Question 1

Would it be possible to get an estimate on the annual volume of work for all four categories i.e. Translation, Comparative Editing, Source Text Editing and Transcription? As well as the breakdown per tier?

I just want to specify that by volume we are requesting number of words for Translation, Source text editing, comparative editing and number of minutes or hours for transcription.

I understand that the solicitation did indicate the percentages of expected business volume.

Answer 1

We are unable to provide annual volume to the requested level of detail, however, based on the existing RFSO for translation, source text editing, and comparative editing, we can provide the following:

- From April 1, 2014 to Mar 31, 2018 we issued 4 call-ups for translation with a total value of $564,554.29.
- For Fiscal Year 17/18, there were 1303 acquisition card transactions with a total value of $2,147,459.57.

Question 2

Can agencies bid on only the translation portion and not the transcription?

Answer 2

Offerors are required to bid on the entire requirement – translation, transcription, source text editing and comparative editing.

Question 3

I work from English into Spanish exclusively. Can I respond to this request for Standing Offer or is it meant for companies that can provide services to all languages listed?

Answer 3

Offerors are required to bid on the entire requirement for all languages listed.

Question 4

I'm reaching out to see if the following RFPs are open to non-Canadian vendors:
- R109D: Translation Services
- R104B: Transcription Services

Can you confirm whether or not this is the case?

Answer 4

Yes, the NPP will be updated to reflect that the requirement is open to non-Canadian vendors who meet the security requirements.

Question 5

Why is ESDC going into the RFP process? What are the key results that ESDC is expecting to accomplish?

Answer 5
ESDC is going into the RFP process to meet the needs of their clients in a more timely fashion and provide an alternative to the Translation Bureau for translation requirements

Question 6
What are the KPIs that ESDC is looking to improve? For example, quality, process improvements, faster timescales, costs?

Answer 6
ESDC is looking to improve all of the above – quality, process improvements, faster timescales, and cost.

Question 7
How many vendors does ESDC currently have for translation services?

Answer 7
ESDC currently has 6 vendors for translation services.

Question 8
Can you clarify the ESDC's motives to selecting more than one vendor?

Answer 8
In responding to the needs of their clients, ESDC has determined that multiple Standing Offers are best suited to supporting the high volume of demands from their clients.

Question 9
Does ESDC have an internal translation team?

Answer 9
No. ESDC clients use the existing Standing Offers or the Translation Bureau.

Question 10
Do you have an idea of what your annual budget and costs are for translation? Can you provide this info for translation process improvement and cost optimization?

Answer 10
We are unable to provide annual volume to the requested level of detail, however, based on the existing RFSO for translation, source text editing, and comparative editing, we can provide the following:
- From April 1, 2014 to Mar 31, 2018 we issued 4 call-ups for translation with a total value of $564,554.29.
- For Fiscal Year 17/18, there were 1303 acquisition card transactions with a total value of $2,147,459.57.

Question 11
a. In reference to Basis of Payment- Firm Price(s)/Rate(s), please can you clarify and confirm what is included in the rates for each of the services required?
b. In reference to page 34 paragraph A "Canada will not pay the Contractor for any design changes, modifications or interpretations of the Work unless they have been approved, in writing, by the Contracting Authority before their incorporation into the Work." should it be the case, would Canada wants the bidder provide the formatting and desktop publishing rates? Please clarify
c. Would ESDC allow a different pricing structure?

Answer 11
a) The rates are to be provided per word/hour, as outlined, to deliver the services.
b) During the course of the work, the vendor should not make any design changes or modifications without confirmation in writing from the Project Authority and Contracting Authority.
c) No.

Question 12
What are ESDC's top challenges in relation to translation services?

Answer 12
Quality has been ESDC's top challenge in relation to translation.

Question 13
In reference to the Summary 1.2: please can you clarify the type breakdown of contents for the pertaining services required?

Answer 13
- Translation (50%) - Departmental demands for this outsourced expertise are recurrent.
- Comparative Editing (10%) - Demands for this outsourced expertise are deemed secondary.
- Source Text Editing (10%) - Demands for this outsourced expertise are deemed secondary.
- Transcription (30%) - Departmental demands for this outsourced expertise are identified, yet not fully assessed in terms of actual volumetric data.

Question 14
How many units or divisions contribute to the content?

