

Questions and Answers – PS5363 Business Requirements

Date: 2 May 2024

Question 1:

We would like to ask if there is an incumbent providing / provided similar services for this requirement in the past 24 months? If so, can you please provide us with the supplier name, contract value, estimated level of effort, duration (mm/yyyy to mm/yyyy) and is the incumbent invited?

Answer 1:

Yes, these services were provided by Coradix Technology Consulting Ltd., contract value \$11,653,125 for a period of two years beginning in January 2023; however, that contract was recently terminated.

No, they have not been invited to bid on this opportunity.

Date: 6 May 2024

Question 2:

Do we need to submit the resources resume for all the categories?

Answer 2:

Please refer to Section 4.2(c):

“Resources will not be evaluated as part of this bid solicitation.

Resources will only be assessed after contract award once specific tasks are requested of the Contractor. After contract award, the Task Authorization process will be in accordance with Part 7 – Resulting Contract Clauses, the Article titled “Task Authorization”.

Question 3:

Reference to CM1, we would like to respectfully request the Crown to consider the following acceptable as the current criteria is restricting qualified vendors to pursue this opportunity.

- a. Grants and Contributions system(s) support; **AND/OR**
- b. Application Development, Application Maintenance or Application Support.

Answer 3:

No, Grants and Contributions experience is required. CM1 will remain the same.

Question 4:

Reference to CM1, we would like to respectfully request the Crown to consider the following acceptable as the current criteria is restricting qualified vendors to pursue this opportunity.

- a. Grants and Contributions system(s) support **OR** Digital Transformation Projects; **AND**
- b. Application Development, Application Maintenance or Application Support.

Answer 4:

No, Grants and Contributions experience is required. CM1 will remain the same.

Question 5:

For CM2 and CM3, will the Crown accept similar TBIPS Categories that are mapped to 70 % of the Category Tasks listed in the Statement of Work for each Category?

Answer 5:

Yes, Canada will accept similar TBIPS categories that are mapped to 70% of the tasks in the SOW for both CM2 and CM3. Please see Amendment #2.

Date: 7 May 2024

Question 6:

Can the Crown confirm that the intent of CM1 Corporate Experience is to evaluate one Grant and Contribution System(s) support reference and one separate and independent Application Development, Application Maintenance or Application Support reference? Therefore, separating the two client references from CM1 a. from CM1 b. and confirming that they are not required to be the same client reference and CM1 b does not have to be a Grants and Contribution reference.

Answer 6:

That is correct. The experience can be demonstrated either by one contract demonstrating both requirements, or two contracts each demonstrating one of the requirements, as long as both requirements are met.

Question 7:

It is our experience, that many clients separate the implementation of Microsoft Power Platforms and Dynamics 365. As a result, would the Crown alter CR2 to read: 20 points - The bidder will receive 20 points for migration to Microsoft Power Platforms and/or Dynamics 365?

Answer 7:

Yes, CR2 will be changed. Please see Amendment #2.

Question 8:

Would the Crown consider changing CM2 to allow a maximum of four (4) Client Reference Contracts to increase competition on a demanding RFP response?

Answer 8:

Yes. Please see Amendment #2.

Question 9:

Is there currently, or has there been within the last 24 months, an incumbent performing the duties described in the solicitation? If so, can you please provide the name(s) of the incumbent company, the contract duration(s), and the total contract value(s)?

Answer 9:

Please see Answer 1.

Question 10:

Due to the complexity of preparing a response to this solicitation and the substantial number of bids currently out to tender we would like to request a two-week extension to the solicitation closing date to ensure that vendors are able to submit high quality responses that provide the best value to the Crown.

Answer 10:

The solicitation date will be extended to 27 May 2024. No further extension will be granted.

Date: 8 May 2024

Question 11:

Reference to CM1: Could you please confirm the bidder needs to claim 2 projects with combine value of at least \$2M (Canadian, including taxes)?

Answer 11:

The bidder must provide “a maximum of two” contracts, the value of one, or two together, being at least \$2M.

Question 12:

CR2 asks for Bidders to demonstrate that the work delivered included migration of platforms. It awards points based on the following scale:

- 20 points – The Bidder will receive 20 points for migration to Microsoft PowerPlatform and Dynamics 365, or
- 10 points – The Bidder will receive 10 points for migration to Salesforce platform, or
- 10 points – The Bidder will receive 10 points for migration to ServiceNow platform.

It is our interpretation that Bidders are expected to show experience in each of these three types of migrations in order to score full points. In our experience, performing migrations of platforms regardless of the type of platform being migrated generally follows the same process. To ensure that the Crown receive a competitive number of proposals, we would suggest that the Crown amend CR2 to follow a similar scoring structure as CR1 or CR3 which awards X amount of points per contract.

Answer 12:

Bidders can get the full 40 points by providing two contracts that migrate to Microsoft PowerPlatform and/or Microsoft Dynamics 365.

