



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

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS A SECURITY REQUIREMENT
CE DOCUMENT CONTIENT DES EXIGENCES RELATIVES À LA SÉCURITÉ

RETURN BIDS TO: RETOURNER LES SOUMISSIONS À:

By e-mail to: - Par courriel au :

Sara.Goud@tc.gc.ca

Attention: - Attention : Sara Gould

Solicitation Closes - L'invitation prend fin

At - à: 2:00 PM / 14h00

On - le: April 09, 2024 / 09 avril 2024
April 19, 2024 / 19 avril 2024

Time Zone - Fuseau Horaire :

Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) / Heure avancée de l'Est (HAE)

Title - Sujet Application Services Resources for the Service & Digital Group		Amendment No. - N° modif. 5
Solicitation No. N° de l'invitation T8080-230303	Date of Amendment Date de modification Avril 05, 2024 / 05 avril 2024	
Address enquiries to : - Adresser toute demande de renseignements à : Sara Gould E-Mail Address - Courriel: Sara.Goud@tc.gc.ca		
Destination See herein - Voir aux présentes		

Instructions: Municipal taxes are not applicable. Unless otherwise specified herein all prices quoted must include all applicable Canadian customs duties, GST/HST, excise taxes and are to be delivered Delivery Duty Paid including all delivery charges to destination(s) as indicated. The amount of the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax is to be shown as a separate item.

Instructions : Les taxes municipales ne s'appliquent pas. Sauf indication contraire, les prix indiqués doivent comprendre les droits de douane canadiens, la TPS/TVH et la taxe d'accise. Les biens doivent être livrés « rendu droits acquittés », tous frais de livraison compris, à la ou aux destinations indiquées. Le montant de la taxe sur les produits et services/taxe de vente harmonisée doit être indiqué séparément.

Delivery required Livraison exigée See herein - Voir aux présentes	Delivery offered Livraison proposée Not applicable - Sans objet
Vendor/Firm Name and Address Raison sociale et adresse du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur	
Person authorized to sign on behalf of Vendor/Firm (type or print): La personne autorisée à signer au nom du fournisseur/de l'entrepreneur (taper ou écrire en caractères d'imprimerie) :	
Name - Nom	Title - Titre
Signature	Date

RFP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AND AMENDMENTS

File: T8080-230303

Initiative: Application Services Resources for the Service & Digital Group

RFP Issued: March 13, 2023

RFP Closes: April 09, 2024, 02:00 PM EDT

THIS SOLICITATION AMENDMENT IS RAISED TO:

1. Provide answer to question from potential suppliers.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Question #	Questions and Answers
Question 31	Can the Crown please include ISO 9001:2015 certification as a corporate requirement? This certification signifies adherence to international quality standards, providing assurance of high-quality services, streamlined processes, and competitive advantages in fulfilling government department needs.
Answer 31	Canada has reviewed your request and corporate requirements remains as is.
Question 32	CM1 item d) states that each contract must "Have an initial contract period of a minimum one (1) year providing a minimum of six (6) resources billed during a same six (6) month period." When demonstrating the 6 resources billed during the same six month period, does the six month period cited need to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within the first year of the contract, • within the last 3 years, • or can it be at any time during the contract?
Answer 32	Canada has reviewed your request and confirms that the minimum six-month period can occur at any time within the three (3) years preceding the solicitation issue date.
Question 33	Regarding CM2 please confirm our understanding that, as long as the contract has been active (ie billing) for a minimum of one year in the last three years, bidders may count the relevant billed days throughout a reference contract?
Answer 33	Canada has reviewed your request. Please refer to criteria a) to e) in CM2, that each contract must meet to be accepted.
Question 34	<p>Corporate Mandatory Technical Criterion CM2 on page 67</p> <p>As written, CM2 requires Bidders to demonstrate capability in the provision of the required Applications Services in the Statement of Work. It is common knowledge that many clients use similar TBIPS resource categories to cover delivery of the same services; therefore assigned job title is not always within vendor control. CM2 is intended to evaluate bidder capability of service delivery rather than job title. We are concerned that, by limiting CM2 to direct match resource categories only, the Crown is unintentionally at risk of discriminating against otherwise qualified Bidders.</p> <p>It is a very common practice to allow for same service task mapping in Crown solicitations. In fact, even within this current RFP Transport Canada is providing this allowance already. In Appendix C to Annex A Resource Assessment Criteria and Response Table, Mandatory Resource Assessment Criteria M1 for every resource category is written to accept at least 50% of the tasks identified in the Task</p>

