

Questions and Answers
RFQQ 06-02 (Updated November 22, 2005)

Q1. Is there any deadline for the submission of questions?

A1. No, we currently do not have a deadline on submission of questions. Questions will be accepted until November 22, 2005 at 5:00 PM PST.

Q2. The word Consultant in the RFQQ is used interchangeably with regards to “A Consulting Firm” & “Staff”. What is the exact interpretation of the word Consultant in the RFQQ?

A2. Consultant can be clarified as the technical staff provided by the Contractor to provide staffing support.

Q3. Is there any pre-requisite that a vendor should have worked on Voters Registration Database system?

A3. No.

Q4. Is there any incumbent for this RFQQ?

A4. No. We currently have Contractors hired to help implement the first phase of the statewide voter registration database. The second phase of the project is a completely different solicitation.

Q5. Are there any vendors working with the agency on this system?

A5. No vendors are currently working on the second phase of the voter registration database.

Q6. What is the budget for this project?

A6. There is an overall budget to implement all HAVA requirements, but there is not a specific budget for the Voter Registration Database portion. The agency produced a state plan, required by HAVA, that describes, in general terms, use of the HAVA funds to help both the state and the counties implement the HAVA requirements.

Q7. In the RFQQ Page 4, it mentions the service as on “needed basis”? Please clarify.

A7. From Page 4: “Consultant will provide expert programming advice and up to three additional programmers on an as-needed basis.” As needed basis indicates the Agency Project Manager may choose to use less staffing resources if the project is ahead of schedule or more staffing resources if the project is behind schedule. However, the Agency Project Manager will provide a written request for less or additional staffing resources ahead of time.

Q8. How many consultants are required for this assignment?

A8 Three full-time consultants with the desired technical skill sets outlined in the Deliverables and Objectives of the RFQQ are required for this project.

Q9. Can multiple resumes be submitted for agency evaluation for selection purpose?

A9. Yes, multiple resumes can be submitted as part of the RFQQ. The Agency expects a minimum of three resumes.

Q10. Please clarify the deliverables & objectives. It is documented that a minimum of 3 days per week of onsite consulting & programming is required and the remainder can be done from a "remote location" (page 6). Please define "remote location".

A10. Remote location can be defined as a location not within the Agency's physical onsite work location. An example is the consultant can work from his or her home.

Q11. We are excited with the opportunity of pursuing this RFQQ and wanted to provide Notification of Our Intent to Bid. We did not find specific directions on your preference of notification format so if this email notice does not suffice please let me know and I can submit a written letter.

A11. We accept any form of written notification for the Notice of Intent to Bid, so notification by email will definitely suffice.

Q12. We received an RFQQ for the Voter Registration DB Phase II, and I was wondering if you could tell us who was the contractor for Phase I?

A12. Microsoft was selected to be the contractor for Phase I of the Voter Registration Database.

Q13. Did the agency use contractors to assist with Phase 1 of this project?

A13. Yes, one Contractor and one Sub-contractor (Advantage Factory).

Q14. If the Agency did use contractors to assist with Phase 1 of this project, will these contractors be eligible to respond to your RFQQ for the Phase II work?

A14. Yes, both the Contractor and Subcontractor are eligible.

Q15. If the Agency did use contractors to assist with Phase 1 of this project, will these contractors receive points for specific experience with your project?

- A15. The Agency will evaluate proposals based on the criteria specified in the RFQQ. The Contractor's and Sub-contractor's work on Phase 1 of the project will be included in their experience as part of the evaluation.
- Q16. Are you looking to hire from one vendor or is there an option to hire from more than one vendor for the RFQQ?**
- A16. The Agency is currently looking to contract with just one vendor. However, there isn't anything in the RFQQ that would preclude the Agency from ultimately selecting more than one vendor to contract with, if the Agency decides that that is in its best interest.
- Q17. As per the definition of Consultant in the RFQQ (Page 6 – Section 1.6) it is understood that Consultant could be a company also. With respect to that the response under the Section 3.2.2 a (Experience) will the experience of company and not the staff proposed and the response under section 3.2.2 b Staff would be the experience of consultant proposed for the engagement. Is that understanding correct?**
- A17. The Agency will evaluate on both the company and staff experience. Staff experience is based solely on the experience of the individuals. Company experience is based on the projects the company has worked on.
- Q18. What are the different databases that are expected to be used for this project? Does the consultant working on this engagement need to have knowledge of all different kinds of databases?**
- A18. It is expected that Phase 2 will involve working with the state voter registration database, county election management systems, and county elections tabulation systems. Other databases may get added as the project progresses. No, the consultant does not need prior knowledge of the different databases.
- Q19. For the Project Estimated Effort Matrix based on the requirement mentioned it is difficult to project the effort. Can we have the functional specification document to provide a clear estimate of the effort?**
- A19. One of the requirements of the Contractor is work with the Agency to further define the requirements into a functional specification document. The Agency understands it will difficult to estimate project effort. The estimated effort matrix is not scored and is only informational for the Agency.
- Q20. Will the Quality assurance services be part of this proposal or they will be seeking these services from other vendors?**
- A20. No, the Agency will evaluate the best means to perform quality assurance reviews.
- Q21. Is the understanding of 3 full time consultants working on this project for 18 months correct?**
- A21. Yes.

