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**Canada Revenue Agency  
Agence du revenu du Canada**  
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**Proposal to: Canada Revenue Agency**  
We hereby offer to sell to Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada, in accordance with the terms and conditions set out herein, referred to herein and/or attached hereto, the goods and/or services listed herein and on any attached sheets at the price(s) set out therefor.

**Proposition à : l'Agence du revenu du Canada**  
Nous offrons par la présente de vendre à Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, en conformité avec les conditions énoncées dans la présente incluses par référence dans la présente et/ou incluses par référence aux annexes jointes à la présente et ci-jointes, les biens et/ou services énumérés ici sur toute feuille ci-annexée, au(x) prix indiqué(s).

**Bidder's Legal Name and Address - (ensure the Bidder's complete legal name is properly set out)  
Raison sociale et adresse du Soumissionnaire - (s'assurer que le nom légal au complet du soumissionnaire est correctement indiqué)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Bidder is required to identify below the name and title of the individual authorized to sign on behalf of the Bidder – Soumissionnaire doit identifier ci-bas le nom et le titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du soumissionnaire***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name /Nom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Titre

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (yyyy-mm-dd)/(aaaa-mm-jj)

(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone No. – No de téléphone

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Fax No. – No de télécopieur

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E-mail address – Adresse de courriel

**AMENDMENT TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL / MODIFICATION DE DEMANDE DE PROPOSITION**

<b>Title – Sujet</b> Professional Services Supply Chain	
<b>Solicitation No. – No de l'invitation</b>  1000335302	<b>Date:</b>  2017-09-01
<b>Amendment No. - N° modif.</b> <b>004</b>	
<b>Solicitation closes – L'invitation prend fin</b>  <b>on – le (2017-09-19) at – à 2:00 P.M. / 14 h</b>	<b>Time zone – Fuseau horaire</b>  EDT Eastern Daylight Time
<b>Contracting Authority – Autorité contractante</b>  Name – Nom Alastair Webb Address – Adresse - See original document/ voir document original E-mail address – Adresse de courriel – alastair.webb@cra-arc.gc.ca	
<b>Telephone No. – No de téléphone</b> (613) 867-5203	
<b>Fax No. – No de télécopieur</b> (613) 957-6655	
<b>Destination - Destination</b>  See herein / Voir dans ce document	
<b>THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS A SECURITY REQUIREMENT. LE PRÉSENT DOCUMENT COMPORTE UNE EXIGENCE EN MATIÈRE DE SÉCURITÉ.</b>	



## SOLICITATION AMENDMENT # 004

This solicitation amendment is raised to:

1. Address the following questions submitted during the solicitation period as per RFP; and
2. Amend the RFP.

### 1. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Q1. M5: The Bidder must have been awarded at least five (5) Professional Services Contracts. Each of these contracts must have a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes) and have been awarded within the past five years (as of bid closing date).
- a) Please confirm that the Crown is asking for Professional Services contracts that have been awarded in the past 5 years and the contracts have more than \$5,000,000 dollars in billings against the contract.
  - b) Would a Professional Services contract that has been awarded within the past five (5) years with a contract value greater than 5 million dollars and billings less than 5 million dollars be deemed compliant?
  - c) Would a Professional Services contract that has been awarded within the past five (5) years with an initial contract value of less than 5 million dollars but was given a contract amendment and has billings of greater than 5 million dollars be deemed compliant?
- A1. a) The contract must have a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes), not billed dollars.
- b) Yes.
- c) Yes, the contract must have a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes), not billed dollars.
- Q2. Would the Crown amend this requirement to allow Professional Services contracts that have been awarded in the past 10 years with billings greater than \$5,000,000.00 dollars?
- A2. No CRA will not amend the RFP to the past 10 years. CRA has amended the RFP to allow contracts that have been awarded in the past 7 years. See RFP Amendment #2 released on August 4, 2017.
- Q3. For 1.3 Mandatory Steam and Specific Criteria, SSM 1.2, due the very large requirement for System Analyst experience, would the Crown change "The experience must occur within five (5) years prior to the RFP closing date to experience must occur within ten (10) years prior to the RFP closing date?"
- A3. No, CRA will not make changes to this criteria.
- Q4. For R 1.2, The Bidder should demonstrate their experience providing professional services resources to support Cobol systems using a maximum of two (2) client contacts with contract references within the past five years (as of the closing date of this RFP). Cobol support resources skill sets have not changed much over the past 10 years. Would the Crown change the two (2) client contacts with contract references within the past five (5) years to two (2) client contacts with contract references within the past ten (10) years?
- A4. No, CRA will not make changes to this criteria.



- Q5. Can a company submit its own RFP response and also be part of Joint Venture RFP response, either as a member or as the lead member?
- A5. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q6. Please refer to page 9, section 1.6, overview of the procurement process. Please confirm that it is permissible to submit separate bids per stream under different arrangements. For example, Company A Stream 1 and Company A&B in JV Stream 2.
- A6. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q7. Please refer to section 1.3 Mandatory Stream - Specific Criteria, where the response requirements provide a window of 5 years within which to meet the requirement 'prior to RFP closing date'. In the event that there is one or more extensions to the bid closing date, bidders' will be required to re-calculate and adjust the billable hours. This could prove to be an onerous exercise, the calculation of which could impact scores or even compliance. Therefore, the bidder respectfully requests that a firm date be applied, to avoid a sliding scale (e.g. August 22, 2012 (5 years back)).
- A7. No, CRA will not apply a firm date.
- Q8. In reference to Attachment B – Corporate Reference Template under the Section Resource Details, the Crown is asking to “Cross Reference to Resource category listed in the PSSC Catalogue”. It is the bidder's understanding that by referencing the PSSC catalogue for the applicable category within the Corporate Reference Template would satisfy the response requirements for the applicable category (e.g. an IT Security Engineer (Resource Category) corresponds to the “Security Specialist” category (Cross-reference to resource category lists in the PSSC Catalogue)?
- A8. Yes that is correct.
- Q9. Please refer to point rated corporate criteria R2.1, page 40. As written, the Rated Criteria (particularly for item 2) seems inconsistent with the rating scale. As an example, the bidder must demonstrate "ongoing commitment and continuous improvement to the management of the contract as part of its contract management plan, whereas the rating scale for item 2 appears to be candidate centric (e.g. Certified Staffing Professional). In addition, it is unclear in the rating scale what 'may include but are not limited to' represents. It is suggested that the rating scale be modified to be consistent with a corporate commitment to continuous improvement initiatives (e.g. ISO/Excellence Canada) to the management of the contract and not to individual accreditations.
- A9. Individual accreditations are important to CRA and will remain. Points will be allocated as per the point rating. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q10. Would CRA please confirm references from companies that have been acquired and are now wholly owned can be counted as a reference for the prime bidder?
- A10. Yes, that is acceptable.
- Q11. Would the Crown accept Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) and Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) and Certified Human Resources Executive (CHE) as equivalent certifications? And, if so, please confirm the point value.



- A11. Yes, the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) and Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) and Certified Human Resources Executive (CHE) would be acceptable. The point value is 5 pts per certification. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q12. Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) and Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist are both U.S. certifications, may we ask the Crown for the Canadian equivalency of these two (2) certifications? Also, would the Crown accept Registered Professional Recruiter (RPR) as an equivalency?
- A12. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed and provide the supporting documentation. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below. Yes, CRA will accept Registered Professional Recruiter (RPR). See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q13. For SSM 1.2 Page 28 of 108 - System Analyst 290,000 Billable Hours - Stream 1 Common Development Services, would the Crown consider reducing the # of Billable Hours (currently 290,000) for this resource category - System Analyst. The very large amount of hours for this specific category seems to be out of context with the other categories in Stream 1. Is there a reason for such a large discrepancy?
- A13. There has been sufficient usage of this resource category to justify the minimum number of billable hours to meet the needs of CRA's requirements. CRA will not reduce the number of billable hours.
- Q14. The ATIP Consultant and PIA Specialist categories are very unusual categories for a Professional Services firm; whereas the others are of a more standard nature for administrative services. Would the Crown consider eliminating these categories to provide Bidders an opportunity to respond to a standard complement of professional services administrative categories?
- A14. No, CRA will not eliminate these categories.
- Q15. We respectfully propose the following modification to R1; that the minimum timeframe of 10 years be maintained, where additional points may be acquired through demonstrating service delivery capability in these other areas;
- For example;

	Rated Criteria	Maximum Available Points	Rating Scale
R1	The bidder should demonstrate its Service Delivery capability in addition to its years of experience delivering Professional Services <u>above</u> the mandatory minimum of 10 years requested in M4, as of the closing date of this RFP	<b>TOTAL 20</b>	up to 1 Year = 2 points 1-2 Years = 5 points 2-3 Years = 10 points 3-4 Years = 12 points 4-5 Years = 14 points 5-6 Years = 16 points 6-7 Years = 18 points Over 7 Years = 20 points  Additional Points may be achieved if the bidder hits the following benchmarks within the last 5 years:  Annual Revenue exceeds \$50M = 5 Points Number of Placements exceeds: 500/year = 5 Points Number of Clients retained exceeds 50 = 5 points



A15. CRA will not make these changes to R1.

Q16. R2.1 asks bidders to provide a Contract Management Plan. It is our experience that a Contract Management Plan would call for and include items such as our approach to delivering IT Professional Services, including the distinctive systems and processes that we use within our organization to comply with the terms and conditions of the contract. This would include features such as: our business processes, our ERP Systems, technology that we use in our organization, the structure of our company, and any item that would pertain to our daily performance under the contract with CRA. In this view, a Contract Management Plan enables CRA to develop a good understanding of our company's daily operations as well as long term management strategies.

It seems counterintuitive, however, that the rating criteria under R2.1 awards points for providing 4 kinds of certifications, none of which would normally be included as the distinctive operational features of a company in a Contract Management Plan. Further to this, the rating scale does not take seem to take into account any company activities that would be included in a Contract Management Plan in its scoring schema.

As such, we propose the following change:

The Bidder must provide a plan as to how the resulting contract will be managed. The Bidder must describe its proposed Contract Management Plan specifically addressing measures it proposes to undertake to manage the resulting contract including all of the following elements:

1. Identify, select and deploy the appropriate resource in a timely manner;
2. Manage the process of transitioning between existing contracted resources and the new contract;
3. Manage the process of transitioning between contract resources during the term of the contract;
4. Manage quality assurance practices in providing resources for tasking;
5. Manage contingency plans/practices to ensure resource availability and resource replacement.

