



**Questions and Answers No. 1
Request for Proposal F50B5400032
DoIT Cloud Hosting & Web Shared Services**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

This list of questions and responses is being issued to clarify certain information contained in the above referenced RFP. Nothing in the State's response to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the State of any statement or interpretation on the part of the vendor.

- 1) Will the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) consider extending the proposal due date of April 30, 2015 by two week to allow offerors sufficient time to prepare the proposal and prices?

RESPONSE: Please see Amendment #1.

- 2) Please clarify whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this (India or Canada)?

RESPONSE: Yes, companies from outside the United States may submit a proposal. However, the Offeror must be registered to do business in the State of Maryland. Further, the Key Personnel will be required to work on-site.

- 3) Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

RESPONSE: Yes, there will be meetings that require on-site attendance.

- 4) Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?

RESPONSE: The Key Personnel must perform the tasks described in the RFP on-site. Some of the tasks described in the RFP may be performed outside of the United States.

- 5) Can we submit our proposals via email?

RESPONSE: No. Please refer to Sections 1.11.4 that states "Proposals delivered by e-mail or facsimile shall not be considered".

- 6) What type and version of SharePoint is required? SharePoint 2010 or 2013?

RESPONSE: As described in Section 3.2.4, DoIT's current environment is SharePoint 2010 Enterprise. However, the minimum qualifications do not require a specific version of SharePoint experience.

- 7) Do you want SharePoint Foundation, Standard or Enterprise?

a. How many users? How much storage?

b. Do you require any additional applications on top of SharePoint?

RESPONSE: The State currently owns SharePoint licenses for 2010 Enterprise. Offerors are not required to purchase Sharepoint. In regard to questions #7a & b., please request access to the reading room.

8) Will the state extend the due date to May 15 in order to give all vendors time to provide a detailed RFP response? Currently there are only 6 working days, to complete an RFP and include state responses to questions, assuming the state responds publically 6 days after the question deadline.

RESPONSE: Please see Amendment #1.

9) Please confirm that, for the hosting/cloud and associated security requirements, US government FedRamp compliance will be accepted?

RESPONSE: Section 4.2.2.6 G requires Offerors to provide a narrative of its approach to security. If an Offerors is certified by FedRAMP, then it shall describe how its FedRAMP certification meets or exceeds DoIT's security policy and the security requirements described in Section 3 of the RFP.

10) Will the award be single award, or multiple award for the IDIQ/T&M portion of the RFP?

RESPONSE: As stated in Section 1.1.3, the State intends to make a single award as a result of this RFP.

11) Is a reseller relationships prohibited as a bidder?

RESPONSE: No, reseller relationships are not prohibited.

12) Do you perceive that a reseller practically compete with his own reseller?

RESPONSE: The State does not understand the question in its current form.

13) Does the line of service and production responsibility lie with the reseller, or the owner of the re-sold infrastructure? I ask this question because often the reseller is prohibited from fault isolation with the infrastructure owner's cloud network. Patching, upgrades and fault isolation are not allowed on the owner's platform.

RESPONSE: For this contract, the line of service and production responsibility lie with the reseller. As described in Section 3.11, the Contractor is responsible for fulfilling the Service Level Agreement (SLA) under this contract. However, Section 4.2.2.6 E allows an Offeror to propose the credit table that will specify the amount of credit to be applied to invoices when an SLA is not met.

14) In the spreadsheet titled 'Copy of Maryland RFP_30566147_Compliance Forms_Other_13432392' in the tab titled 'Cloud Hosting Cost (4-2)' below each of the four major 'Description of Services'

categories there is the following line: *'add details to fully describe the pricing and map to the Offeror's Proposed Price plan, adding lines as needed. Include any assumptions.'* Can the State provide an unlocked spreadsheet so that vendors can add those lines as necessary?

RESPONSE: The State will not unlock the Price Sheet. The Offeror's Proposed Price Plan may be provided in a format of the Offeror's choosing and does not need to be added to the State's Price Sheet. However, the State's Price Sheet must be filled out entirely and signed by the Offeror.

15) Will DoIT consider a 1 month or more extension to the due date? With this being a very important project for the State, and with so many outstanding questions, the amount of time allotted to prepare a proposal is not sufficient for us to provide a responsible response.

RESPONSE: Please see the response to Question #8.

16) How does the requirement for Non-Visual Access (Section 1.39.1) apply to the hosting components of this RFP?

RESPONSE: The Non-Visual Access will not apply to the hosting component of this RFP.

