

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

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**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
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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. 013
Client Reference No. – N° référence du client : 14-20384-0	Date 5 November 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"/>	
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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, to modify the ITQ, and issue a notice regarding question period 2.

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.

NOTICE:

In accordance with ITQ article 2.3.2 Enquiries and Comments, Period 2 – Final Question Period closed on November 3, 2014.

Canada hereby confirms that responses to questions as submitted during this Period 2 have now been posted on buyandsell.gc.ca.

No further extension to the solicitation closing date is granted at this time. The closing date therefore remains November 12, 2014 at 11:59PM

As per ITQ section 2.2.3, suppliers are reminded that they are requested to send an e-mail notification to Consultationspc.sscconsultation@ssc-spc.gc.ca prior to the closing date indicating their intention to submit a response.

Also attached is the source file for the ITQ the Q&A modifications in mark-up mode. The PDF version initially issued on Buy and Sell along with all related amendments are the authoritative documents, this is simply to facilitate bid preparation. If there is a discrepancy between this source file and the PDF version of the original ITQ and its amendments, the PDFs will prevail.

Question 136:

Attachment 4.1 Category 2 - Virtual Servers

M02 states "The Respondent must demonstrate how it and/or its Core Team members build, deploy and operate 5,000+ Virtual Servers for each of 3 individual customers, where each customer has 5,000+ employees. The Respondent must describe in sufficient detail the extent of its or its Core Team Member's overall corporate experience in the supply and servicing of these servers, 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, over the past 2 years."

M03 states "The Respondent must demonstrate its and/or its Core Team Member's experience as a primary Contractor with a public sector customer within the past 3 years for one of the customers referenced in M02 for the supply of 100+ of their Virtual Servers using capacity on demand."

We request that M2 be amended to state "within the past three years" to match M03.

Answer 136:

Please refer to Amendment 009, Modification 18.

Question 137:

Attachment 4.1 Category 3 – Cloud Management Platform

M03 states "The Respondent must demonstrate that it and/or its Core Team Member(s) possess experience as a primary Contractor with a public sector Customer within the past 3 years for the supply of their Cloud Management Platform for one of the Customers referenced in M02."

M4 states "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."

We request that M4 be amended to state "within the past three years" to match M3.

Answer 137:

Please refer to Amendment 005, Modification 009.

Question 138:

Table 2 - DCSSI Requirement Summary - Category 2 Virtual Servers

Would the Crown also consider the inclusion of non x86 architectures under this category of the procurement? We can demonstrate specific cost-per-workload savings, added speed & agility as well as enhanced security on RISC based products running standard Linux distributions that may better support existing applications.

Answer 138:

No, Canada's requirements remain unchanged. Please refer to Canada's response to question 30 contained in Amendment 006.

Question 139:

Please confirm that where a supplier provides multiple customers with an existing service that is based on a common Reference Architecture, each client's implementation and the service itself can be considered a project, customer and customer deployment in the context of Categories 2 and 3.

Answer 139:

Yes. In the case where a supplier provides services to multiple customers, each customer can qualify as a project reference in demonstrating the respondent's ability to meet a particular Mandatory Evaluation Criteria. Please refer to Annex C – Definition of terms for the definition of Project Reference.

Question 140:

Could you please provide an updated copy of the ITQ with all of the changes as stated in the amendments. We want to ensure that our understanding of the amendments with deletes and adds are correct.

Answer 140:

Canada agrees to provide a copy of a revised Invitation to Qualify package including all of the modifications and amendments which will accompany the final Amendment of Question Period 2.

Question 141:

Could you please confirm what is the last date to submit questions for clarification is now in place.

Answer 141:

Please see Amendment 012, Modification 025.

Question 142:

We are requesting that Form 4, the Pricing Commitment, be removed from this ITQ

Answer 142:

Please see Canada's response to Question 17.

Question 143:

We have the following request. Regarding Amendment 7 modifications 13 and 14 as stated below, we require that an additional extension of 21 days be provided so we can address these changes. The impact of these changes require us to contact our reference base to seek permission to include the new requirements for our response.

