

R00B0600011 MARS O&M questions from Pre-Proposal Conference

Feb-19 The SCNP team supplied clarification on non-procurement items, un answered Items are tagged as [#procurement](#).

1. What is the estimated budget of this TORFP?

MSDE has a budget to fully fund this contract.

2. Please disclose the previous spending of this contract?

Do not have that information at this time

3. Please disclose the incumbent name.

MARS is managed by the Canton Group,
MDCS is Managed by Serigor

4. If possible please provide the incumbent technical and cost proposal?

Not possible at this time.

5. Does the MSDE have other resources under the same project?

MSDE/OCNP has a project manager to assist with oversight and Dolt manages the network infrastructure

There are no other support contracts are associated with maintenance and support agreements exist for the MARS and MDCS systems

6. What is the estimated start date of this contract?

There is no estimated start date at this time

7. We would like to request the MSDE to release the transcript of the pre-proposal conference?

This will be attached with the release of the Q&A

8. Refer to "5.4 - Volume I - TO Technical Proposal -G. Master Contractor and Subcontractor Experience and Capabilities". Please specify whether the vendors need to provide the references where they have provided staff for similar positions or where they have provided the requested services defined in 3.9.2 Offeror Experience.

References are required for the vendor demonstrating their experience offer Similar Maintenance and Support efforts and references for the four key resources.

9. Refer to “4A Minimum Qualifications Summary” it is stated that the “Minimum qualifications and required certifications as defined in Section 2.1 of this TORFP” whereas the certification is defined in Section 1. Kindly confirm.

Yes

- Is this the amount for all 5 years or for the base year and will the department receive additional funds for the following 4 years?

For all 5 years

2. Is the work divided into modules? Are all modules awarded to 1 Master Contractor? Can we bid for a particular module?

The vendor must bid on the total contract

3. Can we hire Key Personnel from existing Vendors?

Recruitment practices are up to the vendor

4. Can we bid for the whole project as an MBE or do we need to have a MBE Sub-Contractor?

#procurement

5. Are there any Upstream or downstream / data file/s dependencies from where the data is received & sent by offeror that we need to be aware of from an SLA standpoint?

#procurement

6. What are the Application availability requirements? Is it 24/7? Are there any after-hours support expected from the offeror.

MARS and MDCS are web-based application. Except for Monthly maintenance, users access these these applications 7 days a week. Normal Business and peak hours of operation to work with vendors and report issues are 7:30 to 6:00 PM

1. We are MDOT certified DBE. Is it acceptable for the 25% MBE requirement for the TORFR?

#procurement

2. Pg. 61: 3.9.1.F.: Key Personnel – A subset of TO Contractor Personnel whose departure during the performance period, will, in the State’s opinion, have a substantial negative impact on Task Order performance. Key Personnel proposed as part of the TO Proposal shall start as of TO Agreement issuance unless specified otherwise in this TORFP or the Offeror’s TO Technical Proposal. Key Personnel may be identified after Task Order award.

However, on Pg. 61: 3.9.3 states: As part of the TO Proposal evaluation, Offerors shall propose 4 key personnel who are expected to be available as of the start date specified in the Notice to

Proceed (NTP Date). Can you please let us know when we would need to submit the key personnel?

Resumes of Key Personnel are required with the proposal

- Page 14 Section 2.2.2 – This section indicates that the MARS Intranet and Extranet portals are based on the Microsoft .NET platform. Web browsers, Internet Information Services and SharePoint are listed as technologies but it is not clear which web technologies are used within these portals to support the presentation layer (web forms, MVC, etc.). Can additional detail on these technologies be provided?

- MARS and MDCS are custom built application, using HTML, XML, and ASP.net
- Over the life of the contract SharePoint file sharing services will be used to replace the custom legacy solution in MARS

- Page 21 Section 2.3.1.B. – The TORFP states the Transition-In Plan and Project Management Plan will be delivered as fixed price. Attachment B - Price Proposal does not have any line items these fixed price entries. Will the State be amending Attachment B to include, or will these be requested by a fixed price Work Order?

DoIT made us remove the fixed price deliverables from the cost sheet.
The project management plan should be part of the technical proposal?

- Page 22 Section 2.3.2 – Can the state confirm that the vendor should maintain their own development and testing environments either in a vendor managed data center or cloud hosting environment?

Yes, they vendor is expected to maintain their own secure and properly licensed development and testing environments and tools to tracking the backlog, burn rates, and release management.

- Page 43 Section 2.6.8 - Will the state remove the SLA Credits? Adequate staffing is needed to commit to SLAs. The State controls the staffing levels on this T&M contract. Section 3.9.3 says the Offeror shall propose 4 key personnel. No other personnel are guaranteed. Imposing service credits on a TO Contractor is not fair when the TO Contractor does not have control over the staffing levels needed to meet the service level requirements.

No, this operation and maintenance effort is driven by the work items maintained in a backlog. The Vendor will be expected to expand and contract the number of resources to meet the varying workload.

- Page 43 Section 2.6.8 - For Service Requirement No. 6 Service Availability, the events beyond the TO Contractor's control should be excluded from downtime. For example, Section 2.2.7.C. says that data center operations, network operations, internet services, and website hosting are outside the scope of TO Contractor's services. We ask that the Measurement be amended to say "All application functionality and accessibility shall be maintained at 99.5% uptime performance levels, excluding scheduled maintenance and downtime caused by events outside of TO Contractor's reasonable control."

#procurement - Leave this sections the same with no additional language

- Page 50 Section 3.8.1 – If all environments and source code is hosted by MSDE/DoIT, what responsibility does the TO Contractor bear for the SOC 2 Type 2 audit; not the State environment but our internal systems and effectiveness of controls?