	<p>Authorization Statement of Work. For example on page 54 of 75 M1 for the A.1 APPLICATION SOFTWARE ARCHITECT (LEVEL 3) category states:</p> <p>A.1 APPLICATION SOFTWARE ARCHITECT (LEVEL 3)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="326 327 1304 667"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="326 327 399 485">No.</th> <th data-bbox="399 327 932 485">Mandatory Resource Assessment Criteria</th> <th data-bbox="932 327 1027 485">Met (Y/N)</th> <th data-bbox="1027 327 1304 485">Bidder's Response (Reference to Substantiating Materials Included in Bid)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="326 485 399 667">M1</td> <td data-bbox="399 485 932 667">The proposed resource must have a minimum of 10 years of experience within the past 15 years as an Application/Software Architect providing at least 50% of the tasks identified in the Task Authorization Statement of Work.</td> <td data-bbox="932 485 1027 667"></td> <td data-bbox="1027 485 1304 667"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In the spirit of fair, transparent and open procurement, to assist smaller firms that have the capability to deliver the required services, we respectfully request that CM2 be amended to allow equivalent resource categories providing at least 50% of the tasks identified in the Statement of Work, in alignment with the allowance provided for every category at Task Authorization stage.</p>	No.	Mandatory Resource Assessment Criteria	Met (Y/N)	Bidder's Response (Reference to Substantiating Materials Included in Bid)	M1	The proposed resource must have a minimum of 10 years of experience within the past 15 years as an Application/Software Architect providing at least 50% of the tasks identified in the Task Authorization Statement of Work.		
No.	Mandatory Resource Assessment Criteria	Met (Y/N)	Bidder's Response (Reference to Substantiating Materials Included in Bid)						
M1	The proposed resource must have a minimum of 10 years of experience within the past 15 years as an Application/Software Architect providing at least 50% of the tasks identified in the Task Authorization Statement of Work.								
Answer 34	Canada has reviewed your request and corporate requirement CM2 remains as is.								
Question 35	<p>ATTACHMENT 8.2 - CORPORATE MANDATORY TECHNICAL CRITERIA - Corporate Mandatory Technical Criteria – CM1 - Bidder's Corporate Experience providing Informatic Professional Services Resources (page 67 of 75)</p> <p>Given that the TBIPS is a mandatory procurement vehicle for GC departments, the requirement that the CM1 project references must be for contracts issued under a TBIPS SA, locks out newer PSPC TBIPS SA recipients, that have qualified for a TBIPS SA, and have the requisite projects and experience based on their contracts with other public and private sector organizations, from the GC professional services market.</p> <p>CM1 is discriminatory and does not reflect the trade agreement practice of non-discrimination as per 1) Article 201, non-discrimination, of CFTA; 2) Chapter 19.4 General Principles – non-discrimination of CETA; and 3) Article 10 General Principles non-discrimination, revised WTO.</p> <p>Accordingly, Transport Canada is requested to amend the first para of CM1 as follows:</p> <p>“The Bidder must demonstrate using three (3) contract references, its experience providing Informatic Professional Services resources under contracts with public and/or private sector organizations where each reference contract was active for a minimum of 1 year within the three (3) years preceding the solicitation issue date.”</p> <p>And at:</p> <p>CM1 i) amend “TBIPS Category” to “TBIPS Category and/or equivalent whereby equivalent category is defined as having met 60% of the experience for a given TBIPS category and the requisite minimum years of experience for the level of resource.”</p> <p>And</p>								

	<p>b) to amend the Form CM1: 6 resources billed during the same six (6) month period, light green header TBIPS category reference, to “TBIPS category and/or equivalent category reference”.</p>
<p>Answer 35</p>	<p>Canada has reviewed your request and corporate requirement CM1 remains as is.</p>
<p>Question 36</p>	<p>ATTACHMENT 8.2 - CORPORATE MANDATORY TECHNICAL CRITERIA - Corporate Mandatory Technical Criteria – CM2 - Bidder’s Corporate Experience supplying sought Applications Services Categories</p> <p>Where the equivalent category reference is being used, provide a narrative that identifies the areas of equivalency with the TBIPS category descriptions”.</p> <p>a) Given that the TBIPS is a mandatory procurement vehicle for GC departments, the CM2 requirement for 7 000 billable days in Task Based Informatics Supply Arrangement subject core resource categories locks out, from the GC professional services market, newer PSPC TBIPS SA recipients that have qualified, and have the required billable hours based on their contracts with public sector and/or private sector organizations.</p> <p>CM2 is discriminatory and does not reflect the trade agreement practice of non-discrimination as per 1) Article 201, non-discrimination, of CFTA; 2) Chapter 19.4 General Principles – non-discrimination of CETA; and 3) Article 10 General Principles non-discrimination, revised WTO.</p> <p>Accordingly, Transport Canada is requested to amend the first para of CM2 as follows:</p> <p>“Using up to a maximum of four (4) contract references, the Bidder must demonstrate its experience supplying cumulatively, 7 000 billable days in Task Based Informatics Supply Arrangement and/or other public sector and/or private sector contracts and/or supply vehicles, Applications Services subject core resource categories where each reference contract was active for a minimum of one (1) year within the three (3) years preceding the solicitation issue date.”</p> <p>And amend</p> <p>CM2 i): “TIBPS Applications Services resource category / billable days” to read “TIBPS Applications Services and/or equivalent resource category / billable days” whereby equivalent category is defined as having met 60% of the experience for a given TBIPS category”.</p> <p>Where the equivalent category reference is being used, provide a narrative that identifies the areas of equivalency with the TBIPS category.</p> <p>And at</p> <p>“Corporate Mandatory (CM) 2 Form (B) Bidder's Experience Supplying Stream 1: Application Services”, amend sub-header TBIPS stream 1: Applications Services Category to “TBIPS and/or equivalent stream 1: Applications Services Category.</p>
<p>Answer 36</p>	<p>Canada has reviewed your request and corporate requirement CM2 remains as is.</p>
<p>Question 37</p>	<p>Reference CM2:</p> <p>Please confirm that the Billable Days must be demonstrated within the three (3) years preceding the solicitation issue date.</p>

Answer 37	Canada has reviewed your request and confirms that the billable days to be demonstrated in CM2 must be within the three (3) years preceding the solicitation issue date.
Question 38	Due to the upcoming long weekend for the Easter holidays and the large number of bids currently out to tender, we would like to request a one-week extension to the solicitation closing date to ensure that vendors are able to submit high quality responses that provide the best value to the crown.
Answer 38	Canada has reviewed your request, See Amendment 5, Item#1 below.
Question 39	Appendix D to Annex A Certifications Required During the Contract Period, Section 2. Certification of Availability of Personnel, subsection b) indicates that Contractors must complete "Appendix E to Annex A". Would the client please provide a copy of Appendix E to Annex A as one has not been included in the solicitation document.
Answer 39	Canada has reviewed your request. See Amendment 5, Item #2 below.
Question 40	Corporate mandatory criterion M2 requires Bidders must include a reference letter signed by the client representative, for each contract cited. The process of obtaining signatures from clients to certify such details seems redundant and excessive given that Bidders already undergo a rigorous process in order to qualify for TBIPS. Client signatures from private sector organizations are always problematic due to legal liability concerns. Some government organizations will no longer provide signatures attesting to the provision of services. This requirement presents a real logistical risk for any potential respondent, especially considering that the core of the response must be written first so as to provide each client with the details of what they are being asked to certify. This means that potential respondents could put significant effort into producing a response only to discover that signature logistics prevent them from getting signatures in time. For these reasons, we kindly request that the requirement for client signatures to be removed from the RFP and replaced with the standard Crown right to seek client confirmation by means of email or telephone.
Answer 40	Canada has reviewed your request and corporate requirement CM2 remains as is.
Question 41	In order to fulfill the requirements outlined in CM1 and CM2, we intend to include a copy of the original contract cover title page along with any relevant amendment pages specific to the contract value. Our query pertains to Form 8.3: Client Reference Form. Would it be necessary to include the entire contract in this form as well? It's worth noting that including the entire contract would significantly increase the size of the final response document.
Answer 41	Canada has reviewed your request and confirms that a valid bid must include a completed Client Reference Form, and a cover page of the original contract must be provided. See Amendment 5, Item #3 below.
Answer 39	Canada has reviewed your request. See Amendment 5, Item #2.