A scoring example is as follows:

- 35 Points – Excellent: The company has provided excellent and comprehensive understanding of the conditions of the contract and has demonstrated extensive processes and procedures that address the following: the approach and methodology of their organization, the quality and timeliness of deliverables submitted to CRA, the recognition and mitigation of relevant risks that are anticipated in the contract, the approach to communication aimed at ensuring the Technical Authorities are appraised of any progress, challenges, issues or risks that may arise during the course of the contract, and a human resources approach to recruitment, training, and the development and retention of qualified resources.
- 25 Points – Good: The company has provided sound understanding of the conditions of the contract and has demonstrated procedures and processes based on previous work experience that address 3 or less of the following areas: approach and methodology, quality and timeliness of deliverables, risks/challenges, and a human resources approach.
- 15 Points – Satisfactory: The company has provided some understanding of the conditions of the contract and has demonstrated experience addressing two or less of the following areas: approach and methodology, quality and timeliness of deliverables, risks/challenges, and a human resources approach.
- 5 Points – Poor: The company has provided a limited understanding of the contract and has addressed one of the following areas: approach and methodology, quality and timeliness of deliverables, risks/challenges, and a human resources approach.

A16. CRA will not make these changes to R2.1.



- Q17. When substantiating billable hours under a given workstream, bidders are directed to use Attachment B, Corporate Reference Template. In this table, the crown provides a “resource details” section where the resource category is listed along with the cross reference to resource category in the PSSC catalogue. Please confirm that the crown doesn't require that bidders provide task alignment with resources that are provided under non-government contracts. In other words, please confirm that bidders substantiate the resource details in this section by listing the resource category under the contract they were providing services and the corresponding PSSC Catalogue category, but that no further cross alignment (such as mapping the resources particular tasks under the contract to tasks provided in the CRA Statement of Work) is required, and that the client reference will serve as the basis for confirming the submitted details?
- A17. Yes, that is correct.
- Q18. Can the crown please confirm that they would accept the Canadian equivalent Certified Personnel Consultant Program, in place of the Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) designation, which is an American designation.
- A18. Yes, CRA will accept Certified Personnel Consultant Certification. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q19. Please clarify the meaning of Professional Services as it pertains to M4, M5 and the Stream Specific requirements SSM1.x. Specifically what determines a Professional Services contract in each requirement and are there any specific resource requirements implied?
- A19. Please refer to Annex A, Statement of Work and Annex B, PSSC Catalogue of Resources for a description of professional services. There are no specific resource requirements implied.
- Q20. Would the Crown please provide a specific date rather than (as of bid closing date); RFP submission dates are sometimes extended which in turn is a moving target for number crunching for the contracts' revenues timeframe.
- A20. No, CRA will not provide a specific date.
- Q21. In SSM1.x, is there a reason behind requiring “averaged over each of the last three (3) years” of the contracts? As some long-term contracts wane as they come to conclusion - revenue too may wane as the close of a contract approaches. May Bidders use any year of the contract for this average (within the past 5 years)? In addition, Bidders will be using on-going contracts to demonstrate to the referenced requirements above - therefore “the last three (3) years” of the contract may not be applicable, as they will still be invoicing on the on-going, continuing contracts.
- A21. The “averaged over each of the last three (3) years” is important to CRA as it demonstrates recent experience. No, Bidders may not use any year of the contract, the minimum annual gross revenue must be averaged over the last three years.
- Q22. For R2.1, requiring specific certifications to demonstrate “commitment and continuous improvement to the management of provided/required are from the United States and not a certification that a Canadian company may normally turn to - aren't there any Canadian certifications? Would the Crown consider a narrative by Bidders as to how they demonstrate “commitment and continuous improvement to the management of contract” or leave the requirement as having ISO certification only for full rated points' achievement?
- A22. Applicable Canadian certifications are allowed. The point allocation for this criteria will remain as is. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.



- Q23. For R2.2, please confirm that this requirement is asking for one (1) contract only, to demonstrate experience and for that one (1) contract, to provide two (2) client contacts for the one (1) contract.
- A23. There is no maximum number of contracts. There can only be a maximum of two (2) client contacts.
- Q24. Please clarify - is a Bidder to submit one (1) separate proposal for EACH of the Streams, or one (1) proposal for multiple streams?'
- A24. Bidders are required to submit each stream individually in accordance with the requested format in Section 3.1.
- Q25. Restricting Bidders receipt of necessary answers to their requests for clarification to only a set of two provides a great hindrance to Bidders response development. Receiving their requested information as late as August 11 leaves only six business days to proposal submission. Six days may not be enough time for a Bidder to adjust their proposal according to the late receipt of information. Would the Crown please reconsider and provide Bidders the requested information on a timelier basis?
- A25. Questions and Answers will be released as per the timelines in section 2.4, Communications – Solicitation Period. See RFP Amendment #1 released on July 27, 2017.
- Q26. For M5, would CRA consider allowing bidders to demonstrate 5 Professional Services contracts, with a minimum value of \$5 million over the past 10 years, which would be more in line with M4's requirement of demonstrating 10 years of experience?
- A26. No CRA will not amend the RFP to the past 10 years. CRA has amended the RFP to allow contracts that have been awarded in the past 7 years. See RFP Amendment #2 released on August 4, 2017.
- Q27. With regard to the mandatory corporate experience criteria, M4 it states "The Bidder must include documents demonstrating at least 10 years in delivering Professional Services, as described in Annex A....". Will the Crown please confirm that to demonstrate this requirement the Bidders can provide a list of projects (including client name, durations, and project titles), adding up to 10+ non-overlapping years, and this will be considered sufficient evidence to meet the mandatory M4.
- A27. It is up to the Bidder to demonstrate M4. Documents can include, but are not limited to Articles of Incorporation.
- Q28. For the mandatory requirements: SSM 1.1, SSM2.1, SSM3.1, SSM4.1, and SSM5.1, will the Crown please confirm that the minimum annual gross revenue stated under each of these criteria must be related to any Professional Services, and not necessarily aligned to the specific Stream that each criteria pertains to?
- A28. Yes, the minimum annual gross revenue must be focused on Professional Services, not necessarily aligned to the specific stream.
- Q29. With regards to M5 "The Bidder must have been awarded at least five (5) Professional Services Contracts. Each of these contracts must have a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes) and have been awarded within the past five years (as of bid closing date)", would you consider amending to "five (5) Professional Services Contracts, each with a minimum value of \$2 million (including taxes) within the past 5 years (as of bid closing date)"? Contracts satisfying this requirement would have numerous resources each, therefore demonstrating the same capability to provide suitable resources.
- A29. No, CRA will not make these changes to M5.



- Q30. Given that the release of the first-round Q&A was delayed by 8 days, which takes it past the original August 2 deadline for the 2nd set of questions or requests for clarification on the RFP, will CRA set and distribute a new deadline for the 2nd set of questions, to permit vendors to incorporate the newly-received information and amendments to the RFP into any additional questions they wish to submit?
- A30. Questions and Answers will be released as per the timelines in section 2.4, Communications – Solicitation Period. See RFP Amendment #1 released on July 27, 2017.
- Q31. Under R2, CRA lists a number of applicable Staffing and IT professional services certifications. Please confirm that CRA will also accept the CCWP certification given that Staffing Industry Analysts Certified Contingent Workforce Professional (CCWP) is an accreditation designed for HR, procurement, MSP solution providers and others who manage corporate contingent staffing. Further information regarding the CCWP is available at: <http://www2.staffingindustry.com/row/Events/Certification-Training-CCWP-SOW>
- A31. Yes, CRA would accept this certification. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q32. Per the amended R2.1 criterion, would the CRA recognize a post-graduate level Human Resources Management diploma in the list of acceptable qualifications? It demonstrates education levels comparable to or exceeding the CHRP certification as it covers:
- Human Resources Strategies
  - Organizational Behaviour
  - Employee/Labour Relations
  - Recruitment and Selection
  - Training and Development
  - Compensation and Benefits
- A32. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q33. Will the CRA consider an extension to the end of September, to allow vendors to assemble fully-compliant responses to the first and second round of Q&A?
- A33. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q34. For SSM 5.2 Page 32 of 108 – Communications Officer - Stream 5- Administrative, the Communications Officer Category is seldom requested of a Professional Services firm; whereas the others in this stream are more often used by the Crown to contract services. Would the Crown consider eliminating this category and provide more Bidders the opportunity to respond to a more standard complement of professional services administrative categories?
- A34. There has been sufficient usage of this resource category to justify its presence under Stream 5. The Communications Officer category will remain under Stream 5 - Administrative.
- Q35. Per the amended R2.1 criterion, would the CRA recognize a Black Belt Recruiter Certification from the International Professional Alliance of Staffing Specialists (iPASS)?
- A35. Yes, CRA would accept this certification. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.