Answer 14
ESDC is comprised of 16 Branches and 4 regional offices.

Question 15
How often content changes? How are these changes/updates managed?

Answer 15
Frequency/Management of content changes would be done at the Branch level and are likely to vary.

Question 16
What is the current ESDC review process? Are the translated files reviewed by an internal reviewer (linguistic team), or by the client/project owner?

Answer 16
Translated files are reviewed by the client/project owner.

Question 17
What is the actual workflow?

Answer 17
Once a call-up is issued, the client will work directly with the service provider.

Question 18
Do you have defined and documented workflows that support your translation process?
a. Could you please provide examples of workflows needing to be streamlined? "Proprietary"

Answer 18
Aside from the right of first refusal process for issuing the call-up, there is no departmental process in place; internal processes could vary by Branch.

Question 19
What are the files formats to consider? (ex: MS Word, InDesgin, PDF, FrameMaker, etc…)?

Answer 19
Primarily MS Word.

Question 20
Does ESDC have Translation Memories, Glossaries and Terminology? How do you manage them?
a. In what format?
b. Does ESDC use any Computer Aided Translation tools?
c. If so, which tools?

Answer 20
ESDC does not have Translation Memories, if you are referring to Multitrans, etc.
a. However, ESDC will provide a Lexicon (in Excel format) as well as our client's lexicons, glossaries and reference documents.
b. Yes
c. Antidote

Question 21
Will the winning bidder(s) get access to the TM and other language assets?

Answer 21
The winning bidder(s) will have access to the Lexicons.

Question 22
Does ESDC have a Translation Management System?
a. If so, what technology is deployed for it?
b. How are translation request assigned to either the internal team or the vendor(s)?
c. Are translation requests submitted by ESDC to the vendor(s) through a translation coordinator/manager, or is it directly from the client/project owner?

Answer 22
ESDC does not have a Translation Management System
a. N/A
b. The client will determine whether to use ESDC's Standing Offer or the Translation Bureau. When using ESDC's Standing Offer, the Right of First Refusal process will be respected.
c. Translation requests are submitted by the client/project owner, when using the acquisition card or after a call-up has been issued.

Question 23
Are any websites required to be translated?

Answer 23
No, only small segments of websites in word documents.

Question 24
What platforms CMS or WCMS ESDC uses for its website(s)?

Answer 24
ESDC uses both CMS and WCMS. Canada.ca uses the Adobe Experience Manager platform.

Question 25
Are there more than 1 content management system in place? Please elaborate.

Answer 25
No

Question 26
Do you involve internal IT resources in your current workflows?

Answer 26
It is possible that internal IT resources may be consulted.

Question 27
Whether companies from Outside Canada can apply for this?

Answer 27
Yes, the NPP will be updated to reflect that the requirement is open to non-Canadian vendors who meet the security requirements.

Question 28
Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

Answer 28
It is unlikely that on-site meeting would be required.

Question 29
Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside Canada?

Answer 29
Provided that the security requirements are respected, tasks may be performed outside of Canada.

Question 30
Can we submit the proposals via email?

Answer 30
As per the RFSO, offers must be submitted by the date, time and e-mail address indicated on page 1 of the Request for Standing Offers.

Question 31
For Level 3, it is difficult to give a single price for translation into foreign and Indigenous languages. Can you give us an idea of the languages requested and would you accept different prices for different language combinations?

Tier 3	To English or French from foreign or Indigenous languages

a) Can a supplier choose to respond to the request for standing offer at some of the levels, or do we have to bid on all the services/levels?
b) Can we have an idea of the volume we can expect at each level?
c) Can we have an idea of your current suppliers?

Answer 31
a) Offerors are required to bid on the entire requirement for all languages listed.
b) We are unable to provide volume per level, however, based on the existing RFSO for translation, source text editing, and comparative editing, we can provide the following:
- From April 1, 2014 to Mar 31, 2018 we issued 4 call-ups for translation with a total value of $564,554.29.

- For Fiscal Year 17/18, there were 1303 acquisition card transactions with a total value of $2,147,459.57.

c) ESDC's current translation Standing Offer holders:
- Allset Inc.
- CLS Lexi-Tech
- Composition Ste-Foy
- Open Text
- Société Gamma
- Versacom

Question 32
To submit a bid for the above-referenced request for standing offers, must bidders necessarily offer Level 2 (Spanish to English, Spanish to French) and 3 (into English or French for a foreign or Indigenous language) translation services as well as transcription services? In other words, can an offeror bid only on Level 1 translation services (English to French / French to English) with source text editing and comparative editing (English and French).

