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**SOLICITATION AMENDMENT**

**MODIFICATION DE L'INVITATION**

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

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

**Comments - Commentaires**

**Vendor/Firm Name and Address**

**Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur**

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Informatics Professional Services - EL Division/Services

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K1A 0S5

<b>Title - Sujet</b> Professional Services - TBIPS 2	
<b>Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation</b> 08915-170500/B	<b>Amendment No. - N° modif.</b> 010
<b>Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client</b> 20170500	<b>Date</b> 2019-07-08
<b>GETS Reference No. - N° de référence de SEAG</b> PW-\$\$EL-618-35796	
<b>File No. - N° de dossier</b> 634e1.08915-170500	<b>CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME</b>
<b>Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin</b> <b>at - à 02:00 PM</b> <b>on - le 2019-07-19</b>	
<b>F.O.B. - F.A.B.</b> <b>Plant-Usine:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Destination:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other-Autre:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Address Enquiries to: - Adresser toutes questions à:</b> Durigan, Angela	<b>Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur</b> 634e1
<b>Telephone No. - N° de téléphone</b> (613) 859-0753 ( )	<b>FAX No. - N° de FAX</b> ( ) -
<b>Destination - of Goods, Services, and Construction:</b> <b>Destination - des biens, services et construction:</b>	

**Instructions: See Herein**

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<b>Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm</b> <b>(type or print)</b> <b>Nom et titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/</b> <b>de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie)</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

**The Request for Proposal (RFP) Amendment 010 is raised to answer questions received from Bidders and amend the RFP accordingly.**

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Question: 84**

For all work streams, in corporate Mandatory M4, the crown requests billable days for all identified resource categories. To be accepted, the work billed for any given resource category must include at least 50% of the associated tasks listed in Annex A – Statement of Work for the same resource category.

Can the crown please confirm that where a supplier is providing days billed in the same category as requested (ie: Application Software Architect) that the tasks from Annex A SOW and tasks performed under the contract, including substantiation are not required and that these substantiations are only required for the mapping of equivalent categories.

**Answer: 84**

All resources provided, whether for the same resource category or similar resource category, must be substantiated with a minimum of 50% mapping of the SOW.

**Question: 85**

In order to ensure that the Crown receives a competitive response to this solicitation and encourages a fair and open bid process, we respectfully request that the Crown amend M4 in all work streams to allow for the following;

part 3) we are requesting that the billed days must have occurred with the past seven years prior to issuance of this RFP and

part 4) we are requesting that the billed days must have been provided under a maximum of 7 contracts

**Answer: 85**

The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

**Question: 86**

For R3 in all work streams, the crown is asking for contracts that were referenced in M1 where the company provided in excess of 25 bilingual resources. Can you please confirm how you want the companies to substantiate this requirement?

**Answer: 86**

It is the Bidder's responsibility to demonstrate this experience in their response. The Crown may conduct reference checks to validate information provided by bidders in their response to any mandatory or rated criteria.

**Question: 87**

With the RFP change resulting from Question # 41 the Crown is allowing a maximum of four (4) contracts per resource category for Workstream 2. This change introduces a few challenges:

a. Without a change in other text for Billed Days contract parameters, it now implies that two (2) of the four (4) contracts used for each resource category have to be at the Secret security clearance level. This requires respondents to now have to use a much different set of contracts to address the Billed Days requirements and forces a complete reset without an extension to handle it. It may also mean that vendors that were compliant based on four (4) contracts per stream are now potentially non-compliant unless they have two (2) Secret contracts per resource category.

- b. It creates discrepancies with the requirements of other Workstreams—the question was specific to Workstream 2 but the answer and subsequent amendment to the solicitation did not indicate it was for all Workstreams, only Workstream 2.
- c. It enables bidders who may not have been able to bid (due to the contract restriction of four (4) total across the Workstream) to now be able to compile a response but no additional time has been added to allow for that.

Given that this change forces a complete reset on the contracts used to substantiate mandatory and rated Billed Days criteria, it is our belief that this answer is an error and it should be retracted. In order to allow for vendors to respond to whatever change may result without incurring work effort needlessly while the Crown considers its response, will the Crown please grant an extension of two (2) weeks to enable bidders enough time to wait on the Crown's resolution of the change in parameters?