17) What are the Recovery Point Objectives and Recovery Time Objectives (RPO/RTO) requirements for Disaster Recovery? (Section 3.3.4.15)

RESPONSE: The RTO is based on SLA Level: Priority 1, and shall be 30 minutes or less. The RPO is based on SLA Level: Priority 2, and shall be one hour.

18) Do all of the Security controls listed in section 3.7.6.1 B apply to both production and non-production hosted instances?

RESPONSE: Yes, the Security controls apply to both production and non-production hosted instances.

19) Section 1.45.1 indicates that non-State agencies may purchase services from this Contract. Which non-state government entities would be included?

RESPONSE: Section 1.45.1 allows the opportunity for an intergovernmental cooperative agreement between the successful offeror and a county, municipal or other non-State government agency entity (e.g., University System of Maryland, Maryland General Assembly, etc.).

20) For each of the Websites listed in Section 3.2.4. – DoIT Operational Baseline Information – please provide the following infrastructure sizing data on a per Physical Server or per VM basis: vCPU, RAM, SAN, OS, and for each physical server please provide the CPU/cores/speed, RAM, SAN, OS.

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

21) There is no information on the required volume in the RFP except for the number of sites (67), Monthly Page Views (2.6M) and Monthly Sessions (around 1M). Section 3.15.6 – Item: Operational Baseline Support indicates Fixed Price. If fixed price is required, we need to have some idea on the required volume. Can you share with us the required volume or at least the current number of server and OSI and storage in the current environment?

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

22) Section 3.4.2 indicates that Transition-in must be completed in 60 calendar days including verification and performance testing. Does it mean that all 67 site have to be migrated to the new cloud environment in 60 days or there will be different phases?

RESPONSE: All 67 sites shall be migrated to the new cloud environment within 60 calendar days.

23) 4.2.2.6.A of the RFP states the following “The Offeror shall address each Scope of Work requirement (Section 3) in its Technical Proposal and describe how its proposed products/services, including the products/services of any proposed subcontractor(s), will meet or exceed the requirement(s).”

- a. Section 3 includes a broad mix of information, including MD background information, instructional information, minimum qualification requirement for staff, and actual requirements or work statements at various levels (down to a 4th level heading with lettered and numbered lists underneath). Can the State please clarify what parts of Section 3 requires a narrative response? For example, please confirm that is not necessary provide any narrative response for the background information that appears at the beginning of Section 3. Please confirm that a simple confirmation is acceptable for instructional requirements, such as “*No work shall be performed on a Work Order prior to a fully executed Work Order*” (3.13.2), or “*The Contractor shall not bill the State for any time required to develop a Work Order 3.13.10 Proposal or answer questions about a Work Order Proposal*” (3.13.10).

RESPONSE: A simple confirmation is acceptable for instructional requirements. Please see the remainder of Section 4.2.2.6 for information regarding the items that require a narrative.

- b. Section 3.8 lists the requirements for 64 staff roles. Please confirm that acknowledging the need to comply with the minimum qualification requirements for each staff role as part of a Work Order is sufficient for purposes of the proposal response to this RFP Section.

RESPONSE: It is acceptable to acknowledge the need to comply with the minimum qualifications for each staff role listed in Section 3.8. However, please note Section 2.2 for specific labor categories that are required as part of the evaluation process.

- c. [Will the State] Please provide Word versions of all attachments?

RESPONSE: Please visit eMaryland Marketplace for a Word version of the RFP and the attachments.

<https://emaryland.buyspeed.com/bs0/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=MDF5031019917&external=true&parentUrl=bid>

- d. Attachment Q, Personnel Experience. This form references Section 2.2 and 2.8. The RFP does not have a Section 2.8. Please confirm this should reference the appropriate part of Section 3.8.

RESPONSE: Attachment Q should reference Sections 2.2 and 3.8. Please see Amendment #1.

- e. RFP identifies Attachment Q under both Tab N and Tab F. Please clarify the appropriate location for this form. If the form is to be included in Tab F, please confirm only one copy is needed.

RESPONSE: Please provide copies of Attachment Q in Tab F. Amendment #1 will remove reference to Tab N.

- f. RFP requires the proposal to be sequentially page numbered from 1 to the end. Given the number of forms required, the size and complexity of the response, and the time allotted to prepare the response, having sequential page numbers in Word format will be exceedingly difficult. Please confirm it is acceptable to sequentially number pages within a Tab (with the tab letter included as part of the page number format) with the exception of State provided forms.