- Q36. Regarding R2.1 – In the most recent amendment, the Crown accepted additional certifications based on their relevance to specific experience in the area of Human Resources. We agree that expert knowledge and education in this area will lead to improved success in delivering on this contract, in fact we believe that the various certifications currently accepted in your RFP should be the minimum educational requirements for the named Contract Manager. With that said, would the Crown accept the following two educational certifications and assign them a score of 5pts each as the topics covered, knowledge, and experience gained meets and/or exceeds that of the current accepted certifications: 4 year University Degree: Business Degree (Specialization, Human Resources Management) or 3 year College Diploma – Business Administration (Specialization in Human Resources Management)?
- A36. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q37. On page 43, within section 2.2 Point Rated Corporate Criteria, specific to R1.2, can the Crown please answer the following question: Does the experience provided to substantiate this criteria have to be tied to the contract references used to substantiate the billable hour criteria? Or can we use clients / projects outside of these contract references?
- A37. You can use clients / projects outside of the contract references used to substantiate the billable hour criteria to support criteria R1.2.
- Q38. Regarding Attachment B - Corporate Reference Template (amendment #2); what level of detail will CRA deem compliant under "CONTRACT DETAILS, Description of Services provided under this Contract"? Is CRA seeking a high-level overview of the project itself, or a more detailed breakdown of tasks by resource type used to demonstrate billable hours? i.e does the vendor have to substantiate a minimum % of tasks similar to those outlined in the RFP?
- A38. CRA is looking for a detailed description of the services provided under the referenced contract to demonstrate the billable hours provided in Attachment A – Billable Hours Response Table.
- Q39. We are unable to open/view the “High Complexity Bid Solicitation and Resulting Contract Template (HC)”, can you please provide a copy of the template found: <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/standard-acquisition-clauses-and-conditions-sacc-manual/standard-procurement-templates>.
- A39. This template is not applicable to this RFP.
- Q40. Can the Crown please clarify if we need to provide a contract reference template (attachment B of Appendix 1) in coverage of the rated billable hours? They are requested in the mandatory section, but not listed in the billable section, however Amdt 002 states that all billable hours must be substantiated by a contract reference form for all billable days.
- A40. The contract reference template is required for all billable hours, both mandatory and rated.
- Q41. Please refer to M5 under Mandatory Corporate Experience Criteria requiring bidders to show contract awards of 5, \$5 million contracts within the past 7 years. We find this criterion unnecessarily limiting as a large provider of IT professional services to the Government of Canada. For firms that may provide quality resources with many years' experience for one stream only (i.e. Stream 3 - Cyber Protection Services requiring only 2 resource categories), CRA is eliminating a larger pool of qualified resources based on this criterion as written. In the spirit of fair and open competition, would CRA be willing to accept proof of provision of IT professional services to the Government of Canada totaling more than \$80 million within the past 7 years (or \$60 million over the past 5 years), rather than the 5 contracts of \$5 million each?
- A41. There will be no change to this criteria.



- Q42. Regarding Stream-Specific Mandatory (SSM) Criteria for Stream 4 - SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Services, SSM 4.1 and SSM 4.2 on page 31 of 108: For this stream we are concerned that the mandatory requirements will result in favouring a generalist firm that has done a small amount of SAP work, rather than an SAP specialist firm with the experience required to best serve the needs of CRA. SSM4.1 requires \$4M of any professional services revenue, and SSM4.2 requires a mere 6600 total SAP hours per year (33,000 over 5 years) which amounts to approximately 4 full-time SAP resources having been billed each year. This is a very low requirement for an SAP specific stream as CRA currently has many more SAP consultants than this. As such, we respectfully suggest that CRA would be best served by changing SSM4.1 to require “a minimum annual gross revenue, focused on SAP Professional Services, of ten million dollars (\$10M) averaged over each of the last three (3) years” and/or by significantly increasing the Minimum Number of Billable Hours required in SSM 4.2.
- A42. There will be no change to this criteria.
- Q43. Regarding Appendix 2: Point Rated Criteria, R1 on page 40 of 108: R1 limits many mature small and medium sized businesses who have grown rapidly, despite not having been in business 17 years, to get full points. We respectfully request CRA lower the mandatory years in M4 to 5 years instead of 10 to allow more small and medium sized companies to bid. This would mean full marks would be available to 12 year old companies which we feel is a mature company who could service CRA as well as a 17 year old company.
- A43. There will be no change to this criteria.
- Q44. Regarding Appendix 2: Point Rated Criteria, R2.1 on page 40 of 108: We operate as a team to support our clients whereby a dedicated Client Manager and one or more recruiters support an account. The Individual Certifications requested would normally be possessed by HR/Recruiters. Would it be acceptable for one of the team members that we would assign to CRA to have the certifications? If this is acceptable should we provide the name/profile of the assigned recruiters in addition to the Client Manager identified in M6?
- A44. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q45. With regards to mandatory corporate experience criteria M5, would the Crown confirm that Professional Services related to areas such as business transformation service contracts, six-sigma service contracts, financial statement audit service contracts, etc. would be accepted under this mandatory requirement?
- A45. Please refer to Annex A, Statement of Work and Annex B, PSSC Catalogue of Resrouces for a description of professional services.
- Q46. Based on RFP content and on clarification provided in previous Q&A, we understand that Joint Venture (JV) responses can share contribution to meeting mandatory requirements, such as the requirement for a minimum of 5 contracts with a minimum value of \$5M, awarded within the last 5 years or for minimum averaged annual gross revenue over (\$40M, \$10M, \$3M, \$4M, \$3M) respectively for the 5 streams. Are we also correct in assuming that the same would apply to requirements SSM 1.2, SSM 2.2, SSM 3.2, SSM 4.2 and SSM 5.2? Whereby, experience to show fulfillment of the minimum number of billable hours can also be a shared contribution? Meaning of the 45,000 minimum Project Management hours required, a JV consisting of 3 members, each could contribute a 15,000 for a total of 45,000? Please confirm this assumption is correct.
- A46. Yes, this is correct.
- Q47. It is requested that CRA initiate a 3rd round of questions and answers for this requirement.
- A47. CRA will not be adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> round of questions and answers.



- Q48. Normally for a contract of this size and complexity our company appoints a Client Manager who reports directly to a Senior Company Executive who in turn reports directly to the Company's Board of Directors. The Client Manager then draws on the resources of various company departments including Recruiting, Human Resources and Payroll. This offers our clients specialized expertise in all areas of contract management. Would CRA please consider changing R2.1 so that:
- 1.) The individual certifications are not applicable to only the Client Manager but can be held by the Client Manager's supporting staff.
  - 2.) Certifications are added that are actually germane to the Client Manager role, such as an MBA, a PMP or PgMP, Prince2, degree in Project Management, a degree in Client Relations Management would also be awarded points.
- A48. 1) There will be no change to this criteria. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager.  
2) For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q49. Having found a Contract Manager that would achieve 15 rated points and when combined with our local presence and ISO certification having us achieve all of the available 35 points, will our submitted Contract Management Plan, if considered good or exceptional, be eligible for any additional points?
- A49. Points will only be awarded as per the rating scale identified in the rated criteria.
- Q50. With regards to R2.1, it is understood that CRA recognizes and is awarding points for certifications (5 per certification) that show a firm's continuous improvement and management of contracts by the Client Manager. Our Client Manager completed a rigorous 20 month Masters in Business Administration (MBA) which dealt with all of the education modules covered in the CSP & Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist (CTS) certifications, in addition to learning best practices in Organizational Behavior & Conflict Management, Information Systems, Strategy & Business Alignment, Sustainability and Social Responsibility and Big Data Analytics. These best practices originated from sound public and private sector fundamentals which provide our Client Manager the tools to improve the delivery of our services. Will CRA amend R2.1 to include MBA as an eligible certification/degree, with an associated value of 10 points for this particular degree?
- A50. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q51. Given the amount of time in between the sets of Questions and Answers/Amendments, we are prevented from fully moving forward with our bid while we await answers. We respectfully request an extension to the closing date of the RFP by 4 weeks to Oct. 17th.
- A51. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q52. We respectfully request that CRA provide for the submission of a third set of questions as we anticipate based on the answers to the first round of questions that the answers to the second round of questions will not fully clarify bidder questions and concerns and will not allow bidders to provide their best proposals to the requirements.
- A52. CRA will not be adding a 3rd round of questions and answers.



- Q53. Regarding the revised criteria and associated points for R2.1: currently 15 of the 35 points are for the individual certifications relevant only to the proposed Client Manager. In managing large contracts such as this, it is customary to have an entire delivery team responsible for supporting the client account; this would include a primary client manager, back-up account/client manager, a recruiting team, plus administrative/operations support to assist with reporting, invoicing, security clearances. As it stands, only one individual may claim the points, and it would be highly unusual for one person to hold 3 such similar certifications. We respectfully ask CRA to revise the point allocation for R2.1 to allow for up the 15 points to be awarded for any member of the Bidder's client delivery team who holds the valid certification(s).
- A53. No, CRA will not revise the point allocation for R2.1. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q54. Regarding R2.1, there are 4 individual certifications listed. We feel that in managing a large professional services supply chain contract such as this, there are other relevant certifications or education/degrees which would benefit CRA, in that the holders of such certifications/degrees would have specific knowledge/know-how related to project management, supply chain management, resource management, administration of contracts, etc. Can CRA please confirm if the following certifications or degrees would be considered equivalent to those listed, and therefore also be allocated 5 or 10 points each?
- Project Management Professional (PMP), Prince 2
  - Program Management Professional (PgMP)
  - Masters of Business Administration (MBA)
  - Masters in Human Resources Administration
  - Human Resources Management Certificate
- A54. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed and provide the supporting documentation. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q55. Re: R2.1 Contract Management plan rating scale. In order to award points for the quality and relevance of the plan itself, would the crown consider reducing the three individual certifications to only one and instead, award points for both ISO 9001: 2008 (5 Points) and 2015 (10 Points)?
- A55. No, there will be no changes to this criteria or the rating scale.
- Q56. If companies are not restricted from participating in more than one bid per stream, how will price manipulation be controlled and avoided?
- A56. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q57. Re: Appendix 1, 1.2, M5. Can the Crown confirm that the letters of references that will be provided by the clients for those 5 contracts must stipulate that the service has already been provided and billed over \$5,000,000?
- A57. As stated in M5, the letters of references must show that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes). The letters of reference do not need to stipulate the billed amounts.
- Q58. Would the Crown consider an extension of 3 weeks?
- A58. CRA will not extend the closing date.



Q59. Page 40 – Appendix 2 - Point Rated Corporate Criteria R2.2: In order for a Bidder to score maximum points they must demonstrate their ability to supply, manage and retain 40+ qualified resources for 675 hours over a six consecutive month period on a single project within the past five years. The requirement and its associated scoring does not take into account the vast difference in the average annual gross revenues between Stream 1 Bidders (\$40M) and Streams 2, 3, 4 and 5 Bidders (\$10M, \$3M, \$4M and \$3M respectively). The larger Stream 1 Bidders are more likely to have a single project with over 40 resources (scoring maximum points) while the smaller Bidders on Streams 2, 3, 4 and 5 are less likely to have a single project with over 40 resources (scoring significantly less points).

