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Database Computer Programming Technical Services
RFP #R62B4400011
Pre-Bid Conference Questions

Background/Introduction

The TORFP document contains background for this project. This project came about as the result of the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) partnering with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Department of Labor and Licensing (DLLR) as the umbrella of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS). Our current data collection system is currently hosted on a HP3000 minicomputer system. The creation of the Maryland Longitudinal System has caused us to revamp our collections. Historically we have always collected enrollment data for every student attending higher education institutions throughout the state of Maryland, degree data, financial aid data, high school data, employee data, and transfer data. We have expanded our collections by adding data elements, adding new collection systems and increasing collection frequency, in order to collect additional information for the purpose of uploading data to the MLDS and increasing MHEC's research–ability. We have had to significantly revise our systems to meet that need.

As listed in the TORFP there are nine different collections systems.   We are not only expanding our collection system we are also moving from the old HP3000 platform to an Oracle platform. We are COBOL programmers and so to bridge the gap between the two platforms we are seeking expertise to help us migrate collection systems, editing procedures and reporting from the old HP 3000 system into the Oracle world.

Our collections system on the HP3000 is not a data base. We collect flat files and process them. We are looking for someone to come in and look the collections, look at the data elements, and determine what database tables, staging tables, etc. need to be created and from those tables to determine what reporting requirements can be achieved. There are a number of auxiliary files that are used to validate collections, for example – if a student earns a degree in engineering the institutional file must be checked against the auxiliary file that contains the valid engineering degree programs. There are number of auxiliary files that are required to be a part of this overall data base system configuration. Each collection system has its own editing processes that must be followed and applied to each institutional file. Once all files for a particular system are "clean," files are further processed into statewide student-level and aggregate data sets and prepared for research and analysis.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Section 2.9.2 No. 2 – Education. Please consider reducing the minimum requirements twelve (12) years of overall IT experience developing and fielding automation solutions.

   > Section 2.9.2 No. 2 – 8 Years of Overall IT experience developing and fielding automated solutions.

2. Section 2.9.2 No. 4 & 5 – You are asking for both Oracle and OBIEE. It's his understanding that people are either in one or the other. Are both items a requirement or can one be required and the other preferred? Is there a special need here?

   > Section 2.9.2 No. 4 Oracle is required

   > Section 2.9.2 No. 5 OBIEE is preferred and will be ranked higher

   > Because of our circumstances we are trying to secure as much expertise as possible.

3. Was there a specific reason this was issued as fixed price vs. time and materials.

   > We are looking for one full-time person with a set number of hours per week. From a contract management point it is easier to manage.

4. You talked about the current data being on the HP3000 System. Is there a timeline to migrate all collection systems to Oracle?

   > We would like to develop new systems as soon as possible in the Oracle environment, however, due to workload and timing of collection systems we must strategically prioritize application development based on system due dates.

5. I'm going to go back to the qualifications in Section 2.10. Are you looking for certification or degrees in Higher Education Data collection?

   > No certification or degrees just someone who has prior exposure in the higher education data collection arena is preferred.

6. I'm trying to understand your price sheet; you have column A and column C. You are asking semi-annual for 960 hours.

   > Yes, that is correct. No it's not a time and material contract. It is a fixed rated we don't want to exceed the 960 hours or that dollar amount. This will allow them to work on service reduction days and other times when the office might not be fully staffed.

7. Will MHEC or the master contractor be conducting the work under this engagement? It appears it should MHEC but section 3.4.1.C asks for name and title of contractor's management staff.

   > It will be MHEC directing the work. From an accountability standpoint it will be helpful to have someone behind the contractor who will make sure they are accountable for the work they are supposed to do.

8. The 960 hours do you think the work will be done in that range?

    We anticipate it will require more time.

9. On a fix price base if the project requires more, will you do a change order?

    No. We also have 3, 6-month renewal options. We would exercise renewal option(s).

10. Section 3.4.1. Asked for a lot of history and a lot of information.

    In Section 3.41., A. - Respond to 1, 4, and 5, that will be sufficient. Eliminate 2 and 3. Be sure your proposed solution is detailed enough that the MHEC team has clarity on your suggested system configuration receiving, editing and processing collection files.

11. Can we get word document of proposal.

    Yes. We will provide you the document in word.

12. 2.8.1 – Deliverable Submission

    Deliverables are required see the proceeding sections in 2.8.4.

13. Page 38 general experience match to form 5B. On form 5B we list the work and position and work done. What do you mean by cross reference?

    They need to match. We will eliminate 5A you may submit just 5B.

14. Is there a specific target start date for this engagement?

    We anticipate a minimum of six weeks. No more than eight-weeks from the proposal due date. Target time frame is mid-October which could be potentially longer given state approval processes.

15. The initial appointment is 6 months then potential option of 6 months each. Again it will be coming back as a TORFP.

    No. If we exercise the options, that means we will in affect being extending the contract for 6 months with each option we exercise. The contract may go up to two years.

16. Can we expect that the information on page 24 Section 3.4.1.A.3.

    Do not need to submit the Draft Risk Assessment. Eliminate 3.4.1.A.3.

17. 3.4.1.A #5– Proposed Services - What type of tools are required?

    MHEC will provide the tools.

18. When should we expect to get the minutes?

    Minutes should be available Tuesday at the latest.

19. Attachment 1 – Price Proposal Sheet – CATS+ Labor Category – What Labor Category do you prefer?

    The Master Contractor will select the best labor category for their company.

PRE-SUBMITTED WRITTEN QUESTIONS NOT ASKED

1. Is there an incumbent for this?

   Because this is a different proposal vehicle from what we have done, this is a new requirement.

2. How much is the budget for this requirement?

   The Master Contractor will determine the budget.

3. Page 24 Section 3.4.1 C.2 states, "Provide evidence proposed personnel possess the required certifications in accordance with Section 2.9.2 Offeror's Personnel Minimum Qualifications." If the proposed personnel have a B.S. or M.S. in an IT related field from an accredited college or university, what kind of evidence do we need to provide?

   If we request proof of B.S. or M.S. or IT related accredited college or university contractor will only need a copy of the certification or diploma.