Modification 013:

On page 37 of 48 of the ITQ, Attachment 4.1.1 – Category 1- Server and Storage Infrastructure Mandatory Evaluation Criteria, Mandatory Experience Requirement M01:

Delete in its entirety.

Insert: The Respondent must have manufactured, marketed, supplied, tested, implemented and maintained at least one of the infrastructures listed below as defined in Annex C – Definition of Terms. The Respondent must demonstrate that this experience occurred prior to the posting date of this ITQ, for 5 Customers, each with 5,000+ employees and two or more data centres consuming a minimum of 100 KVA to operate the following specified infrastructure :

- a) Converged Infrastructure
- b) Standalone Servers
- c) Storage

Respondents demonstrating experience in (b) or (c) must further demonstrate how either (b) or (c) is incorporated in a Converged Infrastructure as defined in Annex C - Definition of Terms.

Of these 5 Customers, at least 3 must be located in Canada, and 3 must be from the public sector.

Modification 014:

On page 37 of 48 of the ITQ, Attachment 4.1.1 – Category 1- Server and Storage Infrastructure Mandatory Evaluation Criteria, Mandatory Experience Requirement M02:

Delete in its entirety.

Insert: The Respondent must have supplied server or storage infrastructure that has been marketed, integrated, tested maintained and supported as part of a Converged Infrastructure as defined in Annex C – Definition of terms. For at least 10 customer references, the Respondent must demonstrate how these Converged Infrastructures were deployed and connected to the referenced customer's independent network environment(s) within the past 3 years prior to the posting date of this ITQ.

Modification 015:

On page 19 of 48 of the ITQ, Section 5.5 Non-Disclosure Agreement:

Delete in its entirety.

Answer 143:

No further extensions will be provided for this ITQ process. Please refer to Canada's response to Question 12 in Amendment 005 for further information regarding the Qualification Process described in Section 3.2.

Question 144:

We respectfully request a 10 day extension to the deadline for asking questions for the first round since more than 20 questions remain outstanding at this time.

Answer 144:

No further extensions will be provided for question period 2.

Question 145:

In reference to section 2.4.4 – “Once a Respondent has identified itself as the ITQ Response Lead, it must remain the ITQ Response Lead and cannot switch roles with any member of its team for the duration of the procurement process” together with SSC Answer 43 which indicates Ts and Cs will not be shared until the RRR procurement stage:

As we determine which of our core team members is best suited to be the Lead Respondent it is important for us to consider the Ts and Cs. We ask that either the Ts and Cs are shared at this time, or that any core team member of a responding team can become the lead respondent through subsequent phases of the procurement.

Answer 145:

The structure of the resulting procurement vehicles has not yet been determined and will be discussed during RRR.

Canada is reviewing the possibility of allowing Core Team Members to change roles at RRR under certain circumstances and restrictions which SSC will elaborate on at that time.

Please see Modification 029 to clause 2.4.4.

Question 146:

In reference to Answer 19 – “At the ITQ phase, Canada is seeking responses from the OEMs in Category 1, as the ITQ is based on past experience criteria only. Canada intends to review various distribution models, such as fulfillment partners at the Review and Refine Requirements phase of the procurement.”

Will Canada consider an alternative contract holder on behalf of the qualified OEM respondent, should the qualified OEM determine they cannot accept Canada's Ts and Cs through the RRR process?

Answer 146:

The structure of the resulting procurement vehicles has not yet been determined and will be discussed during RRR.

Canada is reviewing the possibility of allowing Qualified Respondents to designate an alternative bidder on their behalf at RRR under certain circumstances and restrictions which SSC will elaborate on at that time.

Please see Modification 030 to clause 1.1.2

Question 147:

Amendment 007 – Answer 43 states: “ No, Canada will not provide any Terms and Conditions at this time as they will be discussed at the Review and Refine Requirements Phase of the Procurement”.

Given that the Terms and Conditions will only be discussed at the Review and Refine Requirements Phase would the Crown consider removing the Pricing Commitment (Form 4 – Page 48) at the ITQ phase as the Crown is asking Bidders to commit to pricing without providing Bidders with an opportunity to review and understand the impact of the Terms and Conditions on their submission.