Answer 32
Offerors are required to bid on the entire requirement for all languages listed.

Question 33
Can a company bid on one portion of the Standing Offer, namely, the transcription part?

Answer 33
Offerors are required to bid on the entire requirement – translation, transcription, source text editing and comparative editing.

Question 34
a. The RFSA does not provide any detail on expected volume. ESDC provides a percentage breakdown of the business, but without an overview of the expected volume, it is difficult to estimate the level of effort required. Fully understanding that there are no guarantees, please provide an estimate in good faith, perhaps based on previous usage, to give potential Bidders a clear idea of the requirement, in words, for:
- o Translation, in:
  - Official languages
  - Spanish
  - Foreign and Indigenous languages
- o Transcription

b. Please confirm that ESDC is looking for full-service suppliers capable of providing ALL services, including multilingual linguistic services.

c. From a pricing perspective, it is unusual to group all foreign languages and especially indigenous languages into a single category. To ensure fairness and transparency of the

evaluation, please provide additional information on our Bidders should price this section. Are there any specific languages of interest?

d. At 3.1, for Section III, it states one (1) soft copy per certificate. Please further define "per certificate." Our understanding is that Part 5 (page 20) (one page only) must be signed and returned.

Answer 34
a. Based on the existing RFSO for translation, source text editing, and comparative editing, we can provide the following:
- From April 1, 2014 to Mar 31, 2018 we issued 4 call-ups for translation with a total value of $564,554.29.
- For Fiscal Year 17/18, there were 1303 acquisition card transactions with a total value of $2,147,459.57.

b. ESDC is looking for full-service suppliers capable of providing ALL services, including multilingual linguistic services
c. We chose to group all the remaining language categories into one grouping in an effort to reduce the complexity of the financial evaluations. That being said, the majority of the work in this category will be for the translation involving indigenous languages.
d. That is correct, only Part 5, Page 20 must be signed and returned.

Question 35
With significant advances in both Statistical and Neural Network Machine Translation, the quality has reached the point where it is a strong solution for many commercial use cases. In order to meet the standards of the Government of Canada to provide the highest quality of translation at an affordable cost, ESDC has the opportunity to leverage machine translation to *augment* human translation services. Specifically, machine translation can increase the productivity of human translators with:

- First pass translation
- In-depth comparison with original text
- Quicker delivery of translated urgent texts
- Human translators to focus mainly on quality control mechanisms and delivery of urgent texts
- Increasing accuracy, relevance and corporate specificity through continuous improvement of translation models, learning from human translator quality control and correction of internal translations.

In light of these technology advancements, would ESDC consider a hybrid approach that could include both human translation services as well as machine translation to meet the requirements as defined in the RFSO?

Answer 35
ESDC would be open to a hybrid approach, provided that,
- all services outlined in the RFSO can be carried out;
- the proposal can be assessed against the evaluation criteria;

- the security requirements are met;
- pricing is provided as per the RFSO.

Question 36
We respectfully request an extension to the closing date please.

Answer 36
No extensions will be granted at this time.

Question 37
What's the expected or historic volume of work (on a yearly basis)?

Answer 37
Based on the existing RFSO for translation, source text editing, and comparative editing, we can provide the following:
- From April 1, 2014 to Mar 31, 2018 we issued 4 call-ups for translation with a total value of $564,554.29.
- For Fiscal Year 17/18, there were 1303 acquisition card transactions with a total value of $2,147,459.57.

Question 38
We respectfully request an extension to the closing date please.

Answer 38
The solicitation closes June 15, 2018 at 2:00pm (EDT)

Question 39
Transcription requires different deadlines than translation given the context of recording. Considering this context, can you confirm the expected deadlines in number of business days after the transcript request is sent for an hour of recording for:
- Standard delivery?
- Extended delivery?
- Discounted delivery?

Answer 39
Please see description in Appendix 4 to Part 4.

Question 40
For transcription of audio / video recordings, would it be possible to know the physical medium used; cassette, USB stick, MP3 electronic file etc., as well as the media on which you wish to receive the final product.