In order to remove the disparity between Stream 1 Bidders and Stream 2, 3, 4 and 5 Bidders, would CRA consider amending R2.2 to allow Bidders to use one the following options:

- 1) Multiple projects within a single contract for worked performed on an as-and-when requested basis using Task Authorizations;
- 2) A Professional Services Supply Chain contract similar to the current CRA contract (work performed on a multiple award contract, on an as-and-when requested basis using Task Authorizations)

A59. CRA will not amend R2.2

Q60. Section 2 Amendments to RFP#2, made the following change “Corporate Certification: (Points will only be given for one of the following ISO certifications, not both)  
- ISO 9001:2008 certified (5 pts)  
- ISO 9001: 2015 certified (10 pts) “

ISO standards are reviewed every five years and revised if needed. The new version of the standard, ISO 9001:2015, has just been launched, replacing the previous version (ISO 9001:2008). Bidders certified to the standard, if you are certified to the standard, have a three-year transition period from the date of publication (September 2015) to move to the 2015 version. This means that, after the end of September 2018, a certificate to ISO 9001:2008 will no longer be valid.

Please revert the scoring back as to the original RFP, that is:  
-ISO 9001: 2008 or 2015 certified (10 pts)

Alternately, would CRA allow Bidders who are currently ISO 9001:2008 certified to demonstrate organizational commitment to transition to the newly released 2015 version standard to score full points (ie Auditors report/recommendations on transitioning to the new standard). The first Audit cycle for transitioning to ISO 9001: 2015 is not always recommended for organizations by ISO Auditors and timing for compliance is complex for large organizations).

A60. The most recent ISO 9001 2015 certification is important to CRA, therefore CRA will not revise the scoring.

Q61. Section 2 Amendments to RFP#2, made the following change “Individual Certifications: (applicable only to the Client Manager proposed in M6) (max 15 pts).  
-Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) (5 pts)  
-Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist (5pts)  
-Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) (5pts)  
-Registered Professional Recruiter Certification (5 pts)”

The above certifications are traditionally held by recruiters (not necessarily client managers) and bears an unfair weighting of attainable Point Rated Corporate Criteria (up to 15 of 80 pts or +18%) attributable to the client manager's certifications. If Individual Certifications are deemed a significant corporate rated criteria in supporting CRA, then the certifications should be allowed to be held amongst /across the proposed Bidder's CRA delivery team as per their proposed Contract Management Plan (CMP) and aligned to the roles where traditionally companies invest in these certifications (ie recruiters). Please either apply this point scoring to the proposed CMP delivery team and/or remove individual certifications for the proposed client manager.



- A61. CRA will not make these changes. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q62. We respectfully request that CRA clarify its answer in Amendment 2 to Q&A#68 that states “CRA will not restrict companies from participating in more than one Bid per stream”. If CRA allows companies to participate in multiple JVs in response to each stream, it opens the door to potentially affecting the price bands/medians per the financial evaluation criteria and could adversely affect bidders who bid as individual entities (and are not represented in multiple JV responses to a stream). A fair and reasonable restriction on Bidders would be a limit of representation on 1 JV and 1 Individual Entity/Direct non JV response per stream).
- A62. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q63. Re: Amendment # 002, 2. Amendments to the RFP 2, R2.1 – Contract Management Plan; “Individual Certifications: (applicable only to the Client Manager proposed in M6)”
- The change to R2.1 appears to require HR certifications to be held only by the Client Manager. Given the size and value of a resulting contract, the Client Manager for most qualified Bidders would be an executive responsible for the leading the Dedicated Account Team. The requested certifications are HR-related and therefore would be most likely held by the member of the Account Team responsible for the screening, recruiting, and on-boarding of the resources themselves. As such, would the Crown please consider modifying this requirement to be applicable only to any member of the Account Team proposed within the Contract Management Plan? This would also make the evaluation of these certifications relevant to the Contract Management Plan which is the basis of the requirement of R2.1.
- A63. No, CRA will not make these changes. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q64. Re: Amendment # 002, 2. Amendments to the RFP 2., R2.1 – Contract Management Plan; Rating Scale; Corporate Certification: (Points will only be given for one of the following ISO certifications, not both)  
-ISO 9001: 2008 certified (5pts)  
-ISO 9001: 2015 certified (10pts).
- According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ISO 9001 certification is obtained by IT firms whose core business is to provide a product or solution where they are responsible for source code development and product realization, including the steps from design to delivery, and not providing staffing services. The scope of this RFP describes the services as “The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has issued this Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit bids from qualified professional services suppliers for Multiple Award Contracts (MACs) under the Professional Services Supply Chain (PSSC)”. Given these facts, the ISO certification and the CRA's requirement do not align. Furthermore, one of the lead incumbents currently working at CRA is ISO certified and this gives the unintended appearance that they have affected the RFP format. Although ISO is a rated requirement, the competition for a bid such as this will be exceptionally tight so providing this level of advantage to a small subset of companies does not align with the Crown's intent to foster fair and open competition. To ensure a fair competition, would the Crown please remove this requirement for ISO certification and/or allow alternate external third-party validation of processes such as 50 Best Managed?
- A64. ISO Certification is important to CRA and therefore CRA will not be removing the requirement for ISO Certification. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed and provide supporting documentation. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.



- Q65. Re: Amendment # 002, A68, "CRA will not restrict companies from participating in more than one Bid per stream." It is unclear how many bids a company can submit on each stream. If a company is participating in more than one Joint Venture for the same stream, they would have access to the bidding strategy and pricing for bids that are in direct competition and therefore introducing the potential for serious problems such as bid rigging and/or price fixing. Even the perception of these conflicts could result in award delays while challenges are investigated. Given the significant investment Bidders must make to prepare these large-scale proposals, would the Crown please consider restricting the number of proposals a company can be part of to ONE per stream? This would greatly reduce the risk of contract award delays.
- A65. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q66. Regarding R2.1: Certified Staffing Professional (CSP), Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist, Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP), and Registered Professional Recruiter certifications are not typically held by Client Managers; they are held by resources working in a supporting role such as recruiting and human resources. These individuals are not usually assigned to an individual project or contract but provide support to all Client Managers. Please revise the requirement such that the certifications held by any of the company's resources assigned to support CRA would be awarded points.
- A66. CRA will not make these changes. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q67. In R2.1 it appears that CRA is asking not so much for a Contract Management Plan but for one super individual that does Contract Management, Recruiting and Resource Management. This would be something a small company would be looking for but does not seem appropriate for a requirement of this scope. With the complexity of the contract(s) and the number of resource required, especially in certain streams, a Client Manager would have to be supported by Recruiting and Human Resources specialists and those are the people that should have the stated certifications, not the Client Manager. The Client Manager should have a Contract Management Certification or a Project Management Certification or a combination of those as found in an MBA. Will CRA please consider revising the list of certifications to include certifications related to project or contract management, or a degree such Masters of Business Administration or Masters of Human Resources Administration?
- A67. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed and provide supporting documentation. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q68. Given the amount of work necessary to prepare Bidders' responses to up to 6 RFP streams, and the length of time between questions and answers periods, we respectfully request an extension of the closing date of this RFP by one month.
- A68. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q69. In reference to amendment #2, Q&A33 regarding Attachment B of Appendix 1– Corporate Reference Template, Resource Details Section: If Bidders are not required to demonstrate the work billed for each resource by including the resource name, start date, end date and number of hours billed and a cross reference from the referenced contract category to the resource category listed in the PSSC Catalogue (ie , Jane Doe, 01 January 2015 to 31 December 2015, 1,500 billed days, referenced contract category Tester, Cross-referenced PSSC Catalogue resource category Quality Assurance Specialist), how should the details be presented? Could CRA please provide a sample Resource Details section that demonstrates what is acceptable for compliance?
- A69. CRA is looking for a detailed description of the services provided under the referenced contract to demonstrate the billable hours provided in Attachment A – Billable Hours Response Table. The onus is on the Bidder to provide a detailed description of the services provided under the referenced contract.



- Q70. Regarding Appendix 1: Mandatory Criteria, section 1.2 Mandatory Corporate Experience Criteria, M4, which states: "The Bidder must include documents demonstrating at least 10 years in delivering Professional Services, as described in Annex A, Statement of Work and Annex B, PSSC Catalogue of Resources, at the closing date of this RFP." Is a Certificate of Incorporation sufficient to meet M4? If additional documents are required, what needs to be provided?
- A70. It is up to the Bidder to demonstrate M4. Documents can include, but are not limited to Articles of Incorporation.
- Q71. As we will not receive clarification on several questions until the next RFP amendment is released on September 1, 2017, we respectfully request a 4 week extension to allow sufficient time to prepare a compliant and thorough response.
- A71. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q72. With regards to R2.1 – Contract Management Plan, Amendment 2 page 16 of 18: The Crown has significantly restricted this requirement in Amendment 2 by specifying that all 4 certifications listed for scores are "only applicable to the client manager". This is completely unreasonable and represents no advantage to the Crown. FIRST: it is unlikely that 1 individual will gather up 4 certifications that are redundant/all similar in nature. SECOND: For large contracts such as this one, a successful contract management plan will involve a multi-disciplinary delivery "team" which includes a client manager and a team of recruiters. Thus the client manager is not expected to be expert in the recruiting field. THIRD: Two of the listed certifications are American certifications and employees of most of Canadian companies will not have these certificates. This puts Canadian companies at a disadvantage as compared to American firms, which are not likely to deploy the certified resources in support of this contract. Therefore, it gives no advantage to the Crown. A more reasonable and fair scoring for R2.1 is to have the client manager hold one relevant certificate. We therefore request that the requirement be changed to one certificate from the listed four certificates. Alternatively we request that other corporate certifications recognized internationally such as TOGAF, Six Sigma, ITSM, etc. be considered for points as they reflect maturity of the bidding firm.
- A72. CRA will not revise the scoring for R2.1. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q73. With regards to Amendment 2, Q&A #68: the Crown has indicated that it will not prevent a firm from bidding with multiple JV's and as an individual within one stream. This is a grave concern. This means that a vendor could be part of multiple bids and be in a position to influence pricing in all of the bids it is participating in leading to price manipulation and potential bid rigging situations. For example, given that CRA received 8 bids for Stream 1. Company ABC is putting out its own bid and is also part of 5 other bids in a JV arrangement. As a result, company ABC has a strong advantage in being able to influence pricing on 6 bids out of a total of 8 bids. This leads to Bid Rigging. We request that the Crown restricts vendors to the submission of only 1 bid per stream as is the case for most Government RFPs. Since different streams are evaluated separately, it is reasonable that the same vendor can bid with different vendors on different streams as is allowed for most Government RFPs.
- A73. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q74. With regards to Amendment 2, Q&A #70: Can you please confirm our understanding of Answer #70 as meaning that for each of the 5 contracts to be presented for M5, the bidder must have "provided services" (billed) for a minimum of \$5Million including taxes over the past 5 years, and that the client reference letter should reference the total dollars billed, as opposed to simply state the value of the contract which can be obtained from the contract cover page. We understand that this is the only way for the Crown to obtain assurance that the bidder has in fact rendered the services and therefore has the required experience in the successful delivery of large professional services contracts. Can you please confirm our understanding?





