STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON STATE LIBRARY
REPOSTING OF
RFP 21-01 STATEWIDE DATABASE LICENSING

Amendment 2 Questions and Answers

To assist in getting Q&A's out promptly they will be posted as we get them in numbers as separate Amendments with one Final Q&A Amendment containing all on February 4, 2021.

Official responses to questions submitted after the January 13 Preproposal Conference, through January 22, 2021.

Q. REF: Revised Exhibit G: Does the State want the FT backfile ranges for all FT titles, or just for current FT titles? It looks like the ranges are calculated for current FT backfile only.

A. The numbers requested in Exhibit G refer directly to the corresponding text in the written portion of the RFP. In this case, the relevant text appears in Section C. Database Title Counts: as follows, with the relevant portion *italicized*:

    a. What is the average length of backfile provided for *current full-text titles*? How many *current full text titles* provide full text back files as follows:
        i. Greater than 1 year but less than 3 years?
        ii. 3 years or greater but less than 5 years?
        iii. 5 years or greater but less than 10 years?
        iv. 10 years or more?

That said, if you wish to highlight backfiles for the database overall, including non-current titles, you may certainly do so in the more general database description of up to 500 words (see Section A. Database Descriptions:).

Q. There are 3 rfps

- Database for Higher Edu (Community College and up)
- Database for k-12
- Database k-12 and Higher Ed (combined)

During the meeting, you mentioned that we don't have to participate in all 3 RFPS, and we can focus on where our content will be most relevant. For example, I can submit a bid just for the Higher Ed portion.

A. Your interpretation of the RFP is not completely accurate. In actuality, there are TWO (2) content categories within the RFP, one for aggregated periodical content, and one for K-12 Resources. See Sections 3.3.1 Periodicals Database(s) and 3.3.2 K-12 Resources. These categories are also described in Sections 1.2.3 and 1.2.4. Proposals may be submitted for either content category, or for both.

In addition, Section 3.3.3 Offering Choices, reflects the desire of participating libraries to have more choices within the available packages, and describes a number of other types of content that are typically of interest to libraries. A proposal which allows libraries a range of choices for content within the package price will be scored higher than a proposal without choices.

However, to be clear, a proposal may not focus on these types of content to the exclusion of the two primary types. These types of content may be offered as supplemental choices within a proposal that addresses one or the other of the two primary content categories. For the purposes of this procurement, a proposal that does not provide one of the two primary content types cannot be considered.

Ideally, proposals in response to each RFP content category should be priced for statewide access by all library types. Since however, in the past, a single vendor has provided the content for both categories, the result has been a single, one price for all, bundled package. In the future, as a result of the current procurement process, should different vendors be selected for each category, it may be feasible to allow libraries to sign up for whichever packages they want. In all cases, should a significant percentage of libraries not choose to sign up for a particular package, pricing should reflect that reality.

The RFP, as written, probably doesn't adequately reflect every possible eventuality. The complete procurement process provides two other procedures for adjusting or negotiating pricing to reflect the actual situation: the Best and Final Offer process, see RFP Section 4.6 BEST AND FINAL OFFER (BAFO), and the contract negotiation phase, as outlined in Section 2.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES, which describes April 8 – May 1, 2021 as the period in which to "Negotiate and Execute Contract."

Q. Please consider our appeal for an extension on the deadline for this solicitation. The technical complexity of the RFP will challenge many vendors (especially smaller companies). A one week extension would be very helpful, 10 days would be a great advantage.

A. The deadline for submission of proposals has been extended until February 19, 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Q. REF: 3.3.1 Periodicals Database(s) and 3.3.2 K-12 Resources: Please confirm that we may submit one proposal document set, or proposal package, to present our offers related to both of these sections. We understand each section is to be scored separately.

A. Yes. Please also review the response to the previous question, which begins "There are 3 RFPs." However, be very careful to respond fully and very carefully to the RFP requirements for both sections (both content categories), and especially, in Section 3.4 Technical and Management Proposal, such that any differences between products or platforms are accurately documented in the responses to each requirement.

Q. REF: 2.4 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:
    Given the extensive documentation required for this submission, please provide some information on file size limits that can be accepted by the State's email system.

A. We are not aware of any significant file size limits on the State's e-mail system.

Q. Are zip files acceptable for submissions?

A. We don't believe zip files are necessary, and would prefer to avoid them, especially since the files will be sent to multiple members of the scoring team, also by e-mail.

Q. Do you recommend multiple emails (Submission 1 of 3, 2 of 3, etc.)?

A. If file sizes really do pose a problem, this would be the preferred mechanism for dealing with the issue.

Q. May we post supporting documentation (titles lists, privacy/security documentation, etc.) to a single site - accessible via URL to reduce the volume of a submission via email??

A. Yes, at least for title lists. In fact, the RFP already states in Section 3.3.1 – A. c. "Do not include any title lists within the body of the proposal itself. Title lists may be provided separately, in electronic format, or linked from Proposer's website." Title lists, if provided, are preferred in Excel spreadsheet format, although other formats are also acceptable.

Q. 2.4 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS
Given the requirement for MS Word Format submissions, may we set the Tracking tool to lock the document so that any changes to our documents are tracked?

A. No. The required format is fully editable Microsoft Word documents. This is for the convenience of the scoring team, so that they can easily insert comments regarding scoring issues directly into the documents. This makes the scoring process much easier to manage in an all-electronic environment. Please be assured that we will maintain a strict separation of copies of proposal documents altered or edited as part of the scoring process from the originals submitted by vendors.

Also, as stated in Section 2.4 of the RFP, "A PDF version may be provided as a more permanent reference supplement to the Microsoft Word version, if desired." If you are concerned about maintaining the authenticity of the original document, please submit identical Word and PDF formatted documents, so that the PDF version functions as the permanent reference.

So, for all documents requested (e.g., license agreements, terms of use, privacy policies, etc.), a fully editable Microsoft Word format is strongly preferred. In the case of the proposal itself, and any license agreements, failure to comply could result in a proposal being declared nonresponsive, although the vendor will be permitted to remedy the situation upon request of the RFP Coordinator.

Q. REF: 3.4.7 Usage Statistics
If proposed products sit on separate platforms but have the [same] technical functionality, may we include a single response [to] the defined issues/questions?

A. Yes; if the functionality is identical for both platforms, be sure to make that fact clear, and then one response is sufficient.

Q. Is the State seeking only the subjects covered by the current ProQuest resources?

If no, is the State interested in considering any unique products for libraries that are not cited specifically in the solicitation, such as self-help tools that advance interests in legal, early literacy, workforce development, education, educator references, test prep, etc.?

A. No, the state is not seeking "only the subjects covered by the current ProQuest resources."

The state is seeking the resources specifically described in the RFP, i.e., resources in two categories: aggregated periodical databases as described in Sections 1.2.3 and 3.3.1 and K-12 Resources as described in Sections 1.2.4 and 3.3.2. In addition, the state is interested in providing choices to libraries that could include a wide array of other types of resources as described in Section 3.3.3.

However, the way the current RFP is written, a proposal must address one of the two primary categories, aggregated periodicals (Section 3,3,1) and/or K-12 resources (Section 3.3.2), in order to also provide resources in the "Choices" category (Section 3.3.3). A proposal that only provides resources in areas other than the two primary categories cannot be considered. Please also consult the explanation provided in the response to a previous question, the question that begins "There are 3 rfps".