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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

Issuing Office - Bureau de distribution

Informatics Professional Services Division / Division
des services professionnels en informatique

Les Terrasses de la Chaudière

10, rue Wellington, 4ième

étage/Floor

Gatineau

Québec

K1A 0S5

Title - Sujet APPLICATION SERVICES	
Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation A0416-183261/A	Amendment No. - N° modif. 008
Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client A0416-183261	Date 2020-07-26
GETS Reference No. - N° de référence de SEAG PW-\$\$ZM-631-38062	
File No. - N° de dossier 631zm.A0416-183261	CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME
Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin at - à 02:00 PM on - le 2020-08-11	
Time Zone Fuseau horaire Eastern Daylight Saving Time EDT	
F.O.B. - F.A.B. Plant-Usine: <input type="checkbox"/> Destination: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other-Autre: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address Enquiries to: - Adresser toutes questions à: Dubeau, Stephane	Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur 631zm
Telephone No. - N° de téléphone (613) 447-8075 ()	FAX No. - N° de FAX () -
Destination - of Goods, Services, and Construction: Destination - des biens, services et construction:	

Instructions: See Herein

Instructions: Voir aux présentes

Delivery Required - Livraison exigée	Delivery Offered - Livraison proposée
Vendor/Firm Name and Address Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur	
Telephone No. - N° de téléphone Facsimile No. - N° de télécopieur	
Name and title of person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm (type or print) Nom et titre de la personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/ de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie)	
Signature	Date

Solicitation No. – N° de l'invitation A0416-183261/A	Amd. No – N° de la modif. 008	Buyer ID – Id de l'acheteur 631zm
Client Ref. No. – N° de réf. De client VME A0416-183261	File No. – N° du dossier 631zm.A0416-183261	CCC No./ N° CCC – FMS No/ N° V

AMENDMENT No. 008

This amendment is raised to answer bidders' questions.

Question 1:

1. In RTC7 the Crown is awarding 10 points for vendors with an ISO certification. In doing so, we believe the Crown is looking for certification that vendors have consistent best practices and repeatable processes for risk and contract management, however, ISO certification does not provide this assurance. We believe that having risk and contract management methodologies implemented as a best practice within the firm and validated with client references for similar contracts would provide the Crown with the assurance that the methodologies will be utilized for management of this contract. Therefore, would the Crown either replace the ISO certification, or provide equal points to firms who can document and provide client references validating their repeatable and consistent management methodologies?
2. MC2 d) and RTC2 d) requires bidders to provide the minimum total invoiced amount of 70% of the total value of the contract provided in response to this criteria; however, Form 2 and Form R1 do not include this in the tables. Will the Crown be modifying the tables and resending them for bidders to populate this criteria, or would it be acceptable for bidders to modify the tables to include this in their bid.

Answer 1:

A1: Canada has reviewed your request. The requirement will remain unchanged.

A2: Yes, bidders can modify the form to include this criteria.

Question 2: In Amendment 6, Question 4 asked, *"To ensure complete transparency in the bidding process, would the Crown consider amending requirements RTC1, RTC2, RTC4 and RTC6b) to also require client reference signatures in order to attest that the information being provided by bidders is accurate and true?"* Canada answered yes.

Would Canada please consider leaving RTC1, RTC2, RTC4, and RTC6b) as originally stated in the solicitation?

The original requirements for RTC1, RTC2, RTC4, and RTC6b), already provide transparency and opportunity for validation as they require customer contact information, allowing Canada to validate any information (if needed), in addition to copies of the contract Statement of Work and/or tasks performed.

Also, please consider that the solicitation closes in less than 2 weeks' time. Changing the requirements this drastically and requesting upwards of 8-10 additional customer signatures does not create transparency, rather a strenuous ask on vendors and their clients, especially during Covid-19 when clients are dealing with many different challenges on their time. The forms also do not reflect these changes, and would require the distribution of amended forms, which would facilitate the need for an extension of the solicitation.

Due to these factors, and already clear and transparent requirements for RTC1, RTC2, RTC4, and RTC6, we respectfully request that these requirements remain as originally written, and do not require customer signatures.

Answer 2:

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Canada has reviewed your request. The requirement will remain unchanged.

Question 3:

1) Regarding the July 15th Amendment #006, Q&A#4, which states that client reference signatures will now be required for all contracts used in RTC1, RTC2, RTC4, and RTC6b:

Though we understand the Crown's interest in ensuring that the information provided by bidders is accurate and true upon bid submission, requesting signed client references on almost all requirements significantly changes the level of effort and timing required by vendors to prepare a compliant response and this change comes with only eight (8) business days to the closing date.

For MTC1/RTC1 and MTC2/RTC2 alone, this modification increases the minimum number of signed references required from 2 to at *least* 7. This number does not account for the numerous additional signed references that will now be required in the remaining point-rated requirements. With this in mind, would the client please consider:

- a. Extending the closing date by two weeks to August 11, 2020 @ 2pm to allow vendors an appropriate amount of time to prepare, review, and obtain client approval/signature on these additional references; **OR**
- b. Reverting back to the original requirements where signed client references are only required in response to MTC1 and MTC2 and client contact information is sufficient elsewhere.

2) Regarding RTC4, item c): this requirement states that for each of the contract references provided, "The services provided by each resource must have been the same or similar to at least three of the tasks for the specific resource category at a Junior level, at least five of the tasks for the specific resource category at an Intermediate level, **and** at least seven of the tasks for the specific resource category at a Senior Level as identified in Section 2.2 of Annex A – Statement of Work."

Please confirm that each resource only needs to align with the Level 1, Level 2, OR Level 3 resource category and item c should read:

"The services provided by each resource must have been the same or similar to at least three of the tasks for the specific resource category at a Junior level, at least five of the tasks for the specific resource category at an Intermediate level, **OR** at least seven of the tasks for the specific resource category at a Senior Level as identified in Section 2.2 of Annex A – Statement of Work."

Answer 3:

A1: The closing date has been extended as requested;

A2: "OR" is accepted.

Question 4: Regarding Amendment 6, Q&A #3: Bidders are now required to include the invoiced amount in support of RTC1 for all the client references in support of that criteria. As such, will the Crown be re-issuing Form R1 to include a section for this additional information? Or can bidder's modify the Form themselves?

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Regarding Amendment 6, Q&A #4: The Crown has modified the response requirements for the client references for RTC1, RTC2, RTC4 and RTC6b) which now requires bidders to obtain signatures from their clients for a large amount of references in support of these criterion. Since bidders are already required to provide the contact information for their clients who can attest that the information being provided by bidders is accurate and true, we question why signatures are now required, and would respectfully request that the Crown reconsider the requirement for signatures at this late date in the process.

If the Crown is not willing to remove the requirement for signatures, we request a two (2) week extension to the bid closing date in order to obtain these signatures, as it could prove to be a challenge in contacting numerous clients during the Covid pandemic, along with the fact that this is a popular vacation period. This will allow bidders additional time to contact and obtain these signatures to submit a fully compliant and competitive bid. We would also request that the Crown issue amended Forms to include a signature block for these references.

Answer 4:

Yes, bidders can modify the form to include these criteria.

Question 5: Further to Amendment 008, Q&A #4, the level of effort for Bidder's has increased significantly. As stated '*To ensure complete transparency in the bidding process, would the Crown consider amending requirements (RTC1, RTC2, RTC4 and RTC6b) to also require client reference signatures in order to attest that the information being provided by bidders is accurate and true?*' **Answer 4 Yes'.**

Amending these criteria at such a late date in the competition is unwarranted and unprecedented. Bidders are now required to, potentially, acquire over ten (10) additional Client signatures in order to submit a compliant bid. Given the complexity of the bid requirements, the size of the bid, unavailability of Clients due to the vacation season, exacerbated by COVID-19 accommodations, and the volume of Tier-2 RFPs currently under competition, the requirement for additional Client signatures is excessive. Also, the Solicitation for the ASA version competed in March did not require the same volume of client signatures. The fact that copies of the referenced contract are required as part of the bid response and Client contact information is required for each reference contract, clearly demonstrates complete transparency.

The requirement to attain additional 'signed' client references at this late time and, as stated above, is excessive and warrants the necessity to extend the closing date. Given this, we request that the above-referenced amendment is removed or provision of a three-week extension to the Solicitation closing date in order to acquire the additional client signatures. Please advise.

Answer 5:

In order to accommodate, the closing date has been extended to August 11.

Question 6: Reference 1: MC1, MC2 and Amendment 006, Q&A #4: RTC1, RTC2, RTC4 and RTC6b) – client reference signatures.

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Question 1: Can the Crown please confirm that email confirmations and electronic signatures are acceptable for MC1, MC2, and now due to Amendment 006, Q&A #4, RTC1, RTC2, RTC4 and RTC6b) given many client contacts are working remotely and many not be able to sign and scan documents?

Reference 2: Solicitation Closing Date: July 28, 2020

Question 2: Due to Amendment 006, Q&A #4, now requiring client reference signatures, and given the number of individuals who take a vacation during the summer months, we kindly request an extension to August 7, 2020

Answer 6:

A1: email confirmations and electronic signatures are acceptable;

A2: The closing date has been extended to August 11.

Question 7: Given there are several outstanding questions submitted against this solicitation that could have major implications on a vendor's bid, would Canada please grant a one week extension to the solicitation closing date to give Bidders adequate time to formulate a response?

Answer 7:

The closing date has been extended to August 11.

Question 8:

- 1) Amendment No. 6, Question and Answer # 3 changes the entire evaluation criteria for RTC1. The addition of parameter (f) from MTC1 now requires Vendors to have billed over 70% (if completed within the last 8 years) and 20% (if ongoing for more than one year) whereas this was not a requirement previously. This is a drastic change to the requirement and will disqualify many Vendors who are currently holding large omnibus contracts but have not billed the outlined amount. We would like to request that the change to RTC1 in Amendment No.6 be redacted and that parameter (f) be removed.
- 2) Amendment No.6, Question and Answer # 4 now requires vendors to obtain client signatures for requirements RTC1, RTC2, RTC4 and RTC6b The addition of requiring client signatures adds a significant amount of time and effort to bid preparation, especially since the summer season is prime vacation time with many clients away from the office and difficult to reach. As such we would like to request a two week extension to the solicitation closing date to allow Vendors ample time to obtain the newly required client signature references for RTC1, RTC2, RTC4, and RTC6b.

Answer 8:

A1: Canada has reviewed your request. The requirement will remain unchanged;

A2: The closing date has been extended to August 11.

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Question 9:

1) Regarding July 9th, Amendment #004, Q&A#3 and July 13th Amendment #005 modifying MTC1, MTC2, RTC1, and RTC2 item b) which now states, "The client contract cited must have a minimum total contract value **or billed (invoiced) value...**"

This modification introduces an unfair advantage to vendors who substantiate their experience by providing an "IT professional services contract where work is requested on an 'as-and-when-required' basis [that does] not have a set dollar value upon contract award" (as per Q&A#3). These vendors will avoid being evaluated on the contract parameters set out in MTC1 item f) and MTC2/RTC2 item d) which state that the contracts must "have a minimum total invoiced amount of 70% of the total value of the contract (before taxes) if the contract was completed in the last eight years (as of bid closing date) or, 20% of the total value of the contract (before taxes) if the contract has been ongoing for a period greater than one year (as of bid closing date)."

With this in mind, we suggest that the Crown:

- a. Reverts MTC1, MTC2, RTC1, and RTC2 item b to the original wording by removing the option to use billed (invoiced) values or total contract value; **OR**

Removes MTC1 item f) and MTC2/RTC2 item d) which require each contract to meet a minimum % of total contract value invoiced.

- 2) Regarding July 15th Amendment #006, Q&A#3 which states that contracts used to substantiate experience in RTC1 are required to meet MTC1 contract parameter f).
This is a significant change that comes very late in the procurement process (only eight business days to bid closing date) and has not been reflected in any revisions to the grid as of July 17. Please confirm that contracts used in RTC1 only need to meet parameters a) through e) as per Attachment 4.2 (Revised no.01 dated 2020-07-13) on Buy and Sell.

Answer 9:

A1: Canada has reviewed your request. The requirement will remain unchanged;

A2: Canada has reviewed your request. The requirement will remain unchanged.

Question 10:

Amendment #6, Q&A#4, required that Bidders supply a client signature in their responses to RTC1, RTC2, RTC4, and RTC 6 b).

To-date, FORM R1, FORM R2, FORM R3, and FORM R5 have not been amended to reflect Answer #4.

Is PSPC planning to publish amended Forms? Please clarify.

Answer 10:

Bidders are allowed for modifying the forms to include this criteria.

ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN THE SAME.