

Amendment 10 to the IaaS & Native PaaS Prequalification CBS

Solicitation No.	CS-IAAS-2024	Amd: 010
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The purpose of this amendment is to:

- 1- Provide answers to questions received as detailed in section A.
- 2- Modify M2 of Attachment 1 - Prequalification Evaluation Grid and the Prequalification Bidding Form to remove the requirement for the audit reports for the ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO/IEC 27027 as detailed in section B.

Section A - Questions and Answers (set 8)

	Question	Answer
105	<p>For M1, please confirm that Canada will review each category and confirm that the service instances provided meet the requirements. In the case of Category X, a minimum of 4 service instances are required to be compliant. However, we are able to list up to 6 services for evaluation and Canada will review all 6 services listed to evaluate if the minimum of 4 has been met?"</p>	<p>Yes, this is why the Prequalification Bidding Form allows bidders to provide up to two additional Services and accompanying URLs per category. This measure will allow the Bidder to have two additional opportunities to present services that meet the specific category criteria in the event that Canada does not determine compliance with a single service and category requirement in the URL provided. Bidders can click on the green "+" button on the left side and it will create new lines to insert the information.</p> <p>To further clarify, the URL provided must demonstrate that the services offered meet the requirements of the specified category.</p>

		<p>In order to meet the criteria, the submitted URL must provide direct evidence that:</p> <p>1) The supplied service is located at the URL page provided. Canada will not move past the provided URL in any way.</p> <p>2) Bidders are required to address the mandatory clearly and in sufficient detail. Simply providing a title in the Prequalification Bidding Form or in the URL provided with the same keyword of the category to be demonstrated is not sufficient in itself to demonstrate that the Bidder provides the category of service. The URL page must include supporting data to demonstrate their capability to provide that service.</p>
106.1	Due to the recent release of Amendment 9, we would like to request an extension to review the response and formulate any further questions.	Please also note that due to operational requirements, Canada will not be able to accommodate a further extension of the Prequalification Closing Date.
111	We are requesting that SSC extend the bid closing date by a week (to June 12, 2024).	
106.2	<p>Regarding Mandatory Criteria 2 – Capacity of the Bidder to secure Canada’s Data:</p> <p>This prequalification exercise pertains to an IaaS and Native PaaS Cloud Solution. In the process of evaluating vendors against 3 of 5 'Trust Principles,' we request that Canada recognize ISO 27018 as an equivalent standard for Privacy, alongside AICPA SOC 2 Type II.</p>	2. As per Amendment 009, at this stage of the prequalification process, Canada will not change the prequalification criteria, but will consider your proposal for a future stage of this procurement process.
107	In M2 you stated that bidders must supply both certificates AND audit reports for both ISO 27001 and ISO 27017. Supplying the ISO 27001 and ISO 27017 audit reports is wholly unheard of within the industry. Audit reports contain highly sensitive information concerning any company’s systems and we therefore oppose sharing these materials.	<p>Canada agrees that the Bidder should only provide the copies of the certifications including the date of issuance and expiration (where applicable).</p> <p>M2 will be amended accordingly. This response supersedes responses to questions 27 (AMD 003) and 60 (AMD 005).</p>