RESPONSE: Yes, it is acceptable to sequentially number pages within a Tab.

- 24) The RFP states that Tab A is to include the title page followed by a TOC. It further states that any confidential information is to be identified and included as Tab A-1, placed between the title page and TOC. Is it the intent of the State to have Tab A contain only the title page, followed by Tab A-1 listing confidential sections, followed by the TOC? Is it acceptable to place the title page, confidential sections description and TOC, in that order, under a single Tab A?

RESPONSE: It is the State's intent to have Tab A contain the title page only. Tab A-1 should contain a list of confidential sections and the table of contents.

- 25) Evaluation Criteria Weights: I did not notice any weighting on the evaluation criteria or did I miss something?

RESPONSE: Section 5.2 states that the evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance. Further, Section 5.5.3 states that technical factors will receive greater weight than financial factors.

- 26) Types of Evaluation Criteria: The title of the RFP suggest a cloud project, but the RFP also “looks like” an IT facilities management project. Are a portion of the selection criteria and pricing sheets going to change to include more cloud-like evaluation criteria and IaaS-type of pricing? *Note: It may be useful to look at how GSA employs the cloud-portion of pricing.*

RESPONSE: **No, the selection criteria and the price sheets are not going to change.**

- 27) Timing: If it takes more than one week to answer the bidder’s questions, will the due date be extended?

RESPONSE: **Please see Amendment #1.**

- 28) Will DoIT consider multiple vendors to fulfill the scope of work? e.g. one entity perform management of hosting infrastructure, VM, OS, network, security, DR, etc.. and another entity to develop and manage SharePoint and other web based environments and provide personnel for labor categories?

RESPONSE: **No, however please see Amendment #1.**

- 29) What is the CPU, RAM, and I/O requirements for the initial deployment? Can DoIT provide an inventory of current machines and resources?

RESPONSE: **Please request access to the reading room for this information.**

- 30) Have IP network scale and specifications been established and quantified?

RESPONSE: **Please request access to the reading room for this information.**

- 31) RFP mentions the roadmap for FedRAMP. Will FedRAMP in progress status be sufficient for award with a roadmap and 3PAO’s in place for FedRAMP certification?

RESPONSE: **Yes. The RFP requires that the support and services are in alignment with FedRAMP, but a FedRAMP certification is not a requirement of the RFP. Also, please see the response to Question #9.**

- 32) Will multiple IaaS (hosting) options for DR be entertained? e.g disk to disk, mirror snapshot? The RFP speaks to back-up tapes. Is this mandatory?

RESPONSE: **Yes. As described in Section 3.3.4.15, the Contractor shall propose, implement and manage a backup service for archival and DR retrieval purposes. This may include tapes, disk-to-disk, or mirror snapshot. Back-up tapes are not mandatory. Please see Amendment #1 for clarification.**

- 33) Is there a preferred geography for Primary and DR systems (RFP says back-up tapes 25 miles away – question pertains to disk to disk)? e.g primary in Maryland for low latency and DR 100+ miles away?

RESPONSE: Per Section 3.3.4.15 of the RFP, the requirement is that an offsite storage facility is a minimum of 25 mile radius away from the primary site.

34) Has a recovery time and recovery point objective been established for DR (RTO/RPO)?

RESPONSE: Please see the response to Question #17.

35) The phrasing of Section 2.1 is ambiguous with respect to whether the offeror must document that across three engagements it meets the three requirements or whether each engagement must meet all three requirements. We submit this question because the phrasing of Requirement 3 indicates that only one of the three engagements must be a government entity.

RESPONSE: Offerors must provide at least three examples of past engagements for each of #1 and #2 listed in Section 2.1. In other words, Offerors shall provide three examples of past performance that meet requirement #1 of the minimum qualifications. In addition, Offerors shall provide three examples of past performance that meet requirement #2 of the minimum qualifications. Out of the six total examples of past performance, one example must meet requirement #3 of the minimum qualifications. Please see Amendment #1 for changes to the minimum qualifications.

36) Please clarify what elements go in TAB N.

RESPONSE: Tab N shall include items A-F as listed in Section 4.2.3.

37) Please clarify the title of TAB O.

RESPONSE: Tab O shall be titled "Additional Required Submissions".

38) Please confirm that the difference between 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 is that 4.2.4 contains business or administrative submissions.

RESPONSE: Section 4.2.3 requires the submission of certain attachments that are included with the RFP. Section 4.2.4 requires the submission of any separate license agreement or AUP for the State to consider as part of the Offeror's proposal.