After each release, the Vendor is expected to export/import the source codes from their secure environment to the MSDE/DoIT secure environment.

- Page 58 Section 3.8 - Will the State change the SOC 2 Type II provision to require the TO Contractor to participate in a SOC 2 Type II audit conducted by MSDE instead of requiring the TO Contractor to conduct its own audit? According to TORFP Section 2.2.7, this TORFP is for T&M resources to complete work orders issued by the State while managing data center operations and network operations are out of scope.

The state infrastructure is managed by DoIT, The vendor is responsible to their development and testing environments. However, the vendor will be responsible for server configurations and securing data in all environments, this mean working DoIT on correcting issues within the MSDE domain.

- Page 80 Section 4.6 – As this is a staffing TORFP, would the State consider changing the Liability of Liability to one (1) time the total TO Agreement amount?

No, Due to the handling and storage of PII data, along with Federal and State compliance the liability cannot be limited to the cost of the agreement.

- On page 34 of the TORFP, we assume 2.3.5.10 – Work Products should be labeled 2.3.5.16. Is this correct? This has been corrected (2.3.5.16.)

3.9.4 61 The key personnel experience is stated as preferred; however, the information is not the same that was in the prefilled attachment 4, page 126, 128, 130, 132 in the TORFP. Which experience should be used to complete attachment 4?

1.2 9 The education requirements listed in section 1.2 is not the same as the requirements listed in the prefilled attachment 4, page 126, 128, 130, 132. Which should be used to completed attachment 4.

4A and 4B 122-125 The information in the prefilled sections related to the duties on pages 126, 128, 130, 132 is different than what is in 1.2 and 3.9.4. Are we to follow what is provided on 126, 128, 130, 132 or the information in 1.2 (which states it supersedes all requirements) or what is listed in 3.9.4?

4A and 4B 122-125 There are prefilled out sections in the TORFP for attachments 4 (pages 126-134), is this supposed to be attachment C or is it supposed to be a continuation of 4B?

Please following all instruction for Qualification Summary and (4A) as well for Labor Classification Personnel Resume Summary.

7 94 Is TO Financial Proposal Form B due before TO Proposal?

[Please follow instruction in Section 7](#)

7 94 Federal Funds attachment is listed as F in the TORFP but listed as G in the link to the attachment. Please confirm which is correct?

[Has been corrected.](#)

7 95 Conflict of Interest attachment is listed as G in the TORFP but listed as H in the link to the attachment. Please confirm which is correct?

[Has been corrected](#)

7 95 Non-Discloser Agreement is listed as H in the TORFP but listed as I in the link to the attachment. Please confirm which is correct?

[Has been corrected](#)

7 95 Location of Performance of Services is listed as K in the TORFP but listed as L in the link to the attachment? Please confirm which is correct?

[Has been corrected](#)

3.7.2 52 It is unclear as to whether background checks are required. Can the state clarify if background checks are required? If not, would the State consider requiring background checks for all personnel assigned to work on the contract due to sensitive nature of the work and data?

[Background checks are required for anyone working on this contract.](#)

As a follow up to the question raised during the pre-conference call related to providing work outside of the United States, what is the process/policy for validating and verification of compliance of the rule in section 2.3.1 and 3.7.5 section of the TORFP.

[No work is allowed to be done outside the united states](#)

5.3.4-5 84,85 It is stated that the email submissions must be password protected in section 5.3.4.A and in section 5.3.5.B.1 it states the Financial Proposal, and all supporting material is to be password protected. However, it does not state the Technical Proposal document(s) to be password protected in section 5.3.5.A. Is the expectation that the Technical Proposal documents also be password protected or that the Technical proposal be password less and sent withing a password protected zip/gar file?

[The expectation that the Technical Proposal documents also be password protected](#)

Training Specialist role requires designing courses. Does the Government has any Learning Management System (LMS) framework for designing and delivering courses?

No - LMS is not part of the contract. The training specialist will provide materials and training based on assigned work-orders.

3. Is there any compliance requirement for training materials, such as SCORM?

As this is a State and Federal project all products but be secure and ADA compliant

4. Automation is going to be integral to the scope of work. Can the government suggest if the available licenses include provisions for PowerAutomate?

As stated in the TORFP the purchasing of software is not part of this agreement.

5. The RFP suggests: "Support DoIT initiatives in a limited capacity to provide migration support as it relates to the Systems and any new infrastructure environment". However, we observed that a lot of software components require urgent upgrade. Can the government give some indicative roadmap of the planned upgrades and migrations?

Where possible, DoIT hosts meetings for planned events such as moving and upgrades of equipment, the vendor are part of those efforts.

3.5.1 Redundancy, Data Backup and Disaster Recovery - Can a description be provided regarding measures used to maintain disaster recovery and backup solutions for the current system?

MSDE and DoIT manage backup of the environments hosted by the State along with a business continuity plan

3.9.3 Number of Personnel to Propose Are their restrictions on utilizing offshore personnel for this opportunity?

No offshore resource

3.9.5 Labor Categories, Additional Personnel We understand that the TO Contractor shall provide additional personnel through the work order process. Is it expected that these roles will be incorporated into the proposal response?

The labor categories for the additional personnel are listed in the TORFP. Only Key Personnel are required at the start of the contract.

If so, should they also be included in the pricing component?

The pricing sheet should be completed based on instruction included within the pricing sheet.

7 TORFP ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES

Can a clarification be made on what form is to be submitted before proposal submission?

R00B0600011 MARS O&M questions from Pre-Proposal Conference

[Please refer to Section 7](#)

Is it the expectation that pricing excel will be submitted prior to full submission?