Answer 40
MP3, but most frequently USB key or MP4 format. We expect to receive the final transcription product in Word format.

Question 41
We respectfully ask again that the list of foreign and autochtones languages be disclosed to allow us to make a realistic price offer. There is such differences in prices and we offer more than 185 languages that providing one price for all is simply not realistic to the market.

Answer 41
After several discussions internally, English-French and French-English translation is likely to account for 80% of the translation requests. For evaluation purposes, one rate is to be provided for Tier 3.

Question 42
Will resources performing transcription services be required to hold a security clearance issued by CISD at all times or would this apply only to select classified projects?

Answer 42
As per Security Requirements, 7.2 2, personnel requiring access to PROTECTED information, assets or work site(s) must EACH hold a valid RELIABILITY STATUS, granted or approved by the Canadian Industrial Security Directorate (CISD)

Question 43
As it pertains to Appendix 4 to PART 4, rates applicable to Transcription:
a) It is not common practice to invoice transcription services on a per word basis. Would ESDC consider changing the UNIT to "per minute" to adhere to industry standards?
b) Could you please expand on the expected delivery time for transcription? For standard delivery, it states: "Standard delivery: between four (4) to six (6) times the length of the recording (in hours)" Does this mean that a 1-hour recording would have to be received, transcribed and delivered to the client within 4 to 6 hours? That is a very short turnaround. Please clarify.
c) Please further clarify what will be required for "Standby fee for conference calls" Would this be for live transcription service of a conference call as it is happening?
d) At the bottom of the table, it states: "Prices above will be added and divided by 6 to obtain a simple average price per unit" Meanwhile, there are 7 items to price. Is there a typo or will one of the services not be considered in the evaluation?

Answer 43
As it pertains to Appendix 4 to PART 4, rates applicable to Transcription:
a) For transcription services, ESDC has converted the UNIT to "per minute." This change is reflected in Amendment 1 to the RFP.
b) For "Standard delivery: between four (4) to six (6) times the length of the recording (in hours)", this mean that a 1-hour recording would have to be received, transcribed and delivered to the client within 4 to 6 hours, taking into consideration the regular business hours of 7am – 6pm. For example, a recording received at 4pm would be expected between 9am-11am the following day, for standard delivery.
c) After converting the UNIT to "per minute", the "Standby Fee for conference calls/webcasts" has been removed. This change is reflected in Amendment 1 to the RFP.

d) This was a typo, but after removing "Standby Fee for conference calls/webcasts", there are now 6 items to price, so no change is required.

Question 44
Q&A#1 states "For Fiscal Year 17/18, there were 1303 acquisition card transactions with a total value of $2,147,459.57".
  - o For evaluation purposes, should this be the amount of business for the initial contract period, then the four (4) selected suppliers would split this business, on a right of first refusal ranking basis. Is this correct?

Answer 44
Correct, however, as business will be allocated on a right of first refusal basis, each vendor is not guaranteed an equal distribution.

Question 45
Part 3 – Offer Preparation Instructions, stipulates that the offer must be separated in four sections.

For Section III: Certifications (one electronic copy per certificate): Does that mean that we need to do two electronic files, one for the 5.1.1 and one for the 5.1.2 certificate? Do we need to include page 20 of the RFSO with signature?

For Section IV: Additional Information (one electronic copy per required item): what do you mean by "item"? Is it those 7 items listed, therefore one file per item (7 files in total)?

Thank you for your clarification and for indicating the total number of files that should be included in the bid.

Answer 45
Four separate sections/files,
    Section I: Technical Offer
    Section II: Financial Offer
    Section III: Certification (p. 20 signed)
    Section IV: Additional Information

Question 46
When you ask for a price for a translation from a foreign or aboriginal language into French or English, is it a correct understanding that we need to indicate a single price for ALL foreign and aboriginal languages from Canada?

Your response to question 31: "Offerors are required to bid on the entire requirement for all languages listed." RFP refers to aboriginal and foreign languages. Nothing is listed in the RFP about this. Consequently, can you specify?

With regard to aboriginal languages, do you want the translation into French or English or do you want it into aboriginal languages?

Answer 46
Yes, a single price for ALL foreign or indigenous languages.
Translation into French or English from foreign or indigenous languages.