	<p>As such, we ask that SSC remove the requirement to also include copies of audit reports, as these are highly secured and add no additional value to demonstrate compliance beyond the certificates.</p>	
<p>108</p>	<p>As regards M1 in the Prequalification bidding form published in Amendment 9, the chapeaus in the column labelled "Information required by Bidders" requests that bidders provide "services (instance types)" for each of the enumerated categories below. However, categories 5 to 13 relate to non-virtual-machine based solutions (i.e., PaaS solutions), like analytics, developer tools, storage, security, networking etc. This creates confusion because the definition for "instance types" supplied by SSC in the column labelled "Criteria" refers to "a virtual machine (VM), serverless instance, or an add-on to a virtual machine offered by a cloud service provider."</p> <p>Please confirm whether bidders are required to merely identify PaaS/IaaS services that are responsive to categories 5 to 13, or whether they are required to identify instance types (i.e., virtual machines, serverless instances, or add-ons to virtual machines) that relate to categories 5 to 13. To the extent that the former interpretation is correct, please remove references to "instance types" for categories 5 through 13.</p>	<p>The definition of Instance Type was developed within the context of cloud computing. Items in Categories 5, 6, and 7 related to storage do not have to be directly attached to an instance to be applicable for this category. In the context of PaaS, Instance Type refers to the various configurable forms of instances offered as PaaS services. It should be noted that not all PaaS services would fall under the instance type definition. In this context, the primary factor to consider is the term service.</p> <p>The term "Add-On to a Virtual Machine" is used as a catch-all for cloud computing services that are offered as add-ons or in addition to another service.</p> <p>Finally, for the purpose of this evaluation process, instances that are either virtual, dedicated hardware, or Bare Metal would meet the requirement of M1 for the applicable categories.</p>
<p>109</p>	<p>Regarding M1 - The definition of instance type in the column labelled "Criteria" states "For the purpose of this criterion, an instance type, in the context of cloud computing, refers to a virtual machine, serverless instance, or an add-on to a virtual machine offered by a cloud service provider."</p> <p>What does an "add-on to a virtual machine" in this context refer to? Does it refer to services that can virtually connect to the virtual machines (VMs)? For example, a network service (PaaS) is typically a standalone service that "connects" to VMs by means of network interfaces. However, it is not an add-on or overlay that necessarily</p>	

	<p>gets installed on customer compute instances. We therefore request Canada to clarify the meaning of the term “add-on” in this context .</p>	
<p>110</p>	<p>Regarding M1 - The definition of instance type in the column labelled “Criteria” states “For the purpose of this criterion, an instance type, in the context of cloud computing, refers to a virtual machine, serverless instance, or an add-on to a virtual machine offered by a cloud service provider.”</p> <p>The general understanding in industry is that “instances” refers to virtual machines (VMs) and also dedicated server hosts, or bare metal servers (BMs), as these provide higher computing power than a traditional VM.</p> <p>We request Canada to confirm whether bare-metal instances and dedicated virtual servers/hosts would also qualify as valid instance types under M1 for categories 1 through 4.</p>	
<p>112</p>	<p>We are requesting that SSC utilize the standard clauses generally used by the Department of Public Works and Government Services for the “Phased Bid Compliance Process,” more information about which can be found here https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/policy-notifications/PN-123 and https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/policy-notifications/PN-123U1.</p> <p>Specifically, the Phased Bid Compliance Process should be used for M1 and M2, which should be defined as the eligible mandatory criteria under that process. The Phased Bid Compliance Process is used in almost every modern procurement and carries significant advantages, most notably by ensuring that potential suppliers are not eliminated from procurement processes for reasons of form over substance.</p>	<p>The PSPC Phased Bid Compliance Process (PBCP) for M1 and M2 will not be incorporated into to this solicitation. Instead, SSC has opted to use the Pre-Bid Compliance Check (PBCC), a process that more closely aligns with SSC’s operational realities. The PBCC offered bidders the opportunity to submit pre-bid and they received feedback.</p>

Section B – Modifications to the Solicitation

1- In Attachment 1—Prequalification Evaluation Grid

In Part A – Mandatory Criteria

In M2, second column, in paragraph a)

Delete “For each certification: copies of the certifications and audit reports including the date of issuance and expiration (where applicable). Should a certification have expired or be due to expire prior to the Prequalification CBS closing date and the bidder is in the process of renewal, a verification letter or a statement from the issuing body confirming the certification’s current and valid status should be provided”

Replace with “For each certification: copies of the certifications including the date of issuance and expiration (where applicable). Should a certification have expired or be due to expire prior to the Prequalification CBS closing date and the bidder is in the process of renewal, a verification letter or a statement from the issuing body confirming the certification’s current and valid status should be provided.”

In M2, third column,

Delete paragraph a), in its entirety

Replace with “a) latest version and valid certifications of the following: ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO/IEC 27017;”

2- In the Prequalification Documents

Delete: Bid Document 1—Prequalification Bidding Form V1.4, in its entirety

Replace by: Prequalification Bidding Form V1.4.1

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.