

## Questions and Answers – Help Desk Specialist

**Date: 18 October 2023**

**Question 1:** Is there currently, or has there been in the past year, an incumbent vendor performing similar services to the duties described in this solicitation? If so, can the Crown please provide the name of the vendor and the value and duration of the contract?

Answer 1: Similar services are currently being provided by Altis Recruitment & Technology Inc. The contract value is \$1,793,818.00, excluding taxes, and the duration of the contract is 4 years 11 months.

**Question 2:** Regarding the Senior Help Desk Specialist for M2, would the Crown accept an Electrical Engineer Technician Diploma and an ITIL v4 certification?

Answer 2: Yes. Please refer to Amendment #001.

**Question 3:** Regarding CM1, can the Crown please confirm that ongoing projects are allowed provided they have been in place for a minimum of 12 months prior to solicitation date? (Section 3.2: Technical Bid (d)(2) requires that previous similar projects be completed by the bid closing date).

Answer 3: CM1 requires that the referenced contracts be in place for a minimum of 12 months prior to the solicitation date. Section 3.2(d)(2) refers to the projects the resources have worked on. Previous projects must have been completed by the bid solicitation date, as per Section 3.2(d)(2).

**Question 4:** Would the Crown please confirm that bidders are not required to submit references for proposed resources at the time of bid submission?

Answer 4: As per Section 3.2 paragraph (d)(3), "each project description must include, at minimum, the name and either the telephone number or email address of a customer reference".

**Question 5:** To promote a more competitive solicitation, we would like to respectfully request that the Crown consider adding a lower and upper median band of -10% and +30%, introducing a median band will ensure that pricing is aligned with industry averages and mitigate any risk of increased replacement volume due to low rates.

Answer 5: The Crown has no plans to add lower and upper median bands.

**Question 6:** We would like to recommend that the Crown add a corporate mandatory requirement for vendors to hold an ISO 9001:2015 certificate. An ISO 9001 certification ensures that vendors have an established and proven quality management system in place, and will be better able to deliver quality service on the resulting contract. The inclusion of ISO 9001:2015 as a mandatory requirement will ensure a competitive solicitation and greater value to the Crown.

Answer 6: There is no requirement for an ISO 9001 certificate.

**Question 7:** Can you please confirm if there's an incumbent providing similar services in the past 24 months?

Answer 7: Yes

If so, please provide us with the following information:

- Company: Altis Recruitment & Technology Inc.
- Contract value: \$1,793,818.00, excluding taxes

- Duration: (Start - End) & (LOE): (7 January 2019 – 30 November 2023) (all resources work on a 240-day per year basis)
- No. of resources: 9
- Is the incumbent invited? Yes

**Date: 19 October 2023**

**Question 8:** Is it possible to respond to the requirement for a Senior OR Intermediate resource, or must we submit both?

Answer 8: You must submit two resumes, one for each level.

**Question 9:** Would the Crown accept education in Economics, as well as ITIL certification and over 8 years of Help Desk experience?

Answer 9: No.

**Question 10:** Would the Crown accept education in Supply Chain / Operations Management?

Answer 10: No.

**Question 11:** Given the delay from clients to received signed contract reference letters, we kindly ask the Crown to grant a 1-2 week extension to the closing date to ensure the Crown receives the as many high quality, compliant bids as possible.

Answer 11: There is no requirement to submit reference letters signed by clients. The Customer Reference Contact Information Form requires the information to be provided and signed by a representative of the Bidder. Therefore no extension will be granted.

**Question 12:** Under M2, for both the Senior and Intermediate grids, would the Crown consider amending the requirements to allow for either certificate, diploma or degree in computer science or other relevant IT-related field OR for 8 years of IT experience within a Help Desk environment?

Answer 12: The education requirement will remain as is. (As for the request to change the criterion for the Level 3, the TBIPS Supply Arrangement requires that all Level 3 resources have a minimum of 10 years' experience in their category.)

**Date: 20 October 2023**

**Question 13:** Would the Crown consider a corporate reference where the bidder was not prime (but secondary), yet staffed over 100 help desk/service desk positions for a government department on a single contract simultaneously for a period of 24 months? Including being responsible for recruiting, interviewing, hiring and training, which in turn represented over 85% of the contracted staff and had a contract value of over \$10,000,000 to the prime vendor.

Answer 13: The TBIPS SA requires that a Bidder be the prime contractor.

**Question 14:** Regarding RFP Part 3 – Bid Preparation Instructions, will the Crown accept Section IV: Signed RFP Cover Page to be embedded in Section I: Technical Bid (as opposed to a stand-alone document)?

Answer 14: Yes.

**Date: 24 October 2023**

**Question 15:** In light of the response to Question #13 “the TBIPS SA requires that a Bidder be the prime contractor,” we request that the Crown remove instruction #2 of Appendix C to Annex A - Resources Assessment Criteria and Response Table “To be considered, the proposed resource must have worked on the Customer Reference project (where applicable) for a minimum of six months.” The inclusion of this instruction creates an unnecessary barrier to participation for Bidders, such that it effectively eliminates Bidders from competition while failing to contribute to the effective demonstration of a Bidder’s capacity to manage, nor the resource’s capacity to deliver the work solicited by this RFQ.

Answer 15: We consider that 6 months is the minimum length of time that a resource can obtain a relevant amount of experience on a project. The requirement will remain the same.

**Date: 25 October 2023**

**Question 16:** Regarding instruction #2 of the Resource Evaluation Criteria, we request that the Crown amend the instruction to allow for the proposed resources to demonstrate having worked for the Bidder on any contract for a minimum of six months (not necessarily the contracts used as Customer Reference Contracts for Corporate M1). This change will demonstrate that the resource has worked for the Bidder for at least six months, without creating an unnecessary barrier to competition by merging the resource’s experience working for the Bidder to the specific contracts used to demonstrate the Bidder’s capacity to manage similar contracts. We believe separating these two elements (the resource’s experience with the Bidder, and the Bidder’s capacity to manage similar contracts), will serve the best interests of INFC in seeking the maximum number of competitive proposals from Bidders, as well as Canada’s procurement principles of openness, fairness, and transparency.

Answer 16: The requirement has been changed. Please refer to Amendment #002.

**Question 17:** The recent change in the RFP and evaluation criteria has created a change in the submission approach for suppliers 1 day before the deadline. Thus, would the Crown please provide a 1-week extension to the closing date in order for suppliers to address the change in the evaluation criteria?

Answer 17: Due to time constraints, but in consideration of the change in the requirement, the closing date will be extended to Monday, October 30. Please see Amendment #003.

**Question 18:** Further to Q&A 16, could the crown please confirm that in Paragraph 2 the phrase ‘where applicable’ means that bidders can optionally provide resources that have worked on customer reference projects?

Answer 18: Bidders may provide reference projects for resources that are cited within the three Customer Reference Contracts required in M1 Corporate Experience, or in any additional Contracts as necessary to demonstrate the required experience.