**Answer: 87**

The change resulting from Question 41 is only applicable to Workstream 2. Workstreams 1, 3, 4, and 5 must be demonstrated under a maximum of 4 contracts, NOT, 4 contracts per resource category. The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**Question: 88**

In reference to Amendment 5, Q & A 41: For the M4 point 4) criteria, the Crown has amended the criteria to read that Bidders can now supply 4 contracts per category rather than what Bidders previously read as 4 contracts across all categories which Bidders have been preparing since the RFP release date. With this change, the substantiating strategy for Bidders has been completely changed. Although Q & A 41 only amended workstream 2, M4 point 4), we are assuming this change applies to all workstreams. With this in mind, Bidders now have the opportunity to submit up to: 20 contracts for workstream 1, 28 contracts for workstream 2, 8 contracts for workstream 3, 24 contract for workstream 4 and 16 contracts for workstream 5. In addition, Bidders must prepare 50% task mappings for each of these contracts. This will be a tremendous effort for Bidders to prepare this amount of data with the current July 5th due date. In order to successfully re-evaluate contract data and prepare a compliant Bid with this recent change, we respectfully request a two week extension.

**Answer: 88**

See response at 87.

**Question: 89**

In instances where a Bidder is using non TBIPS contract references where levels are not defined, could the Crown provide details as to how Bidders are to present a level 3 billed category?

**Answer: 89**

See response at 78

**Question: 90**

R2 – Regarding the requirement for ISO 9001:2015 Certification.

ISO certification 9001:2015 is in no way a guarantee of quality services to the Crown. ISO is set up for internal quality controls, and although every organization strives to provide the best service possible, and any organization can use ISO as their governance model to establish their quality controls and audit their performance, a vendor holding an ISO certification is not necessarily going to deliver a higher standard over a non-certified one. Any organization is actually able to certify just one small area, or one process within their organization and justifiably claim that they are 9001:2015 certified. For example, in the interest of cost savings, a vendor may choose to certify their accounting practices. However, would this in any way offer a better contract management and talent sourcing solution for their clients? It absolutely would not. Although it is understandable that Canada is looking for innovative ways to refine the solicitation process and guide desirable and successful contract outcomes, we feel that this requirement is highly

limiting and does not support an open, fair and competitive process. To date the Crown has not provided a justification as to why this Certification has been included as a 25 point rated requirement. We respectfully request that the requirement for ISO 9001:2015 removed.

**Answer: 90**

The request has been reviewed, the requirement will not be amended as requested.

**Question: 91**

Amendment 5, Question 37b attempts to offer some clarity into the contract support requirements for billed days bench strength. However, there appear to be some contradictory explanations. It has already been determined that categories outside of the ones listed can be used for support, providing the tasks are mapped at 50%. That part is clear. The answer provided for question 37b seems to allude to the requirement dictating that only level 3 contracts can be used for support. If the SOW is being mapped, the level should not be relevant. In addition, billed days accomplished through a private sector contract would prove difficult to use as support, since the Government of Canada is the only sector that uses the Level 1, 2, and 3 approach to represent seniority. Can the crown please clarify this requirement?

**Answer: 91**

See responses at 78 and 79.

**Question: 92**

Answer 41 in Amendment 005, published June 25th: the Crown confirmed that the M4 billed days requirement in Workstream 2 is to be demonstrated per category and further amended the RFP to insert "4) The billed days must have been provided under a maximum of four (4) contracts per category".

- Can the Crown please confirm that this change should be applied to M4 for ALL WORKSTEAMS?
- Can the Crown please confirm that this change should be applied to R5 for ALL WORKSTEAMS?

**Answer: 92**

See response at 87.

**Question: 93**

REFERENCE 1: Mandatory Requirement M4, Statement of Work (SOW) Tasks in all Workstreams, and Q&A 44, Amendment 5, dated June 26th.

Question 1: As per the requirement in M4 regarding: "The worked billed for any given resource category must include 50% of the associated tasked listed in Annex A - Statement of Work..." There appears to be several instances where tasks are specific to GAC systems, which would seem to favour incumbents and not support days billed in same or similar type systems. Would the Crown consider amending any mention of these specific systems to similar type systems throughout each of the Workstreams? As additional examples, in Workstream 2 – A.1 Application/Software Architect, tasks specific to "Siebel, Oracle BI Publisher", or In Workstream 2 – A.8 System Analyst, tasks specific to "IBM WebSphere MQ", or in Workstream 3 – A.10 Test Coordinator, tasks specific to "Siebel CRM application".

**Answer: 93**

The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

**Question: 94**

REFERENCE 2: Previous Requests for Clarifications and Request for Extension.

Question 2: Would the Crown please advise when answers to our previous questions will be forthcoming? We understand this is a busy time for the Crown, however it is quite important that all Bidder's questions are answered in a timely manner to ensure a fair and equitable process and enable all bidders to respond to this complex, multi-stream RFP. Further to this, given the upcoming Canada Day long weekend, the approaching deadline for enquiries (of 5 calendar days prior to submission), as well as

the necessary time required to resume our response development activities based on the Crown's answers to our queries, we respectfully request a further extension to the solicitation's closing date of two (2) weeks in order to provide the Crown with a quality and highly competitive proposal.

**Answer: 94**

The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**Question: 95**

Due to the Canada Day and St-Jean Baptiste holidays combined with client summer vacations, it is difficult to obtain the many signed client letters that are required to respond to this RFP. Further, Bidders who wish to respond to all five (5) workstreams are required to gather a large number of billable days across several resource categories. That, especially when combined with the requirement to map the roles to the SOW, is a time consuming process and the current closing date of July 5th doesn't provide enough time for Bidders to prepare compliant responses to all five (5) Workstreams. Given this, would the Crown please consider granting a two (2) week extension to the closing date of the RFP?

**Answer: 95**

The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**Question: 96**

With regards to all streams M4/R5 - please confirm that bidders are only required to have two contracts within the stream that provided Secret level resources not two secret contracts per category. For example Stream 1 - allows now 4 contracts per category x 5 categories = 20 contracts only 2 out of the 20 need to have provided Secret level resources.

**Answer: 96**

See response at question 87.

The requirement for contracts with resources at the level of SECRET, or higher has not been revised. Please refer to M4<sup>PB</sup>/R5 (all Workstreams):

2) At least two (2) of the contracts provided must have been for resources at the level of SECRET, or higher

**Question: 97**

The mandatory criteria in the response tables require differing years of experience in accordance with each resource level (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3). For example, M1 of the Application/Software Architect (Siebel Specialty) in Workstream 1 requires experience in accordance with resource level as follows:

Level 1: < 5 years of experience

Level 2: 5- < 10 years of experience

Level 3: 10+ years of experience

In contrast, rated criteria of the response tables do not account for resource levels, and the criteria appear to be based only on Level 3 qualifications. There are rated criteria within the resource tables requiring 10+ years of experience, and in some cases 16+ years' experience. Thus, if a Level 1 or Level 2 resource is requested in a Task Authorization, they would likely be unable to score above the minimum threshold for rated criteria.

The grids are currently structured so that Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 resources must all be qualified against the same rated criteria, essentially making Bidders present all resources at the same Level 3 experience threshold. This would not align with the current structure of the Pricing Schedule, which prices each resource level separately presumably due to differing experience levels. If bidders must present resources in the TA process against rated criteria that are structured for Level 3 experience levels, this will impact Bidders' approach to the pricing schedule. Bidders will have to price Level 1 and Level 2

resources at the industry rate of a Level 3 resource, as Bidders will have to find resources that can meet the Level 3-based rated qualifications. This will drive up the per diem estimates of the pricing schedule, as Bidders will have to overprice their Level 3 resources in order to achieve fair industry rates with the 90% and 80% pricing ratios of Level 1 and Level 2 resources, who will be aligned with standard Level 3 industry rates.

Accordingly, we ask that the Crown please provide updated resource grids across all categories to provide separate rated criteria qualifications based on each resource level (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3).

Because of the fact that the rated criteria for Level 1 and Level 2 resources may affect how Level 3 pricing needs to be set, we request an extension until new resource grids can be provided. In addition to this, we request an additional extension upon the release of new resource grids to provide Bidders with sufficient time to analyze and assess the new grids in order for Bidders to determine pricing for all resource levels based on the new rated criteria.

**Answer: 97**

See response at 79. The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**Question: 98**

Amend 003 Q & A 15 identifies that criteria R4.4 Retention of Resources is the same criteria as R4.3. The crown in their answer refers companies to answer 4 under RFP001. In this amendment, the only criteria that was changed is point i) Identifies and describes the risks associated with retention of resources. The lead in section a) has not been modified and is still identical to R4.3.

**Answer: 98**

See response at 66.

**Question: 99**

Regarding the Task Authorization mandatory and rated evaluation grids located in Appendix C to Annex A, Resources Assessment Criteria and Response Tables, we have the following questions:

- Question: Workstream 1 – Application Development Services, I.1 Data Conversion Specialist criteria M5 involves demonstrating experience with Microsoft SQL Server 2008 or above. The criteria is asking for 10+ years of experience for the Level 3 category. Microsoft SQL Server 2008 was released August 2008. It usually takes several months for a department or enterprise to implement new technologies, meaning that it would be difficult to demonstrate 10+ years' experience with a product that was only released 11 years ago and most likely not immediately implemented widely at companies. Would the Crown consider revising M5 to include an earlier version of Microsoft SQL Server, such as version 2005?
- Question: Workstream 1 – Application Development Services, I.1 Data Conversion Specialist criteria M6 also involves demonstrating experience with Microsoft SQL Server 2008 or above. The criteria is asking for 10+ years of experience for the Level 3 category. Microsoft SQL Server 2008 was released August 2008. It usually takes several months for a department or enterprise to implement new technologies, meaning that it would be difficult to demonstrate 10+ years' experience with a product that was only released 11 years ago and most likely not immediately implemented widely at companies. Would the Crown consider revising M6 to include an earlier version of Microsoft SQL Server, such as version 2005?
- Question: Workstream 2 – Infrastructure/DBA Services, A.1 Application/Software Architect criteria R1 involves demonstrating experience with Microsoft Windows Server 2008 or higher. The criteria awards full points for 11 years or more of experience with this technology. Microsoft Windows Server 2008 was released February 2008, which is about 11.5 years ago. It is unlikely for a department or enterprise to immediately implement a new technology at its release date. It would be difficult to demonstrate 11+ years' experience with a product that was only released 11.5 years ago and most likely not immediately implemented widely at companies. Would the Crown consider revising R1 to include an earlier version of Microsoft Windows Server?

- Question: Workstream 2 – Infrastructure/DBA Services, A.8 System Analyst criteria R2 involves demonstrating experience with Microsoft Windows Server 2008 or 2012. The criteria is asking for 10+ years of experience to be demonstrated with these technologies for full points. As Microsoft Windows Server 2008 was released February 2008, it would be difficult to demonstrate 10+ years' experience with a product that was only released 11.5 years ago and most likely not immediately implemented widely at companies. Would the Crown consider revising R2 to include an earlier version of Microsoft Windows Server?
- Question: Workstream 3 – Testing Services, A.10 Test Coordinator criteria R6 awards points for either a certification or a university degree. Many resources in the Tester role have obtained relevant college diplomas rather than university degrees. Would the Crown consider revising R6 to include full points for a college diploma relevant to the Tester role category?
- Question: Workstream 3 – Testing Services, A.10 Test Coordinator criteria R8 requires resources to demonstrate 5 or more projects within the last 5 years to score full points. This requirement would be difficult for resources who remain on projects for extended periods of time, as they may have been on the same project for the last 5 years. Would the Crown consider revising R8 to include project equivalencies, i.e. every 6 months on a project counts for 1 project?
- Question: Workstream 4 – Business Services, A.11 Tester criteria R1 and R2 have been revised to now require 11 years of experience within the past 11 years to score full points. As resources often have small gaps between projects, it would be very difficult for a resource to score full points by demonstrating continuous full-time work experience for the past 11 years. Would the Crown revise R1 and R2 to match point scales of other requirements, i.e. full points for demonstrating "10 to 11 years" for full points.
- Question: Workstream 4 – Business Services, B.9 Courseware Developer criteria R4 is asking for 16 years and more of demonstrated experience for full points. The criteria states experience must be demonstrated "within the last fifteen (15) years." It would be impossible to demonstrate 16+ years' experience within the last 15 years. Would the Crown please revise R4 to remove "within the last 15 years" limitation?
- Question: Workstream 4 – Business Services, B.9 Courseware Developer criteria R5 is asking for 16 years and more of demonstrated experience for full points. The criteria states experience must be demonstrated "within the last fifteen (15) years." It would be impossible to demonstrate 16+ years' experience within the last 15 years. Would the Crown please revise R5 to remove "within the last 15 years" limitation?
- Question: Workstream 4 – Business Services, P.9 Project Manager criteria R7 is asking for 16 years and more of demonstrated experience for full points. The criteria states experience must be demonstrated "within the last fifteen (15) years." It would be impossible to demonstrate 16+ years' experience within the last 15 years. Would the Crown please revise R7 to remove "within the past 15 years" limitation?

**Answer: 99**

Workstream 1 (1): The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

Workstream 1 (2): The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

Workstream 2 (1): The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

Workstream 2 (2): The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

Workstream 3 (1): The crown confirms that a college diploma is acceptable, providing it is in IM/IT. See RFP change no. 19 below.

Workstream 3 (2): The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

Workstream 4 (1): The request has been reviewed, the requirement remains unchanged.

Workstream 4 (2): See RFP change no. 20 below.

Workstream 4 (3): See RFP change no. 20 below.

Workstream 4 (4): See response at question 34.

**Question: 100**

M4 for all streams has been amended drastically in the latest amendment 005, Question and Answer 41, where the Crown has now confirmed that the requirement is to be demonstrated in 4 contracts per category and not 4 contracts in total. This amendment has now allowed us the ability to submit a compliant proposal on streams that we were not originally able to.

In order to provide the Crown with responses from companies originally not able to respond and ensuring that the process is Open Fair and Transparent, we respectfully ask that there be a minimum two week extension to July 18, 2019.

**Answer: 100**

The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**Question: 101**

We are heading into the long weekend and have a number of questions that remain unanswered. The answers required will either allow or not allow us the ability to submit a compliant proposal.

We respectfully ask for a minimum two week extension to July 18, 2019.

**Answer: 101**

The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**Question: 102**

In the latest amendment 005, Question and Answer 41, for Stream 2, the Crown has now confirmed that the requirement is to be demonstrated in 4 contracts per category and not 4 contracts in total.

Can the Crown please confirm that M4 has been amended across all streams to allow that the requirement can be demonstrated in 4 contracts per category and not 4 contracts in total?

**Answer: 102**

Refer to Answer 87.

**Question: 103**

Given that we still have outstanding unanswered questions (that were submitted on June 19 – see original email below) and that the response to these questions will have a significant impact to the quality of our response, combined with the statutory Canada Day holiday, we respectfully request a one week extension to the bid submission date, to July 12, 2019.

**Answer: 103**

The solicitation closing date has been extended to July 19th, 2019. Please see solicitation amendment 007.

**RFP AMENDMENT**

19. At APPENDIX C TO ANNEX A, RESOURCES ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND RESPONSE TABLE, Workstream 3 – Testing Services, A.10 - Test Coordinator:

**DELETE: R6**

**INSERT:**

<b>R6</b>	<p>The Contractor should demonstrate that the proposed resource has at least one (1) of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance testing certification</li> <li>• Software testing certification</li> <li>• Computer Engineering degree</li> <li>• Computer Science degree</li> <li>• Software Engineering degree</li> <li>• <b>IM/IT focused College Diploma</b></li> </ul> <p>Examples include, but are not limited to: HP ATP – LoadRunner, IBM Rational Performance Tester, or Rational Functional Tester</p> <p>A copy of the certification or degree must be provided with the bid.</p>		<b>/10</b>	Certification, <b>diploma</b> or degree = 10 points	
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20. At APPENDIX C TO ANNEX A, RESOURCES ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND RESPONSE TABLE, Workstream 4 – Business Services, B.9 - Courseware Developer:

**DELETE: R4 and R5**

**INSERT:**

<b>R4</b>	The Contractor should demonstrate, using project descriptions that the proposed resource has at least ten (10)		<b>/20</b>	<b>Less than 10 years = 0 points</b>	
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	years of experience within the last fifteen (15) years working in IT Courseware development.			<p>10 to less than 12 years = 5 points</p> <p>12 to less than 13 years = 10 points</p> <p>13 to less than 14 years = 15 points</p> <p>14 to 15 years = 20 points</p>	
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<b>R5</b>	The Contractor should demonstrate, using project descriptions that the proposed resource has at least ten (10) years of experience within the last fifteen (15) years analyzing needs, developing and delivering IM/IT training material.		<b>/20</b>	<p>Less than 10 years = 0 points</p> <p>10 to less than 12 years = 5 points</p> <p>12 to less than 13 years = 10 points</p> <p>13 to less than 14 years = 15 points</p> <p>14 to 15 years = 20 points</p>	
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**ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED.**