39) In the RFP, Hosting Managed Services is 3.3.13 and Network Managed Services is 3.3.14. Please confirm that we are to price Hosting Managed Services from 3.3.13.

RESPONSE: The State assumes that this question is in regard to Sections 3.3.4.13-14. In addition, please see Amendment #1 for a revised price sheet.

40) [In regard to the Price Sheet] We understand that the State wants the Offeror to i) develop a Bill of Materials for the moving existing data-center configuration into cloud, ii) develop Monthly Cost, iii) provide the unit prices for the various Cloud services to be used for developing the Monthly Cost and for those services that may be used to meet the State's future needs. Please confirm that our understanding is correct.

RESPONSE: The State is requesting pricing for transition-in services, monthly pricing for hosting managed services, monthly pricing for network managed services, monthly pricing for backup/disaster recovery, monthly pricing for support, labor rates for personnel, and the offeror's price plan cloud hosting options.

- 41) Since the spreadsheet is locked, it is not possible to add the lines needed to provide the requested details.
- Please revise the Price Sheet to allow the Offeror to add the needed lines
 - Since Cloud Services are quite numerous, please allow the Offeror to add tabs where the Offeror may include its catalog of Cloud services

RESPONSE: Please see the response to Question # 14.

- 42) [In regard to insurance: specifically employee theft insurance] Does the State intend the Offeror to obtain 3rd-party coverage? We ask because the answer to that question influences the cost of theft insurance.

RESPONSE: Yes, the apparent awardee of this Contract will be required to obtain 3rd party insurance coverage for employee theft insurance. As described in Section 4.2.2.12, an Offeror shall provide a copy of its current certificate of insurance. The current types and limits do not have to be the same as described in Section 3.14.

- 43) Is there is an incumbent, if so than current staff of 14 is with the current contractor, and if they are with the government than how many will stay on this project after the award.

RESPONSE: There is a current incumbent, however the State does not anticipate that any of the incumbent's staff will stay on the project if another Offeror were to receive award.

- 44) A draft transition plan is required but there is no list of hardware, software, storage etc. to be moved or required. Please specify.

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

- 45) As stated in RFP backup and DR and fireproof vaults 25 miles away from primary. Can DR and fireproof vaults can be in the same place. Please explain.

RESPONSE: The State does not require an Offeror to propose two separate locations.

- 46) Project Manager Certification from Project Management Institute or equivalent, as solely determine by the Procurement Officer. Please clarify the equivalent criteria.

RESPONSE: Certifications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and equivalency will be determined by the Procurement Officer in his sole discretion.

47) As stated in RFP the key personnel to operate from Annapolis, MD. Please clarify the key personnel will be provided computer equipment and other necessary things to operate.

RESPONSE: **The State will not provide computer equipment for key personnel under this Contract. Please see Section 3.6.4 of the RFP for more information.**

48) [We] would like to request a two week extension of the due date to May 8, 2015.

RESPONSE: **Please see Amendment #1.**

49) Would the State of Maryland accept responses for hosting only?

RESPONSE: **No.**

50) Is the State of Maryland open to using an enterprise grade Public Cloud for the hosting platform? Or is the State of Maryland looking for a Dedicated or Private Cloud?

RESPONSE: **Yes, the State is open to an enterprise grade Public Cloud. Section 3.3.4.3 states “The Contractor shall furnish public, private, community and hybrid cloud models as such terms are defined in “The NIST Definition of Cloud Computing”, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) 800-145: private, public, and community.”**

51) Can the bidders data center be located in any of the Lower 48 States of the USA?

RESPONSE: **Yes.**

52) For web and application development is the State of Maryland open to performing this work offshore?

RESPONSE: **The Key Personnel shall work on-site in Annapolis, MD. The State will consider the possibility of non-key personnel that are located offshore.**

53) For web and application management is the State of Mary[land] open to a follow the sun service delivery model? In this model, service will be delivered by shared resources in several different time zones and countries depending upon the day of the week and time of day; however, primary support will be delivered from the USA.

RESPONSE: **No. All Key Personnel are required to work on-site in Annapolis, MD.**

54) Is it a requirement of the State of Maryland to have the data center in the State of Maryland?

RESPONSE: **No.**

55) Are bidders allowed to make exceptions to the State of Maryland's Terms and Conditions, as part of our response?