Question 13:

Given that the corporate requirements ask for signed client contact reference forms, we would like to request a 2-week extension to allow our clients adequate time to review and request any needed modifications in the completed forms before signing them?

Answer 13:

The form requires the “Signature of authorized representative of the Bidder”. There is no requirement for the Bidder’s client’s signature.

Question 14:

Due to the complexity of the bid and the short turnaround time, and the other INFC bid that is currently in process, we respectfully request an extension to May 24th, 2024 for INFC-2024/25-**PS5363**, to allow bidders time to compile and submit a competitive response of value to Infrastructure Canada.

Answer 14:

The deadline has been extended to 27 May 2024.

Question 15:

We respectfully request a one-week extension for the bid closing date, citing the complexity of the bid and the significant resources required.

Answer 15:

The deadline has been extended to 27 May 2024.

Question 16:

Regarding Appendix F to Annex A – Additional Financial Information for Proposed Resources on page 57, which is asking for financial breakdown on direct costs, overhead, and profit at the time of Draft TA Response:

- a) Can the Crown please describe how the information disclosed in Appendix F to Annex A will be considered in the evaluation of Task Authorization responses?
- b) Can the Crown please describe the criteria for determining if the information disclosed in Appendix F to Annex A is providing value to the Crown? Currently there is no detail provided which suggests a hidden evaluation criteria.
- c) Can the Crown please describe how the sensitive information to be provided in Appendix F to Annex A will be protected? Who will have access to this information?

Answer 16:

Note that Appendix F to Annex A is a new requirement for the TBIPS Supply Arrangement mandated by Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC).

- a) The information will not be considered in the evaluation of TA responses; however, it is a new requirement of the TBIPS SA.
- b) The information will not be considered during any part of the evaluation; however, it must now be submitted as per the new instructions in the TBIPS SA.
- c) Only the Procurement Officer and Contracting Authority will have access to this information.

Question 17:

The bidder community is waiting for the Crown's answers to questions and will then require additional time to make amendments to their proposals based on your answers, please provide a two-week extension to this solicitation. Can the Crown please extend the closing date to May 30th to allow Bidders sufficient time to respond to your RFPs?

Answer 17:

Please refer to Amendment #2.

Question 18:

We respectfully request an extension to the closing date to Thursday May 30, 2024.

Answer 18:

Please refer to Amendment #2.

Question 19:

Currently under the Instructions to Bidders on Page 64 of the RFP, Item 7. states “ To be considered, each Client Reference Contract provided must: a. Have had a minimum contract duration of 12 months; b. Have been completed within the five years preceding the issuance date of this solicitation, or if the Client Reference Contract is ongoing, have been in place for a minimum of 12 months preceding the issuance date of this solicitation;”

It is limiting to require that contracts be in place for a minimum of 12 months, as this restricts Bidders who have relevant Government of Canada contracts awarded within the last year from using this recent experience. Further, as long as the Bidder can demonstrate that the work was delivered through the contract, ongoing contract duration should not be a limiting factor.

Given this, would the Crown please accept contracts with contract periods exceeding twelve (12) months but that have been in place for a minimum of six (6) months so as to not disqualify companies with recent and relevant experience providing the services requested by INFC?

Answer 19:

No, INFC feels that 12 months better demonstrates that the Contractor is successfully addressing its clients requirements. The Instructions to Bidders will remain the same.

Question 20:

For CM2 can the Crown please confirm that it will accept the mapping of similar or equivalent TBIPS categories and level as long as they meet 70% TBIPS tasks. Clients often use interchangeable categories and as such the categories have similar tasks that are equivalent to other categories.

Answer 20:

Please refer to Amendment #2.

Date: 10 May 2024

Question 21:

In Question and Answer #5 (released May 2, 2024), Canada confirmed that it will accept similar TBIPS categories that are mapped to 70% of the tasks in the SOW for both CM2 and CM3. However, the associated Amendments to CM2 and CM3 state that task mapping to the SOW will be allowed for non-TBIPS categories. Would Canada please update the wording of the amendment as follows:

CM2: For a non-TBIPS resource category or a similar TBIPS category, the billable hours must be for work performed that matches at least 70% of the TBIPS resource category tasks or at least 70% of the tasks listed in the SOW for each category.

CM3: For a non-TBIPS resource category or a similar TBIPS category, the work performed must match at least 70% of the TBIPS resource category tasks or at least 70% of the tasks listed in the SOW for each category.

Answer 21:

Please refer to Amendment #3.

Date: 13 May 2024

Question 22:

May we ask the total number of resource required for this bid solicitation?
Do we need to provide 7 resource or just 1 for each category?

Answer 22:

Please refer to Section 4.2(c):

(a) **Resources evaluated at TA Stage:**

Resources will not be evaluated as part of this bid solicitation.

Resources will only be assessed after contract award once specific tasks are requested of the Contractor. After contract award, the Task Authorization process will be in accordance with Part 7 – Resulting Contract Clauses, the Article titled “Task Authorization”.

Question 23:

We respectfully request a one-week extension for the bid closing date, citing the complexity of the bid and the significant resources required.

Answer 23:

No further extensions will be granted.

Question 24:

We would like to request further clarification on Answer #12 and the corresponding Amendment to CR2. If a Bidder references two (2) contracts for CR2, which each involved a migration to Microsoft Power Platform, would the Bidder be awarded full points (40/40)?

Answer 24:

Yes.

Question 25:

Within the Certification of availability of Personnel if a resource is on multiple contracts and/or task authorizations the crown is asking vendors to fill in the Appendix E to Annex A form. Within this disclosure the crown is requesting detailed information about the contracts. Our firm has legal, regulatory and

contractual duties of confidentiality to our clients, which includes those set out in the Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario's Code of Conduct. In addition to limitations based on vendors' duties of confidentiality, and the feasibility to keep track of this information especially if other contracts are with other vendors we are unable to provide precise information as to any other work of each resource on the task authorization throughout the duration of the project. Based on these limitations to vendors we would ask that this form be removed or revised accordingly. At the time of contracting, resources are required to agree that they will inform our firm of any changes to their employment at any new entities during their period of contract so that we do have a sense of that resource's overall workload.

In addition within this certification the crown is stating that "The Contractor acknowledges that it is fully responsible and financially responsible for full reimbursement of all costs charged to Canada for this resource, if the resource requests hours relating to this task authorization that have also been billed under any other contract or task authorization for the same hours." Our firm has implemented the new timesheet requirements as laid out by PSPC to track specific hours worked for resources and submit timesheets at the time of invoicing for the crown's review. If a resource is working on another task authorization with a different client and under another vendor, however, we would not have line of sight to what hours that resource is billing on that work. As such, our firm cannot accept legal and financial responsibility in this scenario. We would ask the crown remove this requirement.

Given the complexity of the response, we respectfully request a one week extension to June 3, 2024.

Answer 25:

INFC cannot remove either of these requirements at this time as they are mandated by PSPC in the new TBIPS RFP template; however, based on your comment we will bring this to their attention and request a way forward.

No further extensions will be granted.

Date: 14 May 2024

Question 26:

Please refer to Q&A #8 - it was asked if bidders may use four (4) reference contracts to demonstrate the required number of billable days in CM2 to which the Crown agreed and pointed bidders to Amendment #2. It does not appear that this change was captured in Amendment #2, as such, we respectfully request that CM2 be amended to reflect this change in the criterion.

Answer 26:

Please refer to Amendment #4.

Date: 16 May 2024

Question 27:

For CM1, Bidders are requested to provide a maximum of two contracts with a cumulative contract value of \$2M (Canadian, including taxes). However, the Client Reference Contact Information Form (Attachment 4 to Part 8) asks for Total contract value (excluding Applicable Taxes and not including amendments).

Please confirm that Attachment 4 to Part 8 should be amended to read "Total contract value (including Applicable Taxes and including amendments)".

Answer 27:

The Client Contact Reference Information form is part of the TBIPS template as a means to obtain information regarding the reference contracts and is not part of the evaluation. Please ensure the value of the reference contract(s) meets the requirement stated in CM1.

Question 28:

Rated criterion CR2 requires bidder's to demonstrate that the work included migration of platforms to Salesforce platform. Please confirm that the Crown will accept a contract involving a SharePoint on-premises migration to SharePoint Online, to ensure that bidder's are able to demonstrate a wider range of experience with the specific technology.

Answer 28:

Canada will not accept migration from SharePoint on-prem to SharePoint Online; however, to clarify, Bidders can use any combination of reference contracts to attain the full 40 points, e.g. two contracts with migration to Dynamics 365 or four contracts with migration to ServiceNow, etc.

Date: 17 May 2024

Question 29:

CM1 indicates that bidders should provide contracts with a cumulative value of \$2M (Canadian, including taxes). However, the table provided in "ATTACHMENT 4 TO PART 8 CLIENT CONTACT REFERENCE INFORMATION" indicates that the contract value provided should be "excluding Applicable Taxes and not including amendments".

Will the Crown provide clarity as to whether contract values should include applicable taxes or not?

Since many larger contracts span multi years and typically are comprised of an initial contract year with option years and each contract period (initial and each option) is separately funded, many larger value contracts have an initial value that is often as little as one third of the expected value. As such, will the Crown consider including option periods and associated amended contract values for options that have been invoked at time of bid submission in total contract values for referenced projects?

Answer 29:

For CM1, the contract value required is the current contract value, including any options that have already been exercised and including taxes. The Client Contact Reference Information form, which is part of the TBIPS template provided by PSPC, requests the initial contract value. INFC understands that the values will be different from one another. Note that if requested, the Bidder must provide a copy of the reference contract.