



## SHARED SERVICES CANADA (SSC)

### Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) for Government of Canada Network Services (GCNS) Procurement Process

ITQ No.	R000076631	Date	February 3, 2021
Amendment No.	008	GETS Reference No.	PW-20-00939000

Issuing Office	Shared Services Canada 180 Kent Street, 13 <sup>th</sup> Floor Ottawa, Ontario K1P 0B6		
Contracting Authority (The Contracting Authority is SSC's representative for all questions and comments about this document.)	Name	Daniel Ellsworth	
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Closing Date and Time	February 26, 2021 @ 02:00 PM		
Time Zone	Eastern Standard Time (EST)		

**INVITATION TO QUALIFY AMENDMENT NO. 008**

ITQ Amendment no. 008 is raised:

- 1) To identify key dates; and
- 2) To answer questions posed by the potential respondents.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Original Date</b>	<b>Revised Date</b>
ITQ release date	December 21, 2020	completed
ITQ Briefing Session	January 8, 2021	completed
Pre-bid submission date	January 22, 2021 @ 11:59 PM (EST)	January 29, 2021 @ 11:59 PM (EST) (AMD#1) February 5, 2021 @ 11:59 PM (EST) (AMD#2) February 12, 2021 @ 11:59 PM (EST) (AMD#7)
Last day for Questions and Comments	January 26, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST)	February 2, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST) (AMD#2) February 9, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST) (AMD#7)
ITQ closing date and time	February 12, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST)	February 19, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST) (AMD#1) February 26, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST) (AMD#7)

**Question 38:**

Can Canada please confirm receipt of our questions sent on January 19th? We have yet to see any reply.

4.6.6 Certifications (Mandatory upon request after ITQ closing):

Respondents are requested to submit the certifications required under Part 7 (Annex H) with their response. If the certifications are not submitted with the Response, the Contracting Authority will provide the Respondent with the opportunity to do so. Failure to comply with the request of the Contracting Authority and provide any required information within the requested time period will result in the response being disqualified. Respondents should note that certain certifications that are not required at the ITQ stage may be required at the later stage of the procurement process.

Can Canada please confirm if the mandatory certifications required under Part 7 (Annex H) are to be included with the ITQ response or upon request after ITQ closing?

**Answer 38:**

**Respondents are requested, and advised, to submit the certification (Annex H) with their ITQ response prior to ITQ Closing. Failure to do so, will not in itself result in the disqualification of the respondents response. However, this certification is mandatory and the Contracting Authority will request it be produced after ITQ closing if not submitted with the ITQ response before ITQ closing. Should the respondent fail to produce same certification after the request is made by the Contracting Authority, within the prescribed timeframe, the result will be the disqualification of that respondent from the ITQ.**

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**Question 39:**

In A#5, Q&A # 11 it has been documented that there will be no additional GCNS-specific industry day. The request for an industry-day/executive briefing was to allow for Industry to better understand Canada's vision for connectivity and to confirm the overall approach in advance of committing to the ITQ requirements of confirming the composition of the "Respondent". It was hoped that this transparency would better inform individual organizations on the opportunities for possible partnering approaches that will best leverage industry capability and provide optimal value to Canada.

Given Canada has declined the industry-day event, it would be helpful to all parties if Canada were to allow industry to requalify the bidding entity should it be determined that the requirements change significantly during the RRR process or when Canada discloses the form of the eventual contracting vehicle(s)? Will Canada permit the bidding entity to be adjusted during or after RRR or when contractual vehicles are better defined and before the bid solicitation(s)?

**Answer 39:**

**Canada will not make the requested change. Please refer to subsection 6.8 ITQ Phase Second Qualification Round.**

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**Question 40:**

In A#5, Q&A #11 Canada has referenced the commitment from SSC to host, a full Network Strategy discussion sometime in the near future. This is important because the Vendor Briefing Session on Jan 8th did not touch on network strategy (as it was designed to help vendors with the administrative aspects of the response only). This network strategy discussion element will be extremely valuable for all ITQ respondents on the GCNS ITQ and will be fundamental to how or if one chooses to bid. A reasonable period of time must be provided to allow respondents to absorb and evaluate the network strategy information presented so that the bidding entity can best be constructed. While we recognize that the intent of the three stage procurement is to clarify and harden requirements within the RRR phase with Qualified Respondents within each of the Five Streams, this strategy briefing is essential to better understand the envisioned scope, timing, interdependencies, business case context and Governance/Management/Security structure prior to further engagement. At this moment in time the network strategy discussion is not yet scheduled. All GCNS respondents will benefit from this presentation being scheduled in advance of the current pre-submission (Feb 5th) and final ITQ closing (Feb 19th) and must allow for time to evaluate and apply the information gained to the ITQ response,

Given the above will Canada extend the pre-submission and final ITQ closing dates to align with the network strategy discussion and give respondents a reasonable period of time to factor in the strategic context of what has been shared?

**Answer 40:**

**Canada will not make the requested change. As stated in Amendment 005, Answer 11, the information currently available to the potential respondents for GCNS is sufficient to complete the response submission requirements of the ITQ. Additional details with respect to the next stages of the procurement process and the eventual plans for the contracting vehicles will be discussed collaboratively with our Qualified Respondents during the RRR phase under GCNS resulting from this ITQ. Canada invites all respondents to take advantage of the Pre-Bid Compliance Check Process (section 4.8) in order to have SSC review an initial version of their ITQ submission and provide them with feedback.**

**The deadline for submitting questions has been extended to February 9, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST). The pre-bid submission deadline has been extended to February 12, 2021 @ 11:59 PM (EST). The ITQ Closing date has been extended to February 26, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST).**

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**Question 41:**

“The ITQ currently asks for a primary and back up contact. We have clients who are frequently asked for references and have asked us to direct all references through a single point.

Please confirm that SSC is ok with providing the same person as both the primary and back up contact.”

**Answer 41:**

**Canada does not confirm agreement. SSC requests both primary and backup contacts for a project reference as separate individuals so that in the event that the identified primary contact is not available for whatever reason, SSC can pursue the answers it needs with the secondary contact. If SSC cannot get the answers it is looking for from the reference contacts (either Primary or Secondary), within the prescribed timeframe as stipulated in the ITQ, the respondent will have their project reference set aside and not considered in the evaluation, leading to a disqualification from that Stream.**

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**Question 42:**

“Following the very recent publication of 36 questions and answers, it will take some time to process all of the new information and as a result, we may have additional questions. Is it possible to please have a 10 day extension for the question period? Thank you for considering”

**Answer 42:**

**The deadline for submitting questions has been extended to February 9, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST).  
The pre-bid submission deadline has been extended to February 12, 2021 @ 11:59 PM (EST).  
The ITQ Closing date has been extended to February 26, 2021 @ 2:00 PM (EST).  
No further deadline extensions are anticipated at this time.**

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**ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN THE SAME.**