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Gatineau
Québec
K1A 0S5
Bid Fax: (819) 997-9776

**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
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Gatineau
Québec
K1A 0S5

Title - Sujet TBIPS - Tier 2 - Two Workstreams Provision of Professional Services for ESDC Interoperability	
Solicitation No. - N° de l'invitation G9292-223847/A	Amendment No. - N° modif. 006
Client Reference No. - N° de référence du client G9292-223847	Date 2020-11-18
GETS Reference No. - N° de référence de SEAG PW-\$\$ZM-625-38587	
File No. - N° de dossier 625zm.G9292-223847	CCC No./N° CCC - FMS No./N° VME
Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin at - à 02:00 PM Eastern Standard Time EST on - le 2020-12-08 Heure Normale de l'Est HNE	
F.O.B. - F.A.B. Plant-Usine: <input type="checkbox"/> Destination: <input type="checkbox"/> Other-Autre: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address Enquiries to: - Adresser toutes questions à: Haroutounian, Rosanna	Buyer Id - Id de l'acheteur 625zm
Telephone No. - N° de téléphone (873) 354-5346 ()	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

AMENDMENT NO. 006

This amendment is raised to revise the solicitation and to answer bidders' questions.

SOLICITATION REVISIONS

Revision 14 to Revision 27 (please see attachment)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 21: Resource Flexibility

Given the scope, duration and complexity of this requirement, we assume that resource categories, types and levels may expand beyond the two resource categories currently identified within this RFP, and may in fact expand and/or contract to meet the department's ongoing and project-based requirements once the contract is awarded. With this understanding, please confirm that resource categories within the resulting contract will not be limited to the two currently identified in the RFP and that additional types, levels and numbers of resource categories may be added (with rates negotiated) at a later date post contract award, depending on the department's needs and focus.

Answer 21: No. The Bidder's assumption is incorrect. As indicated in the RFP, Section 1.2 Summary item (i), this requirement is for the provision of services in two workstreams, requiring Level 2 and Level 3 resources in four different resource categories per stream on an as and when requested basis. There will not be additional types and levels of resources added after contract award.

Question 22: With respect to each workstream's mandatory requirements, it is currently required that when using similar categories, bidders must complete "...the mapping of the SOW tasks and deliverables of this requirement to the tasks and/or deliverables of the resource category identified in the reference contract."

In compiling our response, we have found that many contracts do not name all tasks, deliverables and technologies involved in the work actually performed. This inadvertently disqualifies actual experience that has been performed. In order to encourage more bids by the vendor community, please confirm that bidders can provide a list of tasks performed under the reference contract that will be validated and confirmed by the Client Contact.

Answer 22: If the Bidder's reference contract does not have a Statement of Work with a list of detailed tasks, the Bidder must provide a list of tasks and/or deliverables performed under the reference contract that can be confirmed and validated by the Client Reference for the reference contract. The Bidder must clearly demonstrate that the list of tasks provided maps to at least 70% of the resource category's SOW tasks and deliverables.

Question 23: RE: Workstream 1, RTC8

Regarding RTC8: *"The Bidder should demonstrate that it holds a current or an expired ISO Quality Management Certification (ISO 9001:2015) by providing a copy of the certification with its bid."*

- a. An active ISO 9001:2015 certification and an expired certification do not provide equal value to the Crown. If a Bidder's certification has expired, it means they have not conducted a comprehensive external audit of their Quality Management System in over 3

- years. It also likely indicates that the Bidder has not kept up with the continuous improvement of their processes required by the QMS in that time.
- b. Achieving an ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System is a major accomplishment for an organization, and the Crown will certainly realize added value from these organizations' commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement. However, as written a Bidder's QMS does not have to be directly related to the SOW requirements in order to be eligible for points: for example, a Bidder with a QMS for payroll services would score the same number of points as a Bidder with a QMS related to as-and-when-needed recruitment/staffing.