- A74. As stated in M5, the letters of references must show that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes). The letters of reference do not need to stipulate the billed amounts.
- Q75. Given the extent of information required for the bid and also taking into consideration that this is prime vacation time and many companies are short staffed; we request a 3 weeks extension in order to prepare a comprehensive bid.
- A75. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q76. Please reference Amendment 2, which modified R2.1 2) Corporate Certification to award 5 points to an ISO 9001:2008 certification, and 10 points to an ISO 9001:2015 Certification: The ISO 9001:2015 standard is very similar to the ISO 9001:2008 standard. The new standard was created to make an organization's quality management system more user-friendly for the organization itself, and uses simplified language to help organizations using multiple management systems. Although the new standard places focus and increased prominence on risk-based thinking, this has always been part of the standard and as such will make no significant difference to the Quality of Service delivered to an organization's clients. Given the above, and given that any vendors currently ISO 9001:2008 certified are required to complete their transition to ISO 9001:2015 in 2018, will the client revert to their original scoring, which awarded 10 points to either ISO 9001:2008 or ISO 9001:2015 certification?
- A76. The most recent ISO 9001 2015 certification is important to CRA, and therefore CRA will not revise the scoring.
- Q77. Please reference R2.1 2) Individual Certifications: will CRA accept a Certified Personnel Consultant (CPC) certification from Canada's Staffing Industry Association, the Association of Canadian Search, Employment and Staffing Services (ACSESS), for 15 points? Unlike the CSP and CTS certifications, the CPC certification is a Canadian certification and therefore tailored to the Canadian market and CRA's needs. It is also more challenging to obtain. The CPC certification focuses on quality services by staffing industry professionals. It requires prior industry experience, the completion of five core modules which include Legal Aspects-Staffing Services including Government Regulations and Employment Standards, Legal Aspects -Recruitment Practices including Human Rights, PIPEDA and Employment Equity, Health and Safety, Recruitment and Selection and Business Practices and Ethics, attendance at workshops, and multiple examinations (online and monitored).
- A77. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below. .
- Q78. For M5 under 1.2 Mandatory Corporate Experience Criteria, can CRA please confirm that they will accept an extension to a Professional Services Contracts with a value over \$5,000,000.00 awarded within the last 5 years?
- A78. M5 was amended to within the last 7 years. See RFP Amendment #2 released on August 4, 2017.
- Q79. With regards to R2.1 – Contract Management Plan Rating Scale, CSP and CTSS are from the American Staffing Association, thus it is unclear what the added value / relevance is to the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) for requesting that the designated Account Managers have these certifications. Will CRA consider removing these from the evaluation since the years of experience of the account manager adds more value to CRA than an entry level certification?
- A79. CRA will not remove these certifications. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.



- Q80. With regard to QA #68 from Amendment No 002, A68 appears to pose significant risk to the bidding process and is potentially in violation of CITT rules. Allowing a company to have more than 1 bid (this includes JV's) within a given stream could challenge CRA's ability to negate potential violations in the bidding process. For example, 3 contracts will be awarded in Stream 1, if Company A is present in all 3 contract awards, how will CRA be able to justify? Also, how does this add value to CRA if the same supplier is present in all 3 contract awards? Can you clarify QA #68?
- A80. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q81. With regard to QA #70 from Amendment No 002, we understand that CRA is asking suppliers to demonstrate (via reference letter) contract awards with a value of \$5M (including taxes). However, some supplier might have been awarded a \$5M contract but have minimal hours billed against this contract if they cannot provide resources. Thus, being able to show that you have billed/invoiced \$5M or more (including taxes) on these contracts is a better representation of a company's strength, experience, placement of resources and ability to add value to CRA as a supplier. Thus, will CRA consider amending Section 1.2 (M5) in the RFP to requesting suppliers prove they have invoiced \$5M or more (including taxes) on their contracts references? This would further help CRA validate a suppliers profile and will be a better demonstration of a company's profile and ability to provide resources.
- A81. As stated in M5, the letters of references must show that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes). The letters of reference do not need to stipulate the billed amounts.
- Q82. Will CRA grant a 3 week extension since the LOE to respond is heavy and most clients are not available during the summer months to respond to request?
- A82. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q83. Given the incumbent companies in CRA have binding legal non-competition clauses in place with on-site contract resources; there is no requirement within the R2.1 Contract Management Plan to address transition of resources to avoid service interruptions. We suggest that CRA amend the requirements to the Contract Management Plan to include the process by which Vendors would transition existing contract resources over to the new contract.
- A83. CRA will not amend R2.1 to include process of transition of existing resources.
- Q84. Demerit Points, would CRA consider increasing the number of demerit points, for 4 of the 5 streams, to be closer aligned with the previous PSSC RFP (where there were only 2 levels per category) from 2010 which had a higher % of allowable demerits for the categories within the stream, For example:
- Stream 1- Increase Maximum # of demerit points to 5
  - Stream 2- Increase Maximum # of demerit points to 4
  - Stream 3- Keep the Maximum # of demerit points at 2
  - Stream 4- Increase Maximum # of demerit points to 4
  - Stream 5- Increase Maximum # of demerit points to 5
- Alternatively, would the Crown consider leaving the total allowable demerits as is but omit Level 1 categories from the demerit process? Level 1 resource pricing can be extremely varied thru the vendor community and, given the lower rates expected at this level, the margin for error would be smaller and thus more likely for Vendors to receive a demerit. Level 1 resource are also, traditionally, rarely requested during most federal government procurement processes as the Crown is usually seeking more experience candidates at the Level 2 and Level 3 categories
- A84. CRA will not remove Level 1 Categories. CRA will revise the demerit points for streams 1 and 5. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #2 below.



Q85. Joint Venture, Regarding the QA 68 from amendment #2, regarding companies participating in more than one (1) Bid/Proposal per stream, but NOT restricting the participation of companies being presented in more than one bidding entity CRA can likely expect hundreds of responses. In the example below one firm can easily submit 4 or 5 bids per stream, with varied pricing, which will both invalidate the median rates and provide an unfair advantage to companies who are just creating JVs to increase their chances of winning.

We request that the Crown have vendors conform to the industry standard which is: "Multiple bids from the same Bidder (or a bid from a Bidder and another bid from any of its affiliates) are not permitted in response to this bid solicitation. Each Bidder may only submit one single bid per stream. For the purpose of this bid solicitation, individual members of a joint venture cannot participate in another bid, either by submitting a bid alone or by participating in another joint venture."

A85. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.

Q86. Referencing requirement Point-Rated 2.2, sub R1.2, the purpose of this requirement is to ensure the proposed vendor has previous experience placing a high number of resources who support Cobol systems, the current scoring allows vendors to garner full points by essentially placing as little as 3 resources each year (3 placement x 5 years = 15 placements). To ensure the scoring maps to the reason for the requirement please consider changing the requirement to include the following:

- Each resource must have been on assignment for a minimum of 6 consecutive months and must have billed no fewer than 675 hours during the 6 month period;
- Each resource placed can only be counted once in the total number of placed resources;
- To garner full points each reference project must have include 15 placements (not 15 combined);
- One of the contract referenced projects must be from NCR; and
- Increase the # of placements to align to CRA historical COBOL needs.

A86. CRA will not be making these changes.

Q87. The Certified Staffing Professional Certificate (CSP) is a USA staffing designation specific to the State in which you request. Having this certification indicates that the holder was trained in "rigorous content focused on employment and labor law at both the federal and state levels" (for example Texas) There is no Canadian content that is affiliated with a CSP designation. In our opinion becoming proficient in American federal and state HR related regulations would not show dedication to, nor aid in, the management of a Canadian based contract. We request this certification's removal and/or replacement with another certification (such as the AIRS Professional Recruiter Certification) that is non-country specific and still shows an Account Manager's commitment and continuous improvement to the recruitment and candidate management process.

A87. CRA will not remove these certifications. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.

Q88. Please confirm that a standing offer and/or supply arrangement cannot be used as unique single contract, given that TBIPS issued Supply Arrangement / Standing Offers have a zero dollar value, individual contracts issued cannot be combined under one TBIPS master contract to total the required \$5M to meet M5. M5 would need to be met by a single issued contract with a value of \$5M.

A88. Confirmed. M5 would need to be met by a single issued contract with a minimum value of \$5M.



- Q89. Appendix 1, 1.2, M5, (1) requests “A letter from its client (referencing a contract award date and a contract serial number or other unique contract identifier) that shows that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes)”. Please confirm that the Bidder must have billed a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes) for this to be considered compliant and would provide the sort of corporate capability the Crown is looking for in this solicitation. We would suggest this be amended to read: “A letter from its client (referencing a contract award date and a contract serial number or other unique contract identifier) that shows that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract that has invoiced or billed a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes)”. The way the current criteria reads would allow for contracts that were awarded for \$5 million but could have been utilized far less than the contract award.
- A89. As stated in M5, the letters of references must show that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes). The letters of reference do not need to stipulate the billed amounts.
- Q90. R2.1 – Contract Management Plan Rating Scale: CRA has allocated 15 points out of 35 of the Contract Management Plan for individual certifications held by the Client Manager proposed in M6. Many of these certifications aren't relevant to the role of a Client Manager assigned to accounts of this nature, and the Certified Staffing Professional is an provided by the American Staffing Association and “features rigorous content focused on employment and labor law at both the federal and state levels” all of which are American based and has no relevance to a Client Manager working with the Canadian Federal Government. We would request that this particular certification be removed.  
To provide real value to the CRA for Contract Management, more emphasis could be allocated towards the local client management presence with the NCR for managing contracts of this magnitude. We would like to propose that only 5 points (either one of CHRP, RPR, CTSS) be allocated to the individual certifications held by the Client Manager and more emphasis put on the ISO certification or the local client management presence which has more impact on managing the CRA contract over a 7 year period.
- A90. CRA will not make these changes to the point allocation for R2.1. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q91. Q/A 68 of Amendment 2 speaks to CRA allowing a company to participate in more than one Bid in a stream, as an individual corporation or with different JV partnerships. We understand the principle of a second bid under PSAB program but allowing the same firm to participate on multiple bids in a free for all format for the same stream could be argued is directly in opposition to access and competition principles as required by NAFTA. It also seems to be fostering an environment where bid rigging, price manipulation, resource category creep (leveling up for better pricing) amongst a whole host of risks could be encouraged. These risks are exactly what the Competition Act is meant to mitigate. How does having 1 bidder who has participated in 3 separate bids qualifying in a single stream who may be providing resources for the same category with 3 different sets of pricing serve CRA's and Canadian's interest? We would respectfully suggest that CRA limit the joint ventures participation of suppliers to either a single standalone bid or a single standalone bid and a single joint venture participation. We would also like to ask if CRA has obtained an internal legal opinion and would that legal opinion be shared with the supplier community.
- A91. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q92. We would respectfully request a three week extension of the due date of this RFP to Tuesday Oct 10th to properly incorporate all the results of the upcoming Q&A for this RFP and potential bid modifications, and also to allow for confirmation from clients, many whom are on vacation, to verify the reference forms being requested in this RFP.
- A92. CRA will not extend the closing date.