Answer 147:

Please refer to Amendment 011, Modification 024.

Question 148:

Amendment 007 – Answer 43 states: “ No, Canada will not provide any Terms and Conditions at this time as they will be discussed at the Review and Refine Requirements Phase of the Procurement”.

Page 48 - Form 4 - Pricing Commitment: Can the Crown please identify the specific contracts to which this Pricing Commitment will apply, as was done in other ITQs. The terms of the Pricing Commitment as stated are legally too broad in nature and could apply to any service that a Bidder and its affiliates are providing which contains a data centre component.

Answer 148:

Please refer to Amendment 11, Modification 024.

Question 149:

In light of the recent amendments and the number of questions that were responded by SSC, we respectfully request an additional 10 day extension be provided to ensure that we fully understand all of the changes to the ITQ process and the requirements.

Answer 149:

Please refer to Canada's response to Question 143.

Question 150:

We request that Form 4 be removed from the ITQ as we see no relevance to the ITQ process.

Answer 150:

Please refer to Amendment 11, Modification 024.

Question 151:

Regarding Category 2: Mandatory Experience Requirement M03: Would SSC consider removing the requirement for a Public Sector client in particular?

Answer 151:

No, Canada's requirements remain unchanged.

Question 152:

In Amendment #12, Modification #26 was introduced as a result of Question 92. Answer to question #92 also refers to response to question #53 in amendment #9. In answer to Questions #53, SSC clearly states “Core Team Members are defined separately as per 3.1.4 c) and can be Core Team members on multiple responses.” And also refers to modification #8 in amend #5. Answer to question #67 further

confirms "Yes a core team member may be a member of multiple core teams. A Core Team Lead cannot be a Core Team Member on other responses. "

There are technologies that cut across multiple converged platforms such as Company X who would naturally participate as core team members and not necessarily a core team lead in numerous bids due to their integral and marketwide presence. Modification #26 would eliminate some of the vendors that work with Company X. We therefore respectfully request that you eliminate paragraph c) in modification 26 and revert to your original interpretation and repeated clarification of this requirement.

Answer 152:

Canada would like to remind Respondents, that core teams at the ITQ phase of the procurement should only be used to enhance the Respondent's experience. Modification #26 supersedes all previous questions regarding core teams. Please review section 3.1.4 as per Amendment 12, Modification 26. A specific company's technology can still be used on multiple bids as a sub-contractor, but as per the revised ITQ, they can only be Core Team Members on one response per category at the ITQ phase. Canada will therefore not make any more modifications to Section 3.1.4

Question 153:

- (a) I am writing to request an extension of the closing timeline for the DCSSI ITQ. After 12 amendments, 26 modifications, the latest made on Dec 31st 2013 with a question period closing November 3rd 2014 and likely additional questions and answers that will be published; bidders don't have the time to adjust, review, renegotiate team member agreements based on the significant changes that have been introduced.
- (b) I would like to request that SSC re-issues a revised, consolidated ITQ package with all the amendments that have been made in order to ensure bidders don't advertently miss an amendment or clarification.
- (b) I would also respectfully request a 2 week extension. In the light of such a substantial procurement, a 14 day extension would not have a substantial repercussion given the length of the contract, but would have a substantial repercussion on bidders and as a results potential outcomes for SSC.

Answer 153:

Canada agrees to provide a copy of a revised Invitation to Qualify package including all of the modifications and amendments which will accompany the final Amendment of Question Period 2.

Since this has been an ongoing process simply consisting of a few corporate experience criteria per category, and having already granted a two week extension, Canada does not see the need to extend any further.

Question 154:

Amendment 5, Modification 011 changed Attachment 4.1.2 – Category 2: Virtual Servers; Mandatory Evaluation Criteria Checklist; and Amendment 012, Answer 94 (b).

- a. Would Canada please confirm our understanding that "Number of hosted concurrent active Virtual Servers" is the number of Virtual Servers that the customer is actually using as the active pool assigned and contracted to be delivered?
- b. Would Canada please confirm our understanding that "Number of Virtual Servers built, deployed, and operated per Customer" is the number of Virtual Servers reserved for the customer, which includes the number in a) above, plus the reserve capacity allocated to that customer to handle surge capacity for that customer?

In the event that one or both of the above understandings are incorrect, would Canada please clarify what is expected in each of these two fields?

Answer 154:

- a) No, that understanding is incorrect. "Number of hosted concurrent active Virtual Servers" refers to M01 of Category 2 and requires the respondent or core team member to host the requested minimum concurrently active virtual servers, regardless of contracted or active pool maximum capacities.
- b) No, that understanding is incorrect. "Number of Virtual Servers built, deployed, and operated per Customer" refers to M02 of Category 2 and requires the respondent or core team member to have built, deployed and operated the requested number of Virtual Servers for each requested project reference regardless of reserve capacity allocations. Only virtual servers built, deployed, and operated per customer are to be included.

Question 155:

Q&A 69 requested a reduction from 25,000 virtual servers to 15,000 virtual servers; and Amendment 009, Modification 017 for Category 2 Virtual Servers Mandatory Evaluation Criteria, Mandatory Experience Requirement M01, replaced all of M01 with:

The Respondent must demonstrate its and /or its Core Team Member's experience by providing examples of projects where it is currently hosting 12,500 concurrent active Virtual Servers, as defined in Annex C – Definition of Terms.

To provide our examples of projects where we are currently hosting 12,500 concurrent active Virtual Servers, we propose to submit the city name and number of Virtual Servers in that location. Will that list of locations and VS's sufficient to demonstrate our experience? If not, would SSC please clarify what is required in terms of a demonstration of experience that meets this mandatory item by providing a typical examples of compliant projects?

Answer 155:

Yes, to sufficiently demonstrate ability to meet Category 2 Mandatory Experience Requirement M01, respondents must describe in sufficient detail their ability to support a total of 12,500 concurrent active virtual servers.

Question 156:

Amendment 009 Q&A 70 requested reduction in the number of virtual servers from 5,000+ to 3,500 servers. SSC responded with Modification 018 which replaced Category 2: Virtual Servers Mandatory Evaluations; Criteria, Mandatory Experience Requirement M02 with an even lower number of 2,500+ Virtual Servers:

The Respondent must demonstrate how it and/or its Core Team members build, deploy and operate 2500+ Virtual Servers for each of 3 individual customers. The Respondent must describe in sufficient detail the extent of its or its Core Team Member's overall corporate experience in the supply and servicing of these servers, 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, within the past 3 years.

Would Canada change the number of virtual servers downwards from 2,500 to 1,000? In our experience generally, it is an industry practice that today's virtual server environments are optimized with extensive orchestration and automation toolsets to drive efficiencies. In view of the considerable size of our clients, the considerable large number of users, by design we have found that server counts drop dramatically in the virtual server domain, resulting in considerable savings for our customers. Our high end, highly secure virtual servers are delivering the computing power as required by the applications in use by business and government with a much smaller number of servers than in a 'servers tied to an application' environment. It has been our experience that even large global corporations, and significant government and defence workloads are accommodated in under 1,500 virtual servers per customer. The vast majority of clients each use few hundred virtual servers. Without this amendment, we will be hard

pressed to present our most appropriate and relevant references that would be of particular interest to SSC.

Answer 156:

Canada's requirements remain unchanged. The number of virtual servers for 3 customer references is reflective of Canada's requirement for SSC to support multiple large client organizations.

Question 157:

Amend 012 Q&A 135 which states:

Question 135:

Due to the recent introduction (specifically for this infrastructure solution) from Company X will North American references be sufficient for your validation purposes. As a global manufacturer and leader, Company X have different adoption rates for new technologies at different times around the globe. Strong North American references however can be provided as requested.

Answer 135:

Canada's requirement will remain unchanged. North American references may not sufficiently demonstrate the ability of respondents to provide the services referenced in Annex B within Canada.

The ITQ response mandatory requirements do not specify Canadian experience, yet the answer to this question seems to point to the requirement for 'in-Canada' experience. Is there a mandatory requirement for Canadian experience? If so, where is the requirement located? If there is no specific mandatory requirement for Canadian experience, then should respondents provide a narrative relating their Canadian experience, and if so requested, how will it be evaluated?

Answer 157:

In the context of Category 1, the Mandatory Experience Criteria M04 and M05 each reference a requirement for Canadian experience. Categories 2 and 3 do not require Canadian experience. Please refer to attachment 4.1 for the mandatory experience criteria.

Question 158:

At that time, there had been 5 Amendments. There have now been 12 amendments, 28 modifications, and 135 questions asked and answered. In light of this, would Canada please provide industry with an updated document that reflects all of the changes so that there is no confusion? There is precedence in the Government of Canada solicitation process; as examples, please see Solicitation No. E60EJ-11000C/H (File No.436ej.E60EJ-11000C, GETS Reference No. PW-\$\$\$EJ-436-24924) Amendment #002 (2012-11-02) and Solicitation No. E60EJ-11000S/B (File No.315ej.E60EJ-11000S, GETS Reference No.PW-\$\$\$EJ-315-25041) Amendment #008 (2013-06-07), which we will gladly provide upon request.

We respectfully request that SSC extend the closing date of the ITQ to November 20th. This will ensure that we have addressed all of the changes, modifications and questions to provide SSC with an compliant response to the ITQ.

Answer 158:

Please refer to Canada's response to Question 153.

Question 159:

Will the Crown please revise the date of close from November 12th to November 26th.

Answer 159:

Please refer to Canada's response to Question 153.

Question 160:

In amendment 12 Modification 026 the Crown has fundamentally reversed its position on the ability for a Company being allowed to bid as a Core Team Member in more than one Responding Group for the same category. In Answer 53 (Question 53) of Amendment 9 published on October 28 "Answer 53: Yes, that is correct, as per Amendment 005, Modification 008. A Responding Group is the Core Team Lead. Therefore, a member of the Responding Group is a member of the Core Team Lead. Core Team Members are defined separately as per 3.1.4 c) and can be Core Team Members on multiple responses."

- 1) We respectfully identify that these fundamental changes with less than 2 weeks remaining in the process cause significant challenges for respondents.
- 2) This reversal of position has a direct impact on the formal agreements that have already been put in place to allow companies to respond to the ITQ and may put companies in a breach of contract position.

Could the Crown please rescind Modification 026 in Amendment 12 and allow Core Team Members to be a member of a separate Responding Group as a Core Team Member.

Answer 160:

No, Canada's requirements remain unchanged. Modification 26 supersedes all previous modifications and answers.

Question 161:

Answer 123 states: "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".

- a) Could the crown please confirm that this statement does not mean that SSC is looking to support only one in the future.
- b) Could the crown please confirm that this statement does not mean that SSC is looking to declare a single hypervisor standard as a result of vendor solutions only being able to support a single hypervisor.

Answer 161:

- a) Canada confirms this interpretation
- b) Canada confirms this interpretation

Question 162:

Can you please confirm when the Period 2 – Final Question period ends?

Answer 162:

Please see Amendment 012, Modification 025.

Modification 029 (Q145)

On page 10 of 48 of the ITQ, Section 2.4 Composition of Core Team (if applicable), article 2.4.4:

Delete in its entirety.

Insert: SSC expects that the ITQ Response Lead will remain the lead for the duration of the procurement process and be awarded the resulting contract(s) or arrangement(s). SSC may allow a Core Team to change roles within the team prior to the final bid solicitation which would possibly allow another Core Team Member to become the Contractor. Whether or not to allow a change of roles will be at SSC's discretion and discussed during the RRR phase

Modification 030 (Q146)

On page 4 of 48 of the ITQ, Section 1.1 Introduction, article 1.1.2:

Delete in its entirety.

Insert: The pre-qualified suppliers will be referred to as the Qualified Respondents in this solicitation process. Only the Qualified Respondents will be permitted to bid on the subsequent bid solicitation(s). Canada may decide during the RRR phase to allow Qualified Respondents to designate an alternative Bidder. Below are the intended phases of the solicitation process. Each phase is briefly described in the attached Annex A.