- Q22. Agency Standards is referred at most places and than reference to Section 1.2 is made. What exactly are the agency standards with respect to this bid?**
- A22. 1) Microsoft SQL Server 2000
2) Microsoft Windows 2003 environment
3) XML 1.0
4) Microsoft .NET framework
5) Microsoft Biztalk Server 2004
- Q23. In the project organization chart for Phase 2 there are positions vacant for Applications specialists. To which applications are these consultants responsible and what is the relation of Contractor Tech Lead to the Applications Specialists?**
- A23. The Applications Specialist positions are Agency staff that will work collaboratively with the project team, which includes the Contractors, on the Phase 2 project.
- Q24. The RFQQ specifically asks for 3 full time technical experts - but it also then requests project management resource time as well. Is the agency presuming one of the technical experts also functions as a project manager?**
- A24. Yes, the Agency expects that at least one of the 3 full time technical experts can assist in project management functions. This will be a project management role to provide written status reports and management of additional contractor staff.
- Q25. Are consultants encouraged to bid a fourth resource?**
- A25. Consultants can bid a fourth resource, but that is not required.
- Q26. Should resumes for project managers be submitted as well?**
- A26. Yes, resumes for project managers should be submitted.
- Q27. In addition, it is clear from the RFQQ and Q&A that further requirements definition will be needed. Will this be completed by the Agency?**
- A27. This will be completed by the Agency along with consulting help and collaboration from the Contractor. Determination of the system requirements will be a collaborative effort by all stakeholders in the project.
- Q28. Should consultants include an array of resources that cover requirements and functional design within the scope of their response?**
- A28. Resources covering requirements and functional design should be included within the 3 full time technical staff requested by the Agency.

- Q29. The Agency has indicated that testing will be covered in a separate procurement; will this sort of requirements definition phase be handled in a similar manner?**
- A29. Testing and quality assurance reviews will be evaluated as the project progresses. The Agency will determine the best means to proceed.
- Q30. We are unclear about the requirements of section 3.2.1 (e). Are you asking if any of our current or former employees were employed by the state in the past 24 months?**
- A30. Yes.
- Q31. What specific languages in the Microsoft .Net framework (e.g. ASP .Net, VB .Net, C#) should the consultants have expertise in?**
- A31. Regarding the Microsoft .Net framework, the consultants should have expertise in ASP.NET, VB.NET, and C#.
- Q32. The documents available online are in PDF format that cannot be electronically modified. Need Word documents to complete. Looking for Attachment A – Certification and Assurances & Attachment C – Project Estimated Effort Matrix.**
- A32. Consultants will need to print out the PDF documents and complete the information on hardcopy.
- Q33. When will the answers to clarifications posted on the website?**
- A33. Answers to questions will be posted on the website as promptly as possible. The Agency makes the best attempt to post answers every other night.
- Q34. In 3.2.2, the RFQQ asks for contact information for three business references for which work has been accomplished by the assigned staff and sub-contractors. Are you asking for three references for each staff / subcontractor submitted, or for a total of three references?**
- A34. The Agency is looking for a total of three references.
- Q35. The RFQQ includes a due date for Letters of Intent to Bid of November 14, 2005. Is this date a required cutoff to be eligible to submit a proposal, or is the Letter of Intent to Bid meant to be a courtesy to the agency?**
- A35. Since the RFQQ does not specifically state that to be eligible to apply a company must submit a Letter of Intent by November 14, 2005, then it will be considered a courtesy. Letters of Intent will be accepted after November 14, 2005, and are not required as a condition of submitting a proposal.

Q36. The RFQQ says work must be done a minimum three days onsite (page 6). Does that mean all three consultants need to be on-site all three days, or does that mean at least one consultant on-site for three days?

A36. In the early stages of the project, the Agency expects that all consultants will need to be onsite a minimum of three days per week. As the project progresses, the Agency can be flexible on the number of consultants that will need to work onsite.

Q37. In phase 1, they completed a database that meets the HAVA requirement. When they say that they implemented a platform for exchanging data with the county election systems, do they mean that they have written and tested the biztalk adapters that do this data exchange?

A37. Yes.

Q38. Regarding the RFP that is out right now – we noticed there was no mention of having this system geographically based, or supported using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology – is this of interest?

A38. GIS is not one of the requirements listed on the website wish list associated with this RFQQ. A small part of the project may involve some mapping.

Q39. Why is a separate procurement being conducted for Phase II of the project, is it due to contract length or other considerations?

A39. The phase I Contract ends on December 31, 2005. The project was “phased” to allow the programming of the HAVA-mandated requirements for the Voter Registration Database to begin immediately while the Stakeholder Committee continued to concurrently on the scope of work for Phase II (non-HAVA related VRDB enhancements and the integration of other databases and the VRDB into one integrated statewide election information system).

Q40. What was the contract value for the Phase I?

A40. The contract value for Phase I of the VRDB is a not-to-exceed amount of \$763,280.

Q41. Can a company submit 2 responses? For example in response 1 the company can prime the response and in second they will be sub to the other vendor?

A41. The Consultant should submit only one proposal on the most favorable terms which the Consultant can propose. The Consultant, if not chosen as a Contractor, can be a sub-contractor (subject to the approval of the Agency) to another Consultant who may be awarded the contract.

Q42. For all the points mentioned in the RFQQ for evaluation there is “less than equal to” (\leq) used. Can the points be changed during the evaluation time or the points mentioned in the RFQQ will remain same?

A42. The points mentioned in the RFQQ indicate a maximum number of points allocated for evaluation purposes – for example, Experience of the Consultant will be scored up to 35 points, but not higher than that. The maximum number of points for each evaluation category will not change during the evaluation time, and can only be changed with an amendment to the RFQQ prior to the deadline.

Q43. Our company would have signed thousands of contracts during the last 5 years which could be considered similar in nature to these projects. Do we need to list all of them or just mention some of them to give a fair idea of our capabilities?

A43. No, not every single similar contract a Consultant has had needs to be listed, but those which most closely relate to the Consultant's ability to perform the requested services should be included.

Q44. What is the formula for calculating the points for the price section under this bid?

A44. This information is not available to Consultants during the procurement process.

Q45 There are 75 points for the qualifications section and under which 35 points are distributed to the experience of the consultant. How are these points distributed for the parameters mentioned in the RFQQ?

A45. This information is not available to Consultants during the procurement process.

Q46. This question is based on assumption that if all the responses under the Schedule commit to the requirements how would the evaluation done as most of this parameter will be done?

A46. This information is not available to Consultants during the procurement process.

Q47. The RFQQ mentions travel. Will there be additional travel beyond the three trips back and forth to Olympia, and about how much would be involved?

A47. Consultants can respond in narrative form by identifying what travel costs they would need to be reimbursed for, and at what rates. Some consultants may include travel costs in their overall consulting rate.

Q48. What is the difference between the deliverable of Phase I & Phase II?

A48. Phase I of this project developed a database that will meet the minimal HAVA requirement by the federal deadline of January 1, 2006. Phase I also implemented a platform for exchanging data with the county election management systems incorporating Web services, standardized XML data packets, and the state's InterGovernmental Network (IGN). Phase I also implemented a platform for exchanging data between the Agency and other state agencies. The technologies employed in Phase I will be employed in Phase II (as outlined in the RFQQ) and are specified

elsewhere in the RFQQ.

Phase II of this project is designed to enhance the database to allow the collection and dissemination of data between the 39 counties, the Agency and other state agencies. The information gathered will be available to local election officials, media, candidates, and the public via web pages hosted by the counties and/or the Agency. Please refer to the Project Estimated Effort Matrix for additional requested functionality.

Note: The automatic generation of web content to serve voters in all 39 counties and statewide is a major focus of Phase II, and requires extensive programming of back-end database applications, XML, and web services to provide such content using the specified technologies employed in Phase I. A small amount of work involves static HTML pages.

Q49. Will the experience of Voters Database Registration & Election in different countries be considered as a part of evaluation?

A49. This experience will be considered and evaluated regardless of the country it was obtained in, as long as the Consultant's experience clearly indicates an ability to provide the services requested in the RFQQ.