- Q93. From our experience, the contract management role does not execute the recruiting role in the delivery of these resources and therefore does not maintain the recruiting related certs identified. Would the Crown consider amending the requirement asking that the "bidder" demonstrate that their team maintains the certs identified in R2.
- A93. No change. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6
- Q94. With respect to the first set of Questions and Answers related to R2.1, would CRA please explain how individual recruitment certifications relate to a company's ability to manage resulting contracts, whereas the ability to demonstrate a proven contract management process is not given any consideration? This does not make sense. Other than having a local presence, there are no points allocated for the criteria that CRA is looking to support. Our company has a proven, long-standing and well-tuned contract management methodology/plan in place that is continuously improved upon. It is this capability that demonstrates and supports this criteria, not the individual recruitment certifications of a client manager that should not garner any merit. We request that CRA remove the requirement for individual certifications completely as it is irrelevant to how a company can effectively manage a contract. Instead, we suggest changing this rated criteria to reflect a company's ability to show or prove it has real-life Professional Services contract management experience.
- A94. Individual recruitment certifications are important to CRA and will not be removed from R2.1.
- Q95. CRA has certifications listed for the client manager at R2.1. The client manager is the client-facing resource who manages the contract. Much of the recruiting and training work is done behind the scenes with a team of specialized HR professionals and Recruiters. In our opinion, CRA has asked for certifications from the wrong people. We request that CRA change the requirement that will award points for certifications held by anyone in the vendor organization.
- A95. No change. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6
- Q96. Regarding R2.1, would CRA accept a Bachelor of Commerce degree with Honours in Human Resources (four year program attained in 2013) held by our Recruiter as equivalent to all of the points allotted for the individual certifications? At the very least, to accept the degree for the equivalent of two certifications? The University of Ottawa, B.Comm, HR program consists of courses that include:
- i. Managing Change
  - ii. International HR Management
  - iii. Strategic HR Planning
  - iv. Intro to Organizational Communication
  - v. Strategic Management
  - vi. Training and Development
  - vii. Compensation Administration
  - viii. Industrial Relations
  - ix. Staffing Organizations
  - x. Organizational Behavior
  - xi. Marketing
  - xii. Business Decision Models
- A96. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6
- Q97. Ref R2.1 - Corporate Qualifications: requirement for ISO certification/accreditations: a) Other than giving the incumbents an obvious competitive advantage in the process, we see no clear justification why CRA would require its vendors of professional services to have ISO certification. We have not seen this anywhere in the history of Federal Government professional services procurement, and feel that it is an offence to the concept of "fair-competitive-transparent" procurement. We respectfully ask you to remove this requirement/criterion.



- A97. ISO Certification is important to CRA. CRA will not be removing this rated criteria.
- Q98. For the same reason, we feel that the certification requirement for the client managers is on a similar plane, in that you are ignoring years of hands- on experience in favour of some accreditations that we have rarely seen in the field of selling professional services, and should be removed. Please advise
- A98. Certifications are important to CRA. CRA will not be removing this rated criteria.
- Q99. Ref Question and Answer #68 in RFP Amendment #2 – Joint Ventures: We are perplexed that CRA would allow a company to submit multiple bids with different partners as this would necessarily produce collusion of pricing between competing factions, and create problems that have had very negative publicity, not to mention legal ramifications, that are shunned upon by the Federal Government. We suggest that you remove the ability for a company to submit more than one bid/proposal response. Please advise.
- A99. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q100. Page 40 – Appendix 2 - Point Rated Corporate Criteria R2.2: In order for a Bidder to score maximum points they must demonstrate their ability to supply, manage and retain 40+ qualified resources for 675 hours over a six consecutive month period on a single project within the past five years.
- The requirement for the experience to be on a single project in the last five years will prevent smaller companies from scoring maximum points. In the interest of fairness to smaller companies, we respectfully request that the timeline for this be adjusted to include a project awarded within the past ten (10) years (as of bid closing date).
- A100. There will be no change to the timeline for this criteria.
- Q101. Can the Crown please confirm that companies that are accredited as Quality Registrars for different certification systems such as ISO can use this accreditation in support of R2.1? For example, companies that offer management system assessment, training, audit and certification services to assist other companies in obtaining certifications such an ISO, will be awarded points for R2.1.
- A101. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below. .
- Q102. Regarding Corporate Mandatory Requirement M6 – Client Manager and Rated Requirement R2.1 – Contract Management Plan - Managing contracts of similar size and scope to the resulting contracts of this CRA solicitation involves many aspects and skillsets of a vendor firm (proposal, recruiting and resource management, finance/contract management, client management, etc.). Our goal is to provide the best level of service to CRA. It would be most beneficial for the Crown to consider a Team approach to the Client/contract management process, combining the skills and certifications of the team members to meet R2.1 certification requirement. The Client Manager remains the single point of contact for the Client Management Team regarding all aspects of the contract and resource management process. Would the Crown consider amending M6 and R2.1 to include the Client Management Team approach described above to the Client Manager and Contract Management Plan?
- A102. No, CRA will not be making the amendments described in this question.
- Q103. Multiple Stream Submissions: Given that August is the period when many take vacation/leave, obtaining multiple signed client letters (5 per stream) and compiling the vast amount of information required to demonstrate billable hours in multiple streams will require addition time. Would CRA consider granting a 1 month extension and adding one additional set of questions/answer in order to provide Bidders sufficient time to develop a quality, competitive response?



- A103. CRA will not extend the closing date. CRA will not be adding a 3rd round of questions and answers.
- Q104. Page 15 – Section 3.1 states: In their technical bid, bidders should demonstrate their understanding of the requirements contained in the bid solicitation and explain how they will meet these requirements. Bidders should demonstrate their capability and describe their approach in a thorough, concise and clear manner for carrying out the work. Can CRA confirm that a Bidder's response to the mandatory and rated criteria will show sufficient demonstration of their understanding of the requirements contained in the bid solicitation and an explanation of how they will meet these requirements is not necessary?
- A104. In their technical bid, bidders should demonstrate their understanding of the requirements contained in the bid solicitation and explain how they will meet these requirements. Bidders should demonstrate their capability and describe their approach in a thorough, concise and clear manner for carrying out the work.
- Q105. Page 23 – Section 5.2.4 – Vendor Reporting Information: If Bidding as a joint venture must each individual member complete this form?
- A105. No, only the Bidder must complete the form.
- Q106. Page 107 – Annex F – Confidentiality – Canada Revenue Agency Acts: Are Bidders required to sign and submit page 1 of the Annex with their submission? Can CRA please confirm when page 1 and 2 need to be signed and submitted.
- A106. No, Annex F must be submitted after Contract Award.
- Q107. Page 18 – Step 5 states: Claims of future compliance with CRA's Synergy requirements in software and/or hardware releases will not be considered during the evaluation of the Bidder's proposal. Can CRA please identify what information, if any, Bidders must include at bid submission in regards to the Ariba Supplier Network Membership or the Proof of Synergy compliance test outlined on page 77.
- A107. There is no Synergy information required with bid submission.
- Q108. A57 seems to contradict A68 of Amendment 002. To clarify, can a company bid on the same stream as both an individual company and part of a JV or multiple JVs?
- A108. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017
- Q109. Please refer to Attachment B – Corporate Reference Template on page 39 of the RFP. The Bidder is requested to provide Customer/Client Reference contact information to allow the Crown to verify the information provided by the Bidder. The bidder has had negative experiences with regards to this requirement. In one instance a customer/client contact was simply overwhelmed by email and missed the response deadline and in another case a customer/client contact was on vacation and the Administrative Assistant chose a stand-in customer/client contact who was unable to sufficiently speak to the bidders work within the timeline provided. Given this experience and the length in time it will take to evaluate this procurement and therefore easily assure the customer/client contact will be available, in the event that the customer/client contact does not respond to the Crown's verification request, will the Crown confirm they will also advise the Bidder of this difficulty so that the Bidder may assist the crown in connecting with the customer/client contract, and if warranted, propose an additional contact?



