7 calendar days.

Answer 106:

Please refer to Canada's response to Question 59.

Question 107:

Page 41, Attachment 4.1.2 – Category 2: Virtual Servers Mandatory Evaluation Criteria checklist.

This form seems to be addressing two different respondent sets with the same form. This may create some confusion. For M01 the question of whether the Core Team member is currently hosting 25,000 concurrent active Virtual Servers can only be answered by the Core Team member providing these services. Hence, row 2 of the checklist form “Customer name” does not apply to answering MO2.

For M02 and M03 this would be appropriate and we would appropriately provide customer name.

Question/Recommendation:

(a) Recommend changing Row 2 from "Customer Name" to "Customer Name (NA if Core Team Member Response to MO1)"

(b) Please confirm that we do not need to provide client name.

Answer 107:

Please see Canada's response to Question 12.

Question 116:

Page 7 of 48 Section - 1.5.2 c) GC Data at rest must remain within the geographic borders of Canada.

Question - Why is state of the "at rest" data qualified distinctly, does it mean that while in transit data may cross Canada's borders? IT is our understanding that data in motion which passes through other sovereign territories may still be subject to the legislation of those territories, and therefore would be potentially at risk.

Answer 116:

Please refer to Part 1, section 1.5.2 b) for the treatment of data in transit or in motion. Detailed requirements will be tabled in the review and refine requirements stage.

Question 117:

Page 7 of 48 Section - 1.5.3

Question - Can further clarification be provided on what companies would qualify and what would they need to demonstrate to prove their immunity from foreign legislation. If the GC data has to remain in Canada, what further safeguard does this accomplish?

Answer 117:

Please refer to Canada's response to Question 31.

Question 118:

Page 11 of 48 Section -

3.1.4 (a) The submission of more than one response from members of the same Responding group for each category of this ITQ is not permitted in response to this ITQ.

3.1.4 (c) A response provided by a Responding Group can contain Core Team Members. A Responding Group's Core Team Member(s) will be permitted a Core Team Member(s) on multiple responses.

There are several technology and service organizations that function as adjacent and enabling partners to OEMs who may be potential ITQ response leads, especially in the converged infrastructure space. If it is Shared Services intent to create a sustainable and competitive ecosystem of suppliers for the various technologies and solutions that they will be procuring through this process, that desire would be better served in this regard to allow for the same core team member to appear multiple times within the same category.

(a) Question - With regards to the sections referenced above, can Shared Services Canada confirm that the reference to members of the same Responding group in section 3.1.4 (a) refers only to members identified as the ITQ Response Lead as defined in 2.4.4?

(b) Question: Can Shared Services Canada confirm that Core Team Members are not considered members (lower case) of the same Responding group as defined in 3.1.4 (b) and therefore would be permitted as Core Team Members (s) on multiple responses within the same category?

Answer 118:

Please refer to Canada's response to Question 89.

Question 121:

Page 15 of 48 Section - 4.3 b) The contractor must maintain a valid Facility Security Clearance (FSC) issued by Public Works and Government Services Canada – Industrial Security Program.

Does this apply to all categories or can category 1 be excluded?

Answer 121:

See Canada's response to Question 31.

Question 123:

1.3 Overview of the Requirement

1.3.1 The anticipated DCSSI requirements consist of the provisioning of pre-configured server and storage devices, Converged Infrastructure, Virtual Servers, and a Cloud Management Platform installed and managed on premises in SSC data centres across Canada. As set forth in the Request for Information (RFI), Shared Services Canada has standardized on a number of application suites and infrastructure standards for leveraging converged solutions composed of x86 based architectures to support hypervisors focused on Windows and Linux OS support. SSC will continue to pursue setting standards to meet its business needs for the forthcoming supply arrangements in conjunction with input from industry to ensure such standards are supportable and sustainable. Standards set forth in the supply arrangements and any other contracts resulting from this procurement process will encourage an open and inter-operable environment.

Question: are there specific hypervisors that need to be supported? If so, what are the specific hypervisors? Will solutions that cannot support multiple hypervisors be disqualified?

Answer 123:

Specific hypervisor requirements will be provided to qualified respondents during the review and refine requirements phase. Solutions that cannot support multiple hypervisors will not be disqualified from this ITQ phase of the SSI process.

Question 124:

1.3.2 SSC will give special attention to the use of Converged Infrastructure and Virtual Servers.

Question: if the GoC/SSC is truly giving special attention to the use of Converged Infrastructure and Virtual Servers then GoC/SSC should be separating them from traditional servers and storage as well as removing limitations such as networking and security. If the GoC/SSC does not make these changes then they will actually be eliminating some of the visionaries (as identified by Gartner) of Converged Infrastructure/Integrated Systems. These "Next-Generation" Convergence players (Hyper-Converged/Web-Scale) have already seen massive adoption within Governmental agencies across the US and Canada, who have realized significant CAPX/OPX savings as a result of this selection. Will the GoC/SSC separate Converged Infrastructure from Standalone Servers and Storage so as to be able to allow for innovation and (proven/validated) Next Generation technologies within the Data Centre?

Answer 124:

Canada's intention is that there will be separate categories at the time of solicitation. Please refer to Amendment 007 Modification 013.

Question 129:

Annex C

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term: Converged Infrastructure

Definition

Converged Infrastructure is the name generally used to describe a pre-engineered set of servers, storage, networking and security systems that are integrated into shared pools of interoperable resources and managed through a common management and orchestration platform.

For the purposes of this ITQ, SSC is specifically looking for the following:

- The Converged Infrastructure must be marketed as a single product by an Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) or consortium, including documentation and support. Although the system can be sold as a single or multiple SKU solution, any system designed for another purpose, or consisting of a number of disparate components assembled together without providing a single point of management, and a single point of support for customers (e.g. single 1-800 number to place a service call) will not be considered;
- The Converged Infrastructure must be fully operational and fully integrated, containing all major components, management software, and optional accessories when shipped. These include but are not limited to:
 - system enclosure and/or rack cabinet (where appropriate);
 - computing systems;
 - network/storage fabric switches;
 - disk array controllers;
 - disk drives;
 - shelving units, power supplies and cooling systems necessary for the system; and
 - any required service / systems management software or function required to integrate with an overall Enterprise service / systems management system.
- The Converged Infrastructure must be sized and deployed based on templates that allow for implementation and growth with a predefined approach; and

Question: What is the smallest unit of pre-defined growth Canada is looking for? Leaders in the convergence/integrated systems space can start off as small as a 2U block which can allow Canada to start with a minimal initial investment, and build from there. This not only allows a massive reduction in CAPX, but also OPX, as the Data Centre footprint is significantly reduced. In addition, the idea of a "fractional consumption model" is best utilized when the increments are smaller, and you "build as you grow". Please advise.

Answer 129:

Canada has not set any "unit of pre-defined growth" at this stage. Further requirements of this nature will be tabled during the review and refine requirements phase.

Question 130:

The Converged Infrastructure must include all vendor management and proprietary software and software or port licenses (for any of the included components), device drivers, and cabling required for the system.

Question: Next generation converged infrastructure technologies don't require an external storage fabric. And subsequently they are designed to work with industry standard network switches and not tied to a proprietary networking solution. The benefit to the client affords both financial benefit from choice in the network fabric and the additional benefit of allowing customers to take advantage of existing investments in networking equipment where applicable.

Please modify the definition that the GoC/SSC is using for the term "Converged Infrastructure" from "These include but are not limited to:" to a more appropriate, all encompassing definition of: "These may include but are not limited to:" which will remove the requirement for the OEM of the network/storage switches to be the same as the OEM for the converged infrastructure. This flexibility also affords Canada the ability to not only leverage the initial investments in infrastructure today, but also, to leverage best of breed networking as part of the overall Converged platform in the years to come.

Answer 130:

Please refer to Amendment 009 Modification 021.

Question 132:

Often Small and Medium Enterprises bring leading innovation, flexibility and complex technical solutions as part of their value added services to the Government of Canada. In many instances, Small and Medium Enterprise will not be able to qualify individually for the ITQ such as the outlined reference requirements or security requirements. What considerations are going to be made for SMEs and inclusions for participation and qualification?

Answer 132:

Please refer to Canada's response for Question 19.

Question 133:

In category 1, will ITQ or follow-on process allow for respondents or OEM's to assign agents as designated by each successful respondent as per their channel strategic alignment? IF so, will the assign agent be classified as a subcontractor and at what stage can they be included in the ITQ?

Answer 133:

Yes, please see Canada's response to Question 19.