For these reason, we suggest that ESDC amend the points scale for this requirement such that:

Active ISO 9001:2015 certification for activities relevant to provision of staffing of resources = 100 points
Active ISO 9001:2015 certification for all other activities = 75 points
Expired ISO 9001:2015 certification for activities relevant to provision of staffing of resources = 50 points
Expired ISO 9001:2015 certification for all other activities = 25 points

Answer 23: Your recommendation was considered but the criterion remains unchanged.

Question 24: RE: Workstream 2, RTC3

Regarding RTC3: *"The Bidder should demonstrate that it holds a current or an expired ISO Quality Management Certification (ISO 9001:2015), or that it is in the process of obtaining this certification, by providing a copy of the certification or the application form with its bid.."*

- a. An active ISO 9001:2015 certification and an expired/in process certification do not provide equal value to the Crown. If a Bidder's certification has expired, it means they have not conducted a comprehensive external audit of their Quality Management System in over 3 years. It also likely indicates that the Bidder has not kept up with the continuous improvement of their processes required by the QMS in that time.
- b. Achieving an ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System is a major accomplishment for an organization, and the Crown will certainly realize added value from these organizations' commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement. However, as written a Bidder's QMS does not have to be directly related to the SOW requirements in order to be eligible for points: for example, a Bidder with a QMS for payroll services would score the same number of points as a Bidder with a QMS related to as-and-when-needed recruitment/staffing.

For these reason, we suggest that ESDC amend the points scale for this requirement such that:

Active ISO 9001:2015 certification for activities relevant to provision of staffing of resources = 100 points
Active ISO 9001:2015 certification for all other activities = 75 points
Expired or In process ISO 9001:2015 certification for activities relevant to provision of staffing of resources = 50 points
Expired or In process ISO 9001:2015 certification for all other activities = 25 points

Answer 24: Your recommendation was considered but the criterion remains unchanged.

Question 25: MTC1-A, item 1-e (i-iv) and item 3-h (iii) ... the requirement requests that Bidders provide a "one-year" period in which the resource worked a minimum of 80 billable days. A billing resource can typically work 80 days in four months. The requirement is unclear if the intent is for:

- the resource to have billed 80+ days and have been on contract for an entire one year period

OR

- the resource is to have billed 80+ days **within** a one year period (example: a private sector client hires a resource on contract for nine months and the resource delivered and billed 165 days in that nine month period... which is within one year)

Answer 25: The Bidder is required to demonstrate that the resource worked a minimum of 80 billable days within a one year period. This applies to each resource for which the bidder is demonstrating experience in response to MTC1-A, item 1 e) in both workstreams.

Question 26: Given the deadline for enquiries is 10 calendar days before the solicitation closing date and the overall complexity of the requirements across both workstreams, we would like to request a two week extension to the closing date to allow Bidders adequate time to prepare a compliant response.

Answer 26: The solicitation closing date has been extended to December 8, 2020. Please see Amendment 004, Solicitation Revision 13.

Question 27: RE: MTC1-A, Workstream 1

Section e) of MTC1-A states that each contract identified by the bidder must provide resources with "5 or more years of experience". However, the Form M1-A does not have an area for bidders to provide substantiation of resources' years of experience. Also, given that junior level resources would not have experience in the tasks and technologies required by ESDC in MTC1-A, please amend MTC1-A, Section e) to state the following:

"e) Have provided the following:

- i) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to an Application/Software Architect, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract;
- ii) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to a Programmer/Software Developer, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract;
- iii) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to a Technology Architect, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract; and
- iv) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to a Project Manager, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract."

Answer 27: Your recommendation was considered but the criterion remains unchanged. Form M1-A for Workstream 1 has been revised to provide space for bidders to provide substantiation of resources' years of experience. Please see Solicitation Revision 14 in the attachments.