- A109. CRA reserves the right to contact any of the client reference(s) provided to verify/validate the information provided by the Bidder. In the event that CRA exercises its right to contact the client reference(s) provided by the Bidder and is unable to reach the reference, the CRA will notify the Bidder. The onus is on the Bidder to ensure that the client reference provided has been notified and will be available if contacted.
- Q110. Please refer to Point Rated Criteria R2.1 Contract Management Plan on page 40 of the RFP. It is the Bidder's experience that large professional services organizations managing a contract of this size and scope have a team of members focused on the many different aspects of contract and resource management including recruiting and delivery of resources. Recruiting will source, qualify, match, select and recommend a candidate. Human resources will support through policies and assist with the management of employee relations issues. Payroll will ensure compliance with payroll and taxation rules and regulations. The Client Manager role is typically focused on managing the individuals and meeting the customers or technical authorities business needs. In addition, it is Bidder's understanding that a single Client Manager would not hold three out of four individual certifications listed in R2.1 and garner full points. For these reasons, would the Crown consider allocating 15 points to Bidder's years of experience in providing contract management services as described in SOW instead of individual certifications applicable to only the Client Manager?
- A110. No, CRA will not be allocating points to Bidder's years of experience providing contract management.
- Q111. Please refer to Rated Criteria R2.1 on page 40 of the RFP. Given Excellence Canada's internationally benchmarked standards and vigorous certification processes to obtain a Canada Award for Excellence, will the Crown also accept a Canada Award for Excellence in the Excellence, Innovation and Wellness Standard at the Gold Level under Corporate Certification for 10 points?
- A111. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q112. Based on the answer to question 68, CRA is currently allowing respondents to submit and participate in an unlimited number of submissions per stream. This could allow a single respondent to set median pricing by participating in or leading a large number of Joint Ventures. In order to keep this procurement process fair, will CRA consider restricting the number of responses a company can participate in two responses per stream?
- A112. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q113. Please refer to Rated Criteria R2.2 on page 40-41 of the RFP. Please confirm that the Bidder may provide one (1) contract reference to demonstrate the requested experience to garner full points on this rated criteria.
- A113. Yes, the Bidder may provide one contract reference.
- Q114. We request a two-week extension to the submission date to October 3rd, 2017.
- A114. CRA will not extend the closing date.
- Q115. Please refer to Mandatory Stream-Specific Criteria SSM 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1 and 5.1 requesting the Bidder to demonstrate minimum annual gross revenue over the each of the last 3 years. Please confirm that the Crown is requesting annual gross revenue for Bidder's last 3 fiscal years (i.e. years 2014, 2015, 2016).
- A115. Yes, confirmed.





- Q116. Please refer to Mandatory Stream-Specific Criteria SSM 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1 and 5.1. Please confirm that the Crown would accept a gross revenue statement (Income statement broken down by revenue source) for Bidder's fiscal years 2014, 2015 and 2016 to demonstrate the annual gross revenue focused on Professional Services over the last 3 years.
- A116. Yes, CRA will accept.
- Q117. Please refer to the rating scale for Individual Certifications under R2.1 Contract Management Plan. Would the Crown accept a Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) granted from the Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario as an equivalent certification?
- A117. Yes, CRA will accept. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below
- Q118. Please refer to the rating scale for Individual Certifications under R2.1 Contract Management Plan. Would the Crown accept Certified Payroll Manager (CPM) as an equivalent certification?
- A118. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q119. Please refer to the rating scale for Individual Certifications under R2.1 Contract Management Plan. Would the Crown accept a Payroll Compliance Practitioner (CPC) as an equivalent certification?
- A119. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q120. Please refer to Stream Specific Mandatory Criteria SSM 1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2 and 5.2 as well as Attachment B – Corporate Reference Template. Would the Crown accept on-going contracts that demonstrate contract experience supplying relevant resource categories for the required minimum billable hours within the last 5 years prior to the RFP closing date?
- A120. Yes.
- Q121. Will CRA amend the RFP to ensure that Vendors may only submit one proposal per stream, either on its own or as part of a joint venture?
- A121. Vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.



- Q122. In reference to A45 of Amendment 002, we believe it is the CRA's intention to allow for Joint Ventures to pool/combine corporate experience in some cases, but not all. For example, in Section 1.2 M4, the requirement states that each member of the Joint Venture must demonstrate at least 10 years in delivering professional services, which means companies cannot pool/combine their years of experience to meet the requirement. Would the CRA please confirm our understanding of items a – d below?
- a) With respect to Section 1.2 M5, 5 companies in a Joint Venture can each submit (1) one \$5,000,000.00 contract to meet this mandatory requirement.
  - b) With respect to Section 1.3, Mandatory Stream-Specific Criteria, SSM 1.1 (and subsequent streams SSM 2.1, SSM 3.1, SSM 4.1 and SSM 5.1), companies may not pool/combine their revenues to meet the requirement. At least one member of the Joint Venture must average \$40M in revenue over each of the last three years.
  - c) With respect to Section 1.3, Mandatory Stream-Specific Criteria, SSM 1.2 (and subsequent streams SSM 2.2, SSM 3.2, SSM 4.2 and SSM 5.2), companies in a Joint Venture may pool/combine their contracts to meet this requirement.
  - d) With respect to Section 2.1 R1, as per amendment 002, question #63, companies may not pool/combine their years of experience. Points for years of experience will only be given once and for the member who has the most years of experience.
- A122. a) Yes, that is correct.  
b) No, members of the Joint Venture can combine to meet the requirement.  
c) Yes, that is correct.  
d) Yes, that is correct.
- Q123. With respect to Section 1.3 Mandatory Stream-Specific Criteria, SSM 1.2, and subsequent streams, as well as the corresponding rated requirements, we agree that the minimum number of billable hours meets the needs of CRA's requirement. Presently, Bidders can use an unlimited number of contracts to substantiate their billable hours. For example, a Bidder could use 30+ small contracts to substantiate the billable hours per category which would mean that a Bidder would submit 210 contracts to meet this requirement (30 contracts x 7 Resource Categories).
- It is our understanding that the CRA's objective is to ensure companies have had success previously supporting large contracts similar in size and complexity to the CRA's needs. By not limiting the number of contracts, the CRA could award contracts to companies or Joint Ventures who have only supported smaller contracts and therefore may not have the capacity to deliver on large scale/volume requirements.
- Our question is: To ensure Bidders have the experience supporting large contracts similar in size and complexity, would the CRA please add the following to SSM 1.2 and R 1.1 (and subsequent streams SSM 2.2/3.2/4.2/5.2 and R 2.1/3.1/4.1/5.1): "The billable hours must have been provided under a maximum of seven (7) contracts per resource category."?
- A123. No, CRA will not limit the number of contracts.



- Q124. Regarding Section 2.1, Point Rated Criteria R2.1: The most relevant way for a company to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement to the management of a contract is through an internationally recognized quality management program, such as ISO. When a company demonstrates they are staying current with the most recent ISO standards, it provides proof that all processes related to providing quality resources have been audited and certified by external experts on a regular basis.  
Individual certifications do not demonstrate the company's ability to provide continuous improvement. Furthermore, the Client Manager who is demonstrating their individual certification may not remain employed with the company for the duration the contract. In Amendment 002 the CRA changed the scoring to allocate more points to individual certifications versus company certifications.  
Our question is: Would the Crown please change the scoring that was applied in Amendment 002 to allow for a greater allocation of points for the company's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement to the following?
- 1) Bidder demonstrates local client management presence within the NCR. (10pts)
  - 2) Applicable certifications: (Max 25 points for all certifications)
- Corporate Certification: (Points will only be given for one of the following ISO certifications, not both)  
ISO 9001:2015 certified (25 points)  
ISO 9001:2008 certified (20 points)  
Individual Certifications: (applicable only to the Client Manager proposed in M6) (max 15 points)  
Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) (5pts)  
Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist (5pts)  
Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) (5pts)  
Registered Professional Recruiter Certification (5pts)
- A124. No, CRA will not make these changes. For certifications not listed in R2.1, the onus is on the bidder to demonstrate the equivalency to the certifications listed. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.
- Q125. Regarding Section 2.2 Point Rated Stream-Specific Criteria – R1.2: CRA frequently has needs for large quantities of Cobol resources. Therefore, CRA should be evaluating the Bidder's ability to provide and manage multiple Cobol resources simultaneously. As currently written, to score maximum points on this requirement, a company would reference 2 contracts and have placed on average 3 Cobol resources per year within the last 5 years. This does not sufficiently demonstrate the companies' capacity to deliver and manage high volume or peak requirements of Cobol resources which is often a reality with CRA.  
Our question is: Would the Crown please change this requirement to the following?  
The Bidder should demonstrate their experience by referencing up to two (2) contracts with a maximum of two (2) client contacts providing multiple professional services resources simultaneously to support Cobol systems within the past five years (as of the closing date of this RFP).  
The bidder will be awarded the following points for the number of resources simultaneously managed that meets the criteria:
- 1-5 resources – 9 points
  - 6-10 resources – 10 points
  - 11-14 resources – 14 points
  - 15 or more resources – 20 points
- A125. No, CRA will not make these changes.
- Q126. a) In reference to Answer #52 of Amendment 002, please confirm that an omnibus contract or supply chain contract (i.e. requirements across the organization/enterprise such as PSSC at CRA) can only be used to meet R2.2 if the resources identified were in support of a single project (i.e. T1 System Redesign Project) referencing a maximum of two (2) contracts?  
b) Please confirm that the answer to question #55 in Amendment 002, means the Bidders resources must have been provided in support of a single project using a maximum of two (2) client contracts but only where they are in support of the same overall project?



- A126. a) Yes, any contract can be used to meet R2.2 if the resources identified were in support of a single project. There is no maximum number of contracts. There can only be a maximum of two (2) client contacts.
- b) The Bidder's resources must have been provided in support of a "single project" using a maximum of two (2) client contacts where they are in support of the same overall project? There is no maximum number of contracts. There can only be a maximum of two (2) client contacts.
- Q127. Referring to Section 1.2 Mandatory Corporate Experience Criteria, M5. Based on the information contained within the RFP, the vast majority of the requirements are to be delivered to the CRA in the National Capital Region (NCR). Therefore, the CRA should take steps to ensure that Bidders have experience providing Professional Services in the NCR to Federal, Provincial, Municipal or Crown Corporations as there is a difference when it comes to providing security cleared resources with a reputable track record working in Public institutions. Currently, the CRA is only allocating 10 points out of a potential 200 points for demonstrated experience within the NCR. This is putting the delivery of the majority of the CRA's needs at risk, as it is very realistic that as written, the CRA could have vendors with no experience providing qualified security cleared resources within the NCR as their suppliers.
- Our question is: Would the Crown please change this requirement to include the following? The Bidder must have been awarded at least five (5) Professional Services Contracts, of which, a minimum of three (3) must be have been awarded by a Federal, Provincial, Municipal or Crown Corporation in the National Capital Region (NCR)... This will ensure that the CRA is placing sufficient importance on the Bidders experience delivering to a Government organization within the NCR which is what the CRA requires.
- A127. No, CRA will not make these changes.
- Q128. Referring to Section 1.2 Mandatory Corporate Experience Criteria, M5: It is common for clients to have contracts in place with significant values whereby little to no utilization has occurred. Contract values are not the most effective way to evaluate a company's experience in delivering resources to the degree that the CRA requires.
- Our question is: Would the Crown change the criteria from "The Bidder must have been awarded at least five (5) Professional Services Contracts. Each of these contracts must have a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes)" to the following?
- "The Bidder must have been awarded at least five (5) Professional Services Contracts. Each of these contracts must have a minimum BILLED value of \$5,000,000 (including taxes) and have been awarded within the past seven years (as of bid closing date).
- The Bidder must submit for each contract:
- 1) A letter from its client (referencing a contract award date and contract serial number or other unique contract identifier) that shows that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum BILLED value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes); and
  - 2) The name, telephone number and, if available, e-mail address of a contact person so that Canada may verify any information provided by the Bidder."

