



**RETURN BIDS TO:
RETOURNER LES SOUMISSIONS À:**

PWGSC/TPSGC Acquisitions Bid
Receiving/Réception des Soumissions
126 Prince William Street/
126, rue Prince William
Suite 14B
Saint John
New Brunswick
E2L 2B6
Bid Fax: (506) 636-4376

**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

All enquiries are to be submitted in writing to the Contracting Officer, Janine Donovan: Email - janine.donovan@pwgsc.gc.ca.

Vendor/Firm Name and Address

Raison sociale et adresse du
fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur

Issuing Office - Bureau de distribution

Saint John, NB (STJ)
126 Prince William Street/
126, rue Prince William
Suite 14B
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Title - Sujet Rehabilitation Services	
Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation 51019-184018/B	Amendment No. - N° modif. 004
Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client 51019-184018	Date 2020-09-14
GETS Reference No. - N° de référence de SEAG PW-\$STJ-002-4508	
File No. - N° de dossier STJ-8-41048 (002)	CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME
Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin at - à 02:00 PM on - le 2020-09-30	Time Zone Fuseau horaire Atlantic Daylight Saving Time ADT
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: Donovan (STJ), Janine E.	Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur stj002
Telephone No. - N° de téléphone (506) 639-0215 ()	FAX No. - N° de FAX (506) 636-4376
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 Amendment

Title Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance Program

Solicitation Amendment No. **004**

This solicitation is hereby amended to provide the follow questions and answers:

Q9: Reference Annex G Technical Evaluation Criteria. For the purposes of the Technical Evaluation Criteria, could you advise if a company may rely upon the experience of other affiliated companies in their corporate group, even if they are not parties to the contract or a Joint Venture (JV) arrangement?

A9: No, a company cannot rely upon the experience of other affiliated companies in their corporate group for the purposes of the Technical Evaluation Criteria.

Q10: Please define "corporate reference". If the contract/reference used to demonstrate the organization's ability to meet one of the mandatory criteria is Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), please confirm VAC will provide such a reference letter.

A10: The corporate client reference letter is a letter provided by a company to verify services has been performed to them. As per Annex G Technical Evaluation Criteria M1 through M3, it must be endorsed at the Management or Executive level. It must also include a minimum the other information specified in that section. Yes, VAC can provide such a reference letter if applicable.

Q11: If the contract/reference used to demonstrate the organizations ability to meet the M3 mandatory criteria is VAC, please confirm VAC will be able to provide a reference letter and confirm the organization meets the mandatory requirements.

A11: Yes, VAC will be able to provide a reference letter to demonstrate the organization's ability to meet Mandatory Criterion 3.

Q12: Reference Annex G Evaluation criteria: section M1 Corporate Experience Medical and Psycho-social Rehabilitation Service Delivery, the Bidder must demonstrate a recent combination of medical and/or psycho-social rehabilitation services experience. Can this experience be demonstrated by a subcontract partner? Can this experience be demonstrated through the facilitation of these services through third party providers?

A12: Canada will only accept the experience of the Bidder as defined in Section 4 of SACC 2003 (2020/05/28). The experience and qualifications of a Bidder's subcontractors will be not be accepted as part of the Bidder's (non-JV) experience and qualifications for the purposes of meeting the mandatory requirements of the RFP as it is not included in the definition of the Bidder, and therefore their experience will not be accepted in the determination of whether the Bidder meets the Mandatory and Point Rated Criteria of the bid solicitation.

Q13: Reference Annex A Statement of Work (SOW) article 8.2.4.d. Does the scheduling have to be a part of Web-based Client Management Portal, or can it be an independent tool that we use in conjunction with software? For example, we can use Microsoft Teams or Outlook to schedule the appointment?

A13: No, the scheduling tool does not have to be part of the Participant Portal. The tool can be independent of the main portal however must be integrated into the interface. Any tool used must meet the government standards as defined in Annex A - Appendix 4.

Q14: Reference Annex A Statement of Work (SOW) article 8.2.4.e. Does live chat have to be a part of Web-Based Portal or can it be an independent tool. For example, can we use Microsoft Teams for chatting?

A14: No, the live chat tool does not have to be part of the Participant Portal. The tool can be independent of the main portal however must be integrated into the interface. Any tool used must meet the government standards.

Q15: Reference Annex A Statement of Work (SOW) article 8.2.4.f. We have secured telephone lines available. For online counselling and meetings, we use a combination of various software. For example: Embodia, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. Would VAC have any security concerns and/or a preference on the software used?

A15: No, there is no preferential software, however any solution must be configured securely and approved by PSPCs Contract Security Program (CSP).

Q16: Reference Annex A Statement of Work (SOW) article 8.2.4.i. Our Web-Based Portal primarily offers the CRM features. We currently use other software to offer Webinar services such as, Embodia, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc. Are there any concerns with using plugins or external software in conjunction with Web-Based Portal?

A16: No, there are no concerns with using plugins or external software in conjunction with Web-Based Portal, provided the system is approved for use by VAC prior to use.

Q17: Reference Annex A SOW article 8.2.11.3. To provide training modules, we are using another secure software which is integrated in our Web-Portal under single sign on. Are there any concerns with respect to using multiple secure apps integration with our Portal to achieve the same results?

A17: No, there are no concerns with respect to using multiple secure apps integrated with the Participant Portal provided they are approved by VAC prior to use.

Q18: Reference Annex A SOW article 8.3.2.1. For this section, would the process document be provided by VAC, or would the successful bidder create their own process?

A18: The successful bidder would create their own process to meet the requirement, which will be reviewed and approved by VAC.

Q19: Reference Annex A SOW article 8.3.4.2. Is it required that the following portals be required to meet all accessibility requirements as indicated in the ICT Accessibility Requirements Appendix 5? a. VAC Portal, b. RSP Portal.

A19: Yes, all ICT Accessibility Requirements apply to all Portals.

Q20: Reference Annex A SOW article 8.9.10.1. This section indicates VAC will undertake a SA&A or HTRA. Will the proposed solution be required to be complete at 6 months or is this to review the design and implementation plans by the 6 month period?

A20: The proposed solutions will be reviewed at both the design and implementation plan phases to allow for any outstanding items to be addressed in a timely manner.

Q21: Reference Annex A SOW appendix 2. Is the current GC Case system used by VAC an on premise implementation or Cloud based solution hosted by a cloud vendor? If hosted, is it hosted by Microsoft or third party?

A21: Currently, GC Case is an on premise instance hosted by Shared Services Canada. It is possible that a move to Microsoft hosted Azure may occur. VAC will provide the necessary direction to the successful bidder following contract award.

Q22: **The development and implementation of the various aspects of the IT system is extensive. Annex A SOW Section 8.0 Application and IT Requirements includes many sections (8.2.7, 8.3.1.4, 8.12.1.18, 8.12.3.2) indicating that the contractor may be required to make changes to the IT systems as required by VAC and/or other stakeholders. After design clarification during the Implementation Phase, our organization would request that system design/requirements remain unchanged, and that further changes, post implementation would be requested through the change management process.**

A22: Any introduction of new requirements during the implementation phase will be handled via a change management process for the implementation phase. Changes required post implementation will be handled via a contract change management process.

Q23: **Reference Annex A SOW articles 8.2.6, 8.3.5.7, 8.3.3.7 (VAC Access). Can VAC provide clarification on the requirements for VAC staff access to the contractor's IT systems? The sections in the SOW on the VAC admin interface (8.3.3.7) and VAC access to the database (8.3.5.7) are specific to the contractor's back-end IT system; however section 8.2.6 refers to a Portal tailored to VAC users. Will VAC staff need access to the contractor's system(s) through a VPN/firewall or via a public web portal?**

A23: It's not anticipated VAC staff will require access to the contractor's IT systems through VPN firewall, however VAC will require access to the contract data and requires a portal for VAC staff as per section 8.2.6.

Q24: **Reference Annex A SOW articles 8.7.2, 8.9.6.2.3 (IT System Infrastructure). The facilities requirements in the SOW include that the 'contractor must set-up and maintain off-site facilities and systems for storing backups and a fail-over site for disaster recovery'. Does VAC require that these sites be on-premises/private cloud? Or will VAC permit the contractor to host these systems within a secure public cloud that meets the security requirements set out in the Government of Canada Cloud Adoption Strategy?**

A24: VAC will permit the use of a cloud based solution that will be reviewed and pre-approved by VAC.

Q25: **Reference Annex A SOW article 4.1.3. The SOW includes the statement that 'Email cannot be utilized for service delivery purposes.' Does this prevent participants from opting-in to receive non-personalized email reminders of specific events (claim decision/payment, survey reminders etc.)? Additionally, could SMS be used to send participants text message reminders and to conduct surveys?**

A25: Provided participants have the ability to both opt-in to receiving and opt-out of receiving non-personalized email, sms/text messages and surveys, and that VAC approves the communication method and content, the contractor may use email, sms/text messages and surveys to correspond with participants provided they are non-personalized messages.

Q26: **Reference Annex A SOW articles 8.4.1.2, 8.9.3 (Password Policy). The Portal Security section of the SOW refers to the cyber.ca User Authentication Guidance for Information Technology Systems, which includes the clause in the Guidance for System Designers section: "Avoid burdensome mechanisms: It is not necessary to implement certain other mechanisms that have proven overly burdensome to users". These mechanisms can include:**

- **Overly complex password composition rules;**
- **Age-based password expiry;**
- **Enforcement of uniqueness against a password history”.**

The Secure Access Controls section of the SOW states that the IT Systems must comply with the VAC Password requirements, including:

- “b. The IT system must enforce minimum password length of 8 characters using at least one number and one upper case character;
- c. The IT system must enforce password aging by requiring users to change passwords at least once every 180 days. For passwords associated with a security token (i.e., two factor authentication) the password must be changed at least annually;
- d. The IT system must enforce uniqueness of the previous four passwords; passwords may only be used once in a twelve-month period”

These policies appear conflicting. Can VAC clarify which one takes precedence or whether different policies are valid for access to different IT systems?

A26: The cyber.ca User Authentication Guidance for Information Technology Systems takes precedence, as it is the latest GoC guidance and will be adopted by VAC. User Authentication Guidance for Information Technology Systems:
<https://www.cse-cst.gc.ca/en/node/2454/html/28582>

Q27: Reference Draft RFP Annex B. The RFP response will include a price per file to transfer files from the existing service delivery partner (VAC, CVVRS, etc.) to the contractor. This would include an electronic file referral and review of the file by contractor’s staff; however, the details of this transfer could impact the effort and cost of this item. Further information which would assist our organization’s response to this section are:

- **Can VAC clarify what information will be sent as part of the electronic referral for these transferred files and the format(s) of this information? Will all documentation (other than electronic referral message) be sent in PDF format, or could other formats be utilized?**
- **How will existing Individual Vocational Rehabilitation Plans (IVRPs) for Vocational Rehabilitation and Assistance participants be transferred to the contractor in order to assure that authorized expenses and timelines, and current utilization of those items is preserved?**
- **How will existing (claimed but declined or pending) Vocational Rehabilitation and Assistance participant claims be handled?**
- **Who is responsible for Vocational Rehabilitation and Assistance participant claims made from closed Vocational Rehabilitation participants who did not transfer to the contractor but are still eligible to claim expenses for up to one year (e.g. participants who closed before transfer)?**

A27: Any information relevant to the status of the Participant's rehabilitation plan will be shared with the contractor. It is anticipated the data will be shared in multiple formats such as standard formats of either comma-separated files /json and pdf. VAC and the Contractor will determine the best approach for transferring Participant's data, IVRPs, and other relevant information during the implementation process. The process for transitioning Participants will be determined with the Contractors during the implementation phase of the project. Allocation of responsibilities for files, claims, plan transfer will be conducted on a case by case basis and responsibilities split between the existing contractor, VAC and the new contractor.

All other terms and conditions of the solicitation document remain unchanged.

Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation
51019-184018/B
Client Ref. No. - N° de réf. du client
51019-184018

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004
File No. - N° du dossier
STJ-8-41048

Buyer ID - Id de l'acheteur
STJ002
CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME

All enquiries concerning this amendment are to be forwarded to:

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