Question 28: RE: MTC1-A, Workstream 2

Section e) of MTC1-A states that each contract identified by the bidder must provide resources with "5 or more years of experience". However, the Form M1-A does not have an area for bidders to provide substantiation of resources' years of experience. Also, given that junior level resources would not have experience in the tasks and technologies required by ESDC in MTC1-A, please amend MTC1-A, Section e) to state the following:

“e) Have provided the following:

- i) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to an Application/Software Architect, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract;
- ii) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to a Programmer/Software Developer, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract;
- iii) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to a Technology Architect, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract; and
- iv) Resources providing services that are the same or similar to a Project Manager, where one resource has a minimum of 80 billable days for a period of one year under the contract.”

Answer 28: Your recommendation was considered but the criterion remains unchanged. Form M1-A for Workstream 2 has been revised to provide space for bidders to provide substantiation of resources’ years of experience. Please see Solicitation Revision 24 in the attachments.

Question 29: For **Workstream 1** rated criteria RTC1, RTC2 and RTC5, would Canada accept equivalent open source/microservice development technologies and frameworks in lieu of the listed criteria?

- RTC1 f) **Loopback** – Would Canada accept other open-source node.js and typeScript frameworks that are used to create APIs and microservices such as **ExpressJS, StrongLoop and NestJS** etc.?
- RTC1 i) **CITRUS** – Would Canada accept other open-source web service testing applications/frameworks such as **SoapUI and Apache JMeter** etc.?
- RTC2 c) **Solace** – Would Canada accept other event streaming and management platforms that integrate with Kafka such as **Confluent** etc.?
- RTC5 a) **ArangoDB** – Would Canada accept other open source databases commonly integrated with microservices environments such as **MongoDB, PostgreSQL (Postgres), AWS DynamoDB and MonetDB** etc.?
- RTC5 b) **CrushFTP** – Would Canada accept other open-source alternative FTP file upload and download products that are also used to transfer data such **Tumbleweed, Amazon S3, OpenSSH, and Filestack** etc.?
- RTC5 c) **3Scale** – Would Canada accept other API management products that build and run high-performance applications in contained and automated fashion such as **WebMethods, Google Apigee API Management Platform and IBM API Connect** etc.?
- RTC5 h) **Fluentd** – Would Canada accept other open source tools for data collection and analyzing event logs/application logs such as **Elastic Logstash, Splunk Enterprise and Google Cloud Logging** etc.?

Answer 29: The criteria have been revised to indicate which equivalent technologies Canada will consider. Please see Solicitation Revisions 15 to 20 in the attachments.

Question 30: For WS1 and WS2, mandatory and rated requirements require that contracts identified “Have an initial minimum contract value of \$1,000,000.00 (CAD) excluding applicable taxes, not including amendments”.

The initial contract value (i.e., the value assigned the day of contract award) is frequently not representative of the volume of work or level of service that ends up being associated with a contract. For example, clients in both the public and private sector often assign a small initial value to establish the contract but add significant funds when the contract proves to be effective and valuable to the client, or priority/funding increases for the project. Using the initial contract value, rather than the billed contract

value at the time of bid issue, will unfairly disqualify many similar Government of Canada contracts from consideration.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the criteria be amended to: "A minimum billed contract value exceeding \$1,000,000.00 (CAD) as of the issue date of this solicitation, excluding applicable taxes.

Answer 30: The criteria have been revised. Please see Solicitation Revisions 1 to 12, Solicitation Revisions 21 to 23, and Solicitation Revisions 25 to 27 in the attachments.

ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN THE SAME.

NOTE: A BID ALREADY SUBMITTED MAY BE AMENDED PRIOR TO THE CLOSING DATE. AMENDING CORRESPONDENCE MUST ADDRESS THE SOLICITATION NUMBER AND THE CLOSING DATE.

BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLY TO THE PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA (PWGSC) BID RECEIVING UNIT VIA E-POST CONNECT.

Note: For bidders needing to register with epost Connect the email address is: tpsgc.dgareceptiondessomissions-abbidreceiving.pwgsc@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca. Interested Bidders must register as early as possible, and in any case, at least six business days prior to the solicitation closing date and time (in order to ensure a response). Requests to open an epost Connect conversation received after that time may not be answered.