A128. No, CRA will not make these changes. As stated in M5, the letters of references must show that the Bidder is providing or has provided such services under a contract with a minimum value of \$5,000,000.00 (including taxes). The letters of reference do not need to stipulate the billed amounts.



Q129. With respect to M6, it would be beneficial to the CRA if the Bidder demonstrates that the Client Manager has been employed with the Bidder as it shows continuity of service to the client. Given the large volumes of requirements the CRA has, providing 5+ resources simultaneously is not aligned with the needs of the CRA.

Would the CRA change the requirement to read the following?

“The Bidder must identify a Client Manager, who has been employed by the Bidder for a minimum of three (3) years in the last five (5) years as of bid closing date that will be the single point of contact for all aspects of the contract and resource management. The Client Manager must have experience providing contract management services as described in the SOW.

The Bidder must provide a minimum of one (1) managed project in the past 5 years including the client contact name, title and department/organization for whom the Client Manager had to provide multiple (10+) resources simultaneously. A copy of the Client Manager’s resume must be provided with the bid.”

A129. No, CRA will not make these changes.

Q130. The current Evaluation Criteria places 70% emphasis on the Technical Response and 30% emphasis on the Financial Response of Bidders which ensures that the combined value of a response takes into account both the cost and the ability of a vendor to meet the CRA’s technical criteria, and also ensures that fair market rates are reflected.

The Financial Evaluation Methodology in itself is powerfully structured with a strike system that ensures that only Bidders who submit rates within a 30% threshold for each category and who do not exceed the strike allocation per stream can be considered for contract award. This Financial Criteria on its own is an adequate method to ensure the CRA awards contracts to companies who propose competitive/market rates.

Therefore, the CRA should place greater importance on the Bidders Technical score which will ensure that the most qualified companies will be providing services to the CRA upon contract award.

Given this, would the CRA change the Evaluation Methodology to a weighting of 80% on the Technical Criteria and 20% on the Financial Criteria of a Bidder’s response?

A130. No, CRA will not make these changes.

Q131. Re: Annex B, Stream 5 – Administrative

The descriptions provided under the “Roles and Deliverables include:” heading are identical for both the Category 2 – Communications Officer and Category 4 – Learning Coordinator. Is this intentional or will the Crown be providing an updated description for the Learning Coordinator role?

A131. The Learning Coordinator category has been corrected. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP #3 below.

Q132. Would the crown accept “conseiller en ressources humaines agréé (CHRA)” designation as an equivalent certification? And, if so, please confirm the point value.

A132. Yes, CRA would accept this certification. See Section 2 Amendments to RFP, #1 below.



- Q133. RFP Page 40 of 108, Rated Criteria R2.1:  
The common sales, client management, and staffing model for professional services to the Federal Government usually has an Account/Client Manager, Contract Manager/Administrator, and then a recruiting team to support the staffing portion of delivery. Typically the recruiting team holds certifications like RPR, CHRP, CHRL, CHRA, etc. Account/Client Managers are typically responsible for managing the resources who are working for the client, ensuring quality control on the service being delivered, managing and monitoring the contract spend, etc.
- Similar to the crown's clarification regarding the ISO 9001 certification requirement, specifying that ISO 9001 is a corporate certification, we respectfully ask that the crown assign Recruiting and HR certifications to the Recruiting and HR team, or individual Recruiter or HR professional who will be supporting the Client Manager as part of the Account management Team for the delivery of the contract.
- A133. No, CRA will not revise the point allocation for R2.1. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q134. With the extension to the proposal submission date, will the Crown entertain another round of Q&As.
- A134. No, CRA will not be adding a 3rd round of questions and answers.
- Q135. Corporate requirement R2.1 lists a number of certifications held at the level of the individual rather than the organization (CSP, CHRP, etc.). Can CRA confirm that these certifications can be held by a number of individuals rather than a sole individual within the bidding firm?
- A135. The individual certifications are only applicable to the Client Manager identified in M6.
- Q136. Would CRA be able to provide an outline of what is required in the contract management plan under R2.1? Specifically, is there a word length limitation for the contract management plan, or are bidders allowed to provide any details, without limitation, to demonstrate "presence within the national capital region" and "demonstrated ongoing and continuous improvement to the management of the contract".
- A136. There is no outline of what is required in the contract management plan.
- Q137. Can CRA confirm that bidders may propose a joint venture response to different streams with different firms? For example, bidder A and bidder B submit a joint venture under stream 1 "AB" while bidder A and bidder C propose a joint venture under stream 2, "AC"?
- A137. Yes, this is allowed, however vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.
- Q138. Are bidders able to propose both an individual response as the sole bidder and a joint venture response on the same stream?
- A138. No, vendors are now restricted from bidding multiple times per stream. See RFP Amendment #3 released on August 24, 2017.



Q139. CRA has requested a significant number of hours in some of the 1.3 Mandatory Stream specific criteria, many of which have unique skill sets and are generally on projects for more than 5 years. If CRA would expand the time-frame to 10 years, vendors could show that they have built long term relationships with their clients and deployed many resources over an extended period of time.

We kindly request that CRA expand 1.3 Mandatory Stream-Specific Criteria to allow billable days be demonstrated within ten years.

A139. No, CRA will not make these changes.

## 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE RFP

1. At Appendix 2, Section 2.1, Point Rated Corporate Criteria;

### DELETE:

<p><b>R2.1</b></p>	<p><b>Contract Management Plan</b> The bidder should provide a plan as to how the resulting contract will be managed.</p> <p>The bidder should describe its proposed Contract Management Plan specifically addressing measures it proposes to manage the following elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Demonstrated local presence for the managing of resources within the National Capital Region (NCR);</li> <li>2) Demonstrated ongoing commitment and continuous improvement to the management of contract.</li> </ol>	<p><b>35</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Bidder demonstrates local client management presence within the NCR. (10pts)</li> <li>2) Applicable certifications which may include but are not limited to:  Corporate Certification: (Points will only be given for one of the following ISO certifications, not both) -ISO 9001: 2008 certified (5pts) -ISO 9001: 2015 certified (10pts).</li> </ol> <p>Individual Certifications: (applicable only to the Client Manager proposed in M6) (max 15pts).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) (5pts),</li> <li>-Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist (5pts),</li> <li>-Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) (5pts),</li> <li>- Registered Professional Recruiter Certification (5pts).</li> </ul>
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**INSERT:**

<p><b>R2.1</b></p>	<p><b>Contract Management Plan</b> The bidder should provide a plan as to how the resulting contract will be managed.</p> <p>The bidder should describe its proposed Contract Management Plan specifically addressing measures it proposes to manage the following elements:</p> <p>1) Demonstrated local presence for the managing of resources within the National Capital Region (NCR);</p> <p>2) Demonstrated ongoing commitment and continuous improvement to the management of contract.</p>	<p><b>35</b></p>	<p>1) Bidder demonstrates local client management presence within the NCR. (10pts)</p> <p>2) Applicable certifications which may include but are not limited to:</p> <p>Corporate Certification: (Points will only be given for one of the following ISO certifications, not both) -ISO 9001: 2008 certified (5pts) -ISO 9001: 2015 certified (10pts).</p> <p>Individual Certifications: (applicable only to the Client Manager proposed in M6) (max 15pts).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) (5pts),</li> <li>-Certified Temporary Staffing Specialist (5pts),</li> <li>-Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) (5pts),</li> <li>- Registered Professional Recruiter (RPR) (5pts),</li> <li>-Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) (5pts),</li> <li>-Certified Human Resources Executive (CHE) (5pts),</li> <li>- Certified Contingent Workforce Professional (CCWP) (5pts),</li> <li>- International Professional Alliance of Staffing Specialists (iPASS) (5pts),</li> <li>- conseiller en ressources humaines agréé (CHRA) (5pts).</li> </ul> <p>If the Bidder submits a certification different from those listed above, the onus is on the bidder to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) clearly indicate which of the certifications listed above is considered equivalent to the bidder’s submitted certification;</li> <li>b) and clearly demonstrate the equivalency by providing the supporting documentation.</li> </ul> <p>Failure to do so will result in a score of zero.</p>
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2) At Section 1.4, Mandatory Median Rate Evaluation, Table 2: Maximum Number of Demerit Points Allowed for Each Stream;

**DELETE:**  
In its entirety

**INSERT:**

Stream	Number of Categories and Levels	Maximum Number of Demerit Points Allowed
Stream 1 – Common Development Services	21	5
Stream 2 – IT Overview/Administration	15	3
Stream 3 – Cyber Protection Services	6	1
Stream 4 – SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Services	15	3
Stream 5 – Administrative	24	5

3) At Annex B, PSSC Catalogue of Resources, Stream 5 – Administrative, Category 4 – Learning Coordinator;

**DELETE:**  
**Experience:**

A minimum of 2 years of work experience in the category.

**Roles and Deliverables include:**

Develops and delivers communication activities and services (i.e., writing, editing, publishing, audio-visuals, exhibits/displays, promotion/publicity, advertising and communications research, analysis and evaluation) to clients.

Applies the standards of quality control and editorial policy in accordance with the Government of Canada's Communications Policy, including plain language, Federal Identity, Official Languages, etc.

Conducts research, analyzes information and coordinates material from various sources to assist in the creation of a communications database, the development of products and preparation of reports.

**INSERT:**  
**Experience:**

A minimum of 2 years work experience in the category.

**Roles and Deliverables include:**

Plans, develops, recommends and implements learning plans.

Organizes, coordinates and facilitates the logistics for learning activities, assesses trends and monitors the availability of external learning services, and proposes options to meet learning needs.

**ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED**