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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer File No.:

ECGZ-RFI-19-0664

Title:

Election Results
Modernization (ERM)

Date:

January 13, 2020

Closing Date and Time:

January 28, 2020 – 2:00 P.M. EST

ENQUIRIES

supplier@elections.ca

Attention:

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RESPONSES

SUBMIT RESPONSE VIA EMAIL TO:

supplier@elections.ca

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Election Results Modernization (ERM)

PART 1. Background and Purpose

1.1. Background

Elections Canada (EC) is seeking opportunities to improve the solutions that support the capture, management, and dissemination of election results. To this end, EC has created the **Election Results Modernization (ERM)** project. The scope of this project includes making recommendations for streamlining business processes and leveraging technology that could be employed to improve management of results.

1.2. Purpose

EC is seeking feedback from suppliers on EC requirements for a solution to support ERM.

EC is issuing this RFI to:

- A. Provide an equal opportunity for suppliers that may be interested in supplier engagement with EC;
- B. Validate solution concepts that could assist EC in further defining requirements;
- C. Identify requirements/strategy, and should legislation be enabled, develop planning, and solicitation documents;
- D. Refine the procurement strategy, project structure, timelines, requirements definition, and other aspects of the requirement; and
- E. Become a more "informed buyer" with an enhanced understanding of supplier goods and service offerings.

1.3. EC Mandate

EC, headed by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), an agent of Parliament, is an independent, non-partisan agency with unique organizational features that reports directly to Parliament. EC exercises general direction and supervision over the conduct of elections and referendums at the federal level. Its mandate is to:

- a) be prepared at all times to conduct a federal general election, by-election or referendum;
- b) administer the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act (CEA)*;
- c) monitor compliance with electoral legislation;
- d) conduct public information campaigns on voter registration, voting and becoming a candidate;
- e) conduct education programs for students on the electoral process;

- f) provide support to the independent commissions in charge of adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts following each decennial census;
- g) carry out studies on alternative voting methods and, with the approval of parliamentarians, test alternative voting processes for future use during electoral events; and
- h) provide assistance and cooperation in electoral matters to electoral agencies in other countries or to international organizations.

1.4. 43rd General Election

The 43rd general election held on October 21st, 2019 resulted in a minority government, and as a result the date for the 44th General Election is not fixed. With little or no notice, the Governor General, with advice from the Prime Minister, may initiate an Electoral Event. Once the Electoral Event is launched, Returning Officers (RO) in each of the country's 338 federal Electoral Districts mobilize thousands of temporary workers and set the machine of an electoral process in motion. This RFI may inform plans for the 44th General Election, but also may be used for planning separate from the election, given the unknown date.

1.5. Electoral Event Numbers

The following volumetric data may be associated with a general election:

- (a) a minimum electoral calendar of 36 days from the call of the general election to Election Day;
- (b) 338 Electoral Districts;
- (c) 485 local offices including satellite offices in the north;
- (d) 15,000 polling sites;
- (e) 70,000 Polling Stations composed of
 - i. 64,000 Ordinary Polls;
 - ii. 1,800 Mobile Polling Stations; and
 - iii. 6,200 Advance Polling Stations;
- (f) over 27 million electors; and
- (g) over 2,200 candidates.

PART 2. Nature of Request for Information

This is not a solicitation of bids or proposals. This RFI may not lead to the launching of a procurement process, the award of any contract or the creation of a source list. As a result, suppliers of any goods or services described in this RFI should not reserve stock or facilities, nor allocate resources, as a result of any information contained in this RFI. Therefore, whether or not any potential supplier responds to this RFI, it will not preclude that supplier from participating in any future procurement. Also, the decision to whether or not to launch a

procurement process for any of the goods and services described in this RFI is entirely at the sole discretion of EC. EC reserves the right to cancel or modify any of the preliminary requirements described herein. This RFI is simply intended to solicit feedback from industry with respect to the subject matter described herein and should not be considered as an authorization to undertake any work that would result in costs being charged to EC. EC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all comments received. Further respondent engagement may be conducted by EC which may include, supplier engagement days, one-on-one meetings, product demonstrations, requesting additional information from respondents, etc.

PART 3. Nature and Format of Responses Requested

Respondents are requested to provide their comments, concerns and, where applicable, alternative recommendations regarding how the requirements or objectives described in this RFI could be satisfied. Respondents are also invited to provide comments regarding the content, format and/or organization of any draft documents included in this RFI. Respondents should explain any assumptions they make in their responses.

PART 4. Response Costs

EC will not reimburse any respondents for any overhead costs or expenses incurred in responding to this RFI.

PART 5. Treatment of Responses

5.1. Use of Responses

Responses will not be formally evaluated. However, the responses received, may be used by EC to develop or modify procurement strategies or any draft documents contained in the planned RFP. EC will review only responses that have been received by the RFI closing date. EC may, at its discretion, review responses received after the RFI closing date.

5.2. Review Team

A review team composed of representatives from EC will review the responses. EC reserves the right to hire any independent consultant, or use any government resources that it considers necessary to review any response. Not all members of the review team will necessarily review all responses.

5.3. Confidentiality

Respondents are solely responsible for marking any portions of their response that they consider proprietary or confidential. EC will handle the responses in accordance with the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*.

5.4. Follow-Up Activity

EC may, at its discretion, contact any respondents to follow up with additional questions or for clarification of any aspect of a response or for one-on-one meetings.

PART 6. Official Languages

Responses to this RFI may be submitted in either of the official languages of Canada, French or English.

PART 7. Information Requested by Elections Canada

7.1. Responses to Questions to Industry

This RFI includes an attached Annex A that consists of questions which respondents can respond to. Respondents are invited to provide information by populating sections in the table in Annex A where they wish to provide a response to. Respondents are not obligated to completing all sections in the table; only those they choose to respond to.

Additional supporting documents may be sent to supplier@elections.ca by the closing date and time identified on the cover page of this document.

The content of this RFI is at a preliminary stage only and new clauses or requirements may be added at EC's sole discretion to any solicitation that may ultimately be published by EC. Any of these clauses or requirements may be deleted or revised if used in any procurement process, at EC's sole discretion. Comments regarding any aspect of the draft document are welcome.

PART 8. Volumetric Data

The data is being provided to respondents purely for information purposes and may not form part of, or may differ from EC's description of any future requirements. . Although it represents the best information currently available, EC does not guarantee that the data is complete or free from error. Reliance by respondents on the data is at their sole discretion. Consequently, EC is not responsible or liable in any way for the accuracy and integrity of such data.

PART 9. Format of Responses

Respondents are invited to complete any or all sections of Annex A of the RFI with details of products and services that could be of interest. For additional or supporting documents sent by email, please respond as follows:

9.1. Cover Page

If the response includes multiple volumes, respondents are invited to indicate on the front cover page of the response the title of the response, the RFI number, the number of volumes and the full legal name of the respondent.

9.2. Title Page

The first page of each volume of the response should be the title page, which should contain:

- a) the title of the respondent's response and the volume number;
- b) the Legal name and address of the respondent;
- c) the name, address, telephone number and email address of the respondent's contact;
- d) the date; and
- e) the RFI number.

9.3. Numbering System

Respondents should prepare their response using a numbering system corresponding to the one in this RFI. All references to descriptive material, technical manuals and brochures included as part of the response should be referenced accordingly.

PART 10. Enquiries

This is not a solicitation, therefore EC will not necessarily respond to enquiries in writing or by circulating answers to all potential respondents. However, respondents with questions regarding this RFI may direct their enquiries to the Contracting Authority via the email address identified on the cover page of this document.

PART 11. Submission of Responses

11.1. Time and Place for Submission of Responses

Respondents interested in providing a response should complete any or all sections of Annex A with details of products and services that could be of interest and submit any additional or supporting documents to the Contracting Authority via the email address and by the closing date and time identified on the cover page of this document.

11.2. Responsibility for Timely Delivery

Each respondent is solely responsible for ensuring its response is delivered on time to the correct location, and to the correct email address, if applicable.

11.3. Identification of Response

Each respondent should ensure that its Legal name and address, name, address, telephone number and email address, the RFI number and the closing date are included in their response in a prominent location.

PART 12. Business Vision

The Election Results Collection and Dissemination initiative envisions modernized technology and business processes that will better support EC in the management of event results.

12.1. Key Considerations

A solution should consider the following factors:

1. Although the date of the next general election in a minority government is not known, EC is anticipating a 'readiness date' of April 2021 to ensure that the agency is prepared to fulfill its mandate should an election be called. Implementation of some or all of a new solution prior to this date is highly desirable.
2. The solution must be capable of supporting upwards of 70,000 users with very limited training for the capture and reporting of election results. Its successful operation is crucial.
3. Existing legislation does not permit the use of vote tabulators in polling stations, however voting results may be captured through tabulation technology at some point in the future.
4. Polling stations do not currently have connectivity to either EC Headquarters or the Office of the Returning Officer. The Office of the Returning Officer has connectivity to EC Headquarters.
5. Polling locations are very temporary. Most are rented just for polling day and arrangements for their use are not finalized until the call of the election. While many are chosen ahead, they are sometimes difficult to come by in some towns, which means that the solution must be able to be used in conditions not always favourable to technology.
6. After limited training, election workers must be able to reliably conduct polling station operations with minimal support.

12.2. Terminology and Definitions

Term	Definition
Advance Polling Station	Advance Polling Stations are opened on the 10 th , 9 th , 8 th , and 7 th days before Election Day for those who choose to vote early. Advance Polling Stations typically serve many more electors (with up to 15 regular Polling Divisions assigned to each advance poll). In some urban areas, multiple advance Polling Stations are held in the same advance Polling Place. In the 42 nd general election there were nearly 5000 advance Polling Stations located at more than 3400 advance Polling Places.
Election Day	The day most people go to vote. Also known as polling day. Election Day must be a Monday, and at least 36 days after the writs are issued. If that Monday happens to be a holiday, Election Day is the following Tuesday.
Electoral District	Each federal Electoral District is a geographical area represented by a member of parliament elected to the House of Commons; often called a riding or constituency. Electoral districts are based upon several attributes, including:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population size • Communities of interest • Geographic area
Electoral Event	A generic term used to describe a general election, by-election or referendum.
List of Electors	The list of names and addresses of all registered electors that is used at a polling station when people vote. Also known as the <i>voters list</i> . The elector count refers to the number of electors on the list of electors for a particular polling division or electoral district.
Mobile Polling Station	A Mobile Polling Station transports the ballot box during voting days to locations such as long term care residents, to serve seniors or persons with disabilities.
Poll by Poll Results	Votes cast for each candidate for each polling station within an Electoral District.
Polling Division	Polling divisions are geographic areas which make up a federal Electoral District. They allow the management of electoral events based on the number of electors per Polling Division.
Polling Place	A Polling Place is a place where electors cast their vote. Each Polling Station is assigned to a Polling Place. A Polling Place will generally serve multiple Polling Stations. A Polling Station may also be referred to as a stationary Polling Station to differentiate it from a Mobile Polling Station. In the 42 nd general election there were over 70,000 Polling Stations located at over 15,500 Polling Places.
Polling Station	Each elector eligible to vote in Canada is assigned to a Polling Station. A Polling Station represents a segment of the List of Electors within an Electoral District. Polling stations are typically configured to serve approximately 400 electors to ensure that the distribution of electors is fairly even, assuring efficient service and integrity in the voting system.
Summary Results	Votes cast for each candidate in an Electoral District.
SVR	The Special Voting Rules (SVR), in Part 11 of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> (CEA), offer alternate voting options to Canadians who cannot or do not wish to vote at an advance or ordinary poll during an election. These special ballot voting options include voting by mail from virtually anywhere in the world or in person at various Elections Canada service points, such as the RO office, an AARO office or an ESP (External Service Point) office on campus. Additional special ballot voting options include voting in acute care facilities

	or from home if an elector qualifies for it.
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12.3. Overview of Solution

Management of ERCD is comprised of three major phases:

Preliminary Results – Ballots cast at Advance and Ordinary polls are counted and results are captured at the close of polls on Day 0 of an electoral event. Counting of Special Voting Rules (SVR) ballots commences prior to polling day on a date determined by the CEO and concludes sometime after the close of the polls. Summary results for each electoral district are posted on EC’s web site and are provided to media, candidates, and other third parties as quickly as possible on polling night.

A solution to capture preliminary results would provide the following functions:

- The ability for an election officer to enter the number of votes cast for each candidate for at their polling station, using a personal mobile device;
- The ability for the Returning Officer to enter the number of votes cast for each candidate at a polling station, on behalf of an election officer who is unable to perform this function;
- The ability for the Returning Officer to enter the number of votes cast for each candidate at Advance Polling Stations;
- The ability for the Returning Officer to enter the number of votes cast for each candidate by special ballot in their office or locally;
- The ability for EC Headquarters staff to enter the number of votes cast for each candidate by special ballot; and
- The ability to disseminate election results to the EC website, media, candidates, and other third parties.

Validation of Results – Between Day -2 and Day -8 Returning Officers are responsible for review of the preliminary results and correction of any errors or anomalies in the data. Modifications may be made to correct any data entry errors, or to protect the secrecy of the vote. This process can be delayed up to two weeks, if the Returning officer has not received the materials to complete this process. Upon completion of validation poll by poll results are published on EC’s web site and are provided to candidates and political parties.

A solution to support validation of results would provide the following capabilities:

- The ability for the Returning Officer to amend the preliminary results to create a set of validated results. The validated results do not replace the preliminary results.
- A set of report that allow users of the solution to analyze the results data. These reports provide information such as:

- Polling stations with no results;
- Polling stations where secrecy of the vote is a concern (all votes cast for a single candidate); and
- The number of votes cast exceeds the count of registered electors.
- The ability for the returning officer to certify the results as final to provide notice that they are complete and may not be modified further.

In rare cases where a candidate has won by a narrow margin a judicial recount may be requested or automatically required. Upon completion of the recount the validated results may be adjusted to reflect the outcome of the recount.

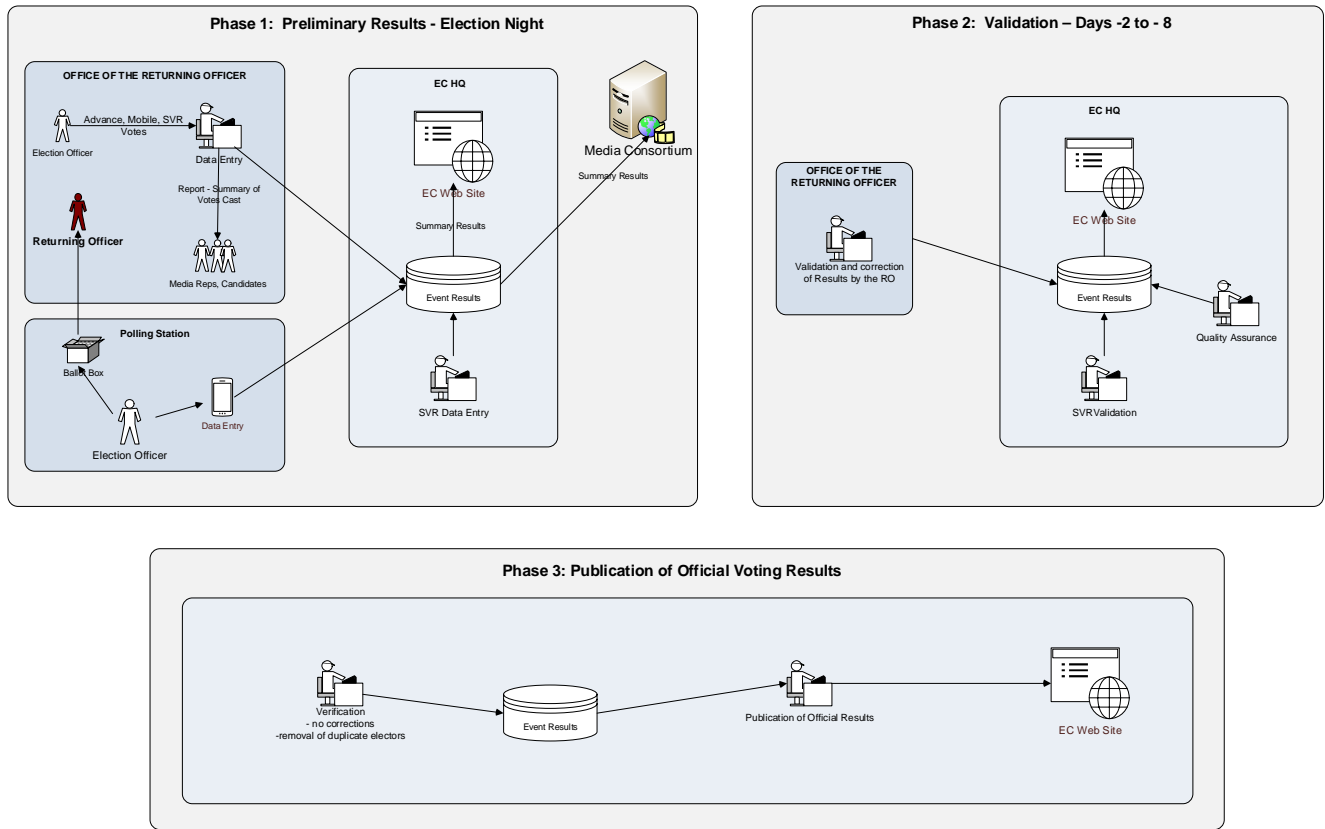
A solution to support validation of results would provide the following capabilities:

- The ability for the Returning Officer or ECHQ to amend the validated results to create a set of judicial recount results. These results do not replace the validated results;
- A set of report that allow users of the solution to analyze the results data;
- The ability for the returning officer to certify the results as final to provide notice that they are complete and may not be modified further.

Publication of Official Results – Upon completion of validation or a judicial recount, work commences to prepare the results for final publication. No modifications are made to the overall results, however there are changes made to count of electors to reflect the final modifications and polling day registrations, and the addition of notes to explain anomalies in the results data. The Official Results of the 42nd General Election can be used as a reference: <https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/off/42gedata&document=index&lang=e>

The following diagram provides an initial conceptual view of a modernized solution:

Event Results Process Flow



The solution is comprised of the following components:

1. A component or components that will provide the ability to:
 - a. Enter preliminary voting results for each polling station, by election officers at the polling station using a mobile device, or at the Returning Office;
 - b. Enter Advance poll voting results at the polling station or at the Returning Office;
 - c. Enter Special Ballot voting results, at EC HQ or at the Returning Office;
2. A component that will provide the ability to monitor and report on the capture of preliminary voting results;
3. A component that will provide the ability to amend preliminary results to create a second set of validated results;
4. A component that will provide the ability to disseminate results;
5. A component that will allow modification of validated results to incorporate adjustments from a judicial recount; and
6. A component that will allow validated results to be certified (ready for official publication).

- a. A reporting component to provide management reports for monitoring of the activities.

Annex A – Questions and Response Template

EC has developed a set of questions with which to evaluate potential solutions for the management of ERCD. EC has not assumed that a single vendor will provide all components of the solution, and vendors are invited to respond in one or more areas.

Please answer the questions below and add any information regarding your related products and/or services, that may be of interest.

No.	Question	Response
1	What Election Event Results Management products and services do you offer?	
2	Does your results management product integrate with other election management products that you offer?	
3	Which jurisdictions currently use your products and/or services?	
4	Can you provide any material that describes your product (eg. screenshots, user guides, etc.)?	
5	Are there capabilities that EC requires that are not available in your product? If so how could these be integrated with your product?	
6	Is there any business requirement crucial to supporting the introduction of the associated technologies with your solution in Polling Places or Returning Offices that we have not considered?	
7	Is it feasible to consider that EC can implement some or all of a solution prior to the readiness date or April 2021?	
8	For planning purposes, how much lead time is required for production and provision of the solution for testing and training?	
9	Would you be interested to come to EC to show your products and talk about your services and capacities? To engage with EC on this initiative please visit the following link. http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=emp&dir=pro&document=index&lang=e	
10	Please provide any additional information that may be relevant to this RFI, such as:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons learned from previous engagements • Challenges and risks • Recommendations 	
User experience		
11	Please describe the process and product features for capturing and managing event results.	
12	How are the users trained to use your product?	
13	Does your product support multiple languages (e.g. Canadian French and English)?	
14	Is your product capable of operating on mobile devices?	
15	Is your solution compliant with the W3C – WCAG 2.0 ¹ accessibility standard? Please indicate which other accessibility standards that your solution may be compliant with.	
16	What is your user authentication process?	
17	What support services are available to users for your products and/or services?	
Volume		
18	In a given election, what is the largest number of users that have used your product?	
19	How does your system scale to meet increased demand?	
Pricing Model		
20	How are your products and services costed?	
21	What are your Maintenance and Support cost models?	
Technical		
22	Do you offer a hosted managed service (i.e. SaaS)? If so, where is it hosted?	
23	Does your product operate on both cloud and physical infrastructure?	

¹ The objective of this standard is to ensure a high level of Web accessibility is applied uniformly across Government of Canada websites and Web applications.
<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=23601>

24	What is your product traceability, audit and reporting capabilities?	
25	Do you offer implementation professional services? If so, what is typically provided?	
26	What are the technology requirements (capacity, IT infrastructure elements/versions) to operate your product/solution?	
27	What Identity and Access Management (IAM) does your product use to authenticate users? Can it be integrated with an existing IAM implementation?	
28	Do you have experience working with an agency that hosts it's own data? What data exchange standards and methods does your product support?	
Security		
29	Please describe your experiences participating in Security Assessment and Authorization (SA&A) process for a federal government agency?	
30	Can you explain the security measures you have put into place to protect information in your solution?	

EC is also exploring the possibility of replacing the web site that publishes election results. If you have experience in this area please describe possible solutions that you could provide.

No.	Question	Response
31	What products or services can you provide for the publication of election results?	