RESPONSE: Yes, however, per Section 1.24 of the RFP, a Proposal that takes exception to these terms may be rejected. Exceptions to the terms and conditions shall be identified in the Executive Summary as described in Section 4.2.2.4 of the RFP.

56) Are bidders allowed to make assumptions as part of their response?

RESPONSE: Yes. Assumptions shall be identified in the Executive Summary as described in Section 4.2.2.4 of the RFP.

57) Is the State of Maryland looking for the bidders to provide web developers, based upon a rate card?

RESPONSE: Yes. Please see the labor rates tab on the State's Price Sheet.

58) Can these Web developers be offshore?

RESPONSE: Please see the response to Question #52.

59) The MBE goal of 10% is a goal not a requirement?

RESPONSE: The MBE goal for this RFP must be met unless an Offeror can provide a waiver as described in Attachment D-1B.

60) When does the State of Maryland anticipate responding to the bidders questions? This is key as the State's response/answers has a direct impact on pricing and proposal.

RESPONSE: The State will respond to questions as soon as possible.

61) Will the State Of Maryland consider amending the RFP to consider team past performance rather than just the prime past performance to meet the application development and cloud hosting requirement?

RESPONSE: Please see Amendment #1.

62) Can you please provide any sizing or specifications on the current servers/virtual machines (e.g., CPU, RAM, Disk including raid sizes and types), as well as the quantity of each type of server?

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

63) If there is external storage, provide your specific external storage requirements (e.g., manufacturer, type of storage (storage area network/network attached storage) and sizes for the infrastructure)

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

64) Please provide any performance metrics that you may have for the environment?

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

65) Is there a specific manufacturer requirement for your load balancers and firewalls?

RESPONSE: No.

66) Do you have a specific recovery time objective (RTO) and/or recovery point objective (RPO) for the websites? The differences in RTO and RPO will affect the proposed costs received from vendors

RESPONSE: Please see the response to Question #17.

67) Do you have requirements for long-term data retention/archival beyond the initial 30 days?

RESPONSE: No.

68) Is the disaster recovery site expected to perform at the same level as the primary site?

RESPONSE: Yes.

69) Section 1.33.4 references an applicable NAICS code for an MBE. Is there a NAICS code for this solicitation?

RESPONSE: An Offeror shall select an MBE entity that is certified by the State to perform the work as described in the proposal. For example, if the scope of work required a contractor to build a bridge and the proposed MBE entity is certified to do software development, then the MBE would likely be an inappropriate entity to meet the MBE goal.

70) Can some of the work be done off-site in the MD/DC/VA area? We would envision the Project Manager, Technical Lead, and Business Analyst (any requirements gathering/analysis) would be on-site with the customers throughout the project?

RESPONSE: Please see the response to Question #52.

71) Can the Photoshop requirement (key personnel, Advanced Technology Application Development, Senior) be handled by a person in a different labor category (i.e., visual designer, graphic artist, etc.)? The skill set is difficult to match an application developer with an experienced photoshop consultant.

RESPONSE: No.

72) Can we request access to the Reading Room to review the materials that are relevant to this opportunity?

RESPONSE: Yes.

73) Will you consider an extension of the response date on the RFP? We would ask for an extension to May 15 or May 22.

RESPONSE: Please see Amendment #1.

74) In order to estimate content storage and compute resources required for each web application based upon content transmitted/distributed, could State of Maryland DoIT provide the following:

- What percentage of content transmitted daily is unique content for each application?
- What percentage per content transmitted weekly is unique content for each application?
- What percentage of content transmitted monthly is unique content for each application?

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information. However, the State may not be able to disclose all of the information being requested.

75) Alternatively, could the State of Maryland DoIT provide the following:

- How much resources are currently being utilized for each web application (i.e., RAM, CPU, local storage).
- How much total content is being stored for each application?
- What is the total amount of content being stored across all web applications?

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

76) Under 2.1 will you consider allowing Subcontractor Experience to meet the minimum qualifications?

RESPONSE: Please see Amendment #1.

77) Can you provide the specifications for the virtual servers that you currently support. We would like to see: CPU cores, Memory, Disk Space, number and size of SQL databases, Bandwidth usage to and from your infrastructure.

RESPONSE: Please request access to the reading room for this information.

78) Would you consider extending the RFP response date out 2 weeks to May 15th?

RESPONSE: Please see Amendment #1.

79) Can you provide instructions on how to request a reading room?

RESPONSE: Please send an email to the procurement officer requesting a date/time for access to the reading room.



Thank you,

Michael Mehl
Procurement Officer

End of Question and Answer # 1