Question 42	In regards to Amendment 4 Question #25, the Crown introduced “a number of billed days in all 3 categories”, where this was not part of the original wording of the RFP. CM2 state “experience supplying cumulatively 7,000 billable days in TBIPS, Application Service subject core categories”, no minimum was ever mentioned per category. After working on the RFP response for over 2 weeks and getting client signatures on letters to confirm billable days, bidders find themselves not able to bid. In order to have a open and transparent competitive process, would the Crown please change the answer to QA #25 to allow bidders to demonstrate 7,000 cumulative days within the core categories, as per the original wording of the RFP or re-consider letting bidder’s provide equivalent categories by providing a 100% mapping of the tasks for a specific category?
Answer 42	Canada has reviewed your request. See Amendment 5, Item #4 below for amended answer #25.

THIS SOLICITATION IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

AMENDMENTS:

Item# 1: **DELETE:** Solicitation closes April 09, 2024, at 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)

REPLACE: Solicitation closes April 19, 2024, at 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Item# 2: **ADD APPENDIX E TO ANNEX A, DISCLOSURE OF RESOURCES WORKING ON MULTIPLE CONTRACTS** in its entirety:

APPENDIX E TO ANNEX A

DISCLOSURE OF RESOURCES WORKING ON MULTIPLE CONTRACTS

This Appendix applies to all cases where any resource being proposed to provide services under the Contract or Task Authorization will be performing work on other contracts or task authorizations concurrently, including contracts issued by Canada to other vendors and contracts with entities other than the Government of Canada.

This disclosure must be signed and attached to the Contractor's quotation or resource proposal when it is submitted to Canada. The Contractor is required to submit one Appendix for each resource that will be working on other contracts or task authorization during the period of the Contract or Task Authorization.

Resource Name : <i>(Insert Name)</i>	
Contract #1: <i>(insert Contract number)</i>	
Task Authorization #: <i>(Insert the Task Authorization number)</i>	
Contractor / Employer	<i>(insert – e.g. ABC Inc.)</i>
Department	<i>(insert – e.g. Public Services and Procurement Canada)</i>
Description of the work	<i>(insert – e.g. Software Developer to support the development of the XYZ application)</i>
Period of services	<i>(insert - e.g. – April 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2024)</i>
Level of effort	<i>(insert – e.g. 220 days)</i>
Schedule limitations (e.g. core hours)	<i>(insert – e.g. From Monday to Friday – between 6:00AM and 5:00 PM)</i>
Contract #2: <i>(insert Contract number)</i>	
Task Authorization #: <i>(Insert the Task Authorization number)</i>	
Contractor / Employer	<i>(insert – e.g. ABC Inc.)</i>
Department	<i>(insert – e.g. Public Services and Procurement Canada)</i>
Description of the work	<i>(insert – e.g. Software Developer to support the development of the XYZ application)</i>
Period of services	<i>(insert - e.g. – April 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2024)</i>
Level of effort	<i>(insert – e.g. 220 days)</i>
Schedule limitations (e.g. core hours)	<i>(insert – e.g. From Monday to Friday – between 6:00AM and 5:00 PM)</i>

(Add sections as necessary if the resource is working on more than two concurrent contracts)

Print name and sign name of Contractor's Representative

Date

Item# 3: **DELETE ATTACHMENT 8.3 - CLIENT CONTACT REFERENCE INFORMATION** and **REPLACE** in its entirety with:

ATTACHMENT 8.3 - CLIENT CONTACT REFERENCE INFORMATION

Client reference Contact Information:	
Name of client organization: _____	
Name of client: _____	
Client's title: _____	
Client telephone n°. _____	
Email address: _____	
Contract Information: The Bidder must provide with this Form a copy of the cover page of the original contract.	
Contract n°: _____	
Start date: _____ End date: _____	
Total contract value (excluding Applicable Taxes and not including amendments): _____	
Core categories provided: _____	
By signing below, the Bidder certifies that the information provided in this Form is accurate.	
Signature of authorized representative of the Bidder:	Name: _____
	Title: _____
	Signature: _____
	Date: _____

Item# 4: **DELETE AMENDMENT #4, Question 25 and Answer 25** and **REPLACE** in its entirety with:

Question 25	Can the Crown please confirm that to meet CM2, bidders can demonstrate minimum billed days in 2 of the 3 categories?
Answer 25	Canada has reviewed your application and confirms that the number of billable days must be 7,000 per contract in one or more of the identified categories.

ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN THE SAME