

RFP Review Checklist

State: _____ Project Name: _____

Date Submitted: _____

_____ Title Page _____ Cover Letter

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Requirements for an RFP

An RFP may address one or more of the following areas: planning activities and documents, software development, quality assurance, equipment, operations, maintenance, training, and other services. This section uses the term “system” to refer to all of the above products and services.

The RFP shall comply with Federal regulations that require “to the maximum extent practicable, open and free competition.” The State agency shall submit RFPs for FNS approval that contains the following items, as applicable to the scope of the proposal. (Note: Additional items may be required by individual State procurement laws and regulations.)

Introduction and Overview

The Introduction and Overview shall present the purpose and scope of the proposed system.

_____ Definition and background information to orient the reader

_____ Reference/include pertinent documentation (the proposed system)

_____ Organizational responsibilities

_____ Agency(s)/Program(s) that will use the system

_____ Relationship(s) of proposed system to agency function and to other systems and organizations

_____ Major objectives of the proposed system (e.g. improved service delivery, accountability, operational efficiency)

_____ Expected useful life of the proposed system

_____ Type of contract anticipated (e.g. fixed price, cost reimbursement)

_____ Preferred method of payment for equipment (rental, lease, purchase)

_____ Procurement Schedule (not the anticipated *project* schedule) with realistic time frames for pre-proposal conferences, Q&As, proposal deadline, benchmarking, evaluation, date of award, contract negotiations and initiation of work.

_____ Qualifications – how vendors are qualified to do business with the State agency

Current Processing Environment

The RFP shall briefly describe the current IS.

- _____ Current data processing organization
- _____ Existing methods, procedures, systems, applications that the proposed system will support, supplement, change or replace
- _____ Existing hardware configurations and components
- _____ Operating system(s), system utility routines, database management, applications development, and other software currently in use
- _____ Portions of current system environment that are expected to remain in place and interface with the new system, and portions that will be replaced

Workload Data

The RFP shall briefly analyze current and projected workload statistics.

- _____ Statistics for such workload types as:
 - Timesharing sessions or connections
 - Online transactions
 - Batch jobs
 - Demand jobs
- _____ Indicate volumes in terms of:
 - Regular and peak loads
 - Daily, weekly and monthly processing schedules
 - Production vs. development environments, if applicable

_____ Provide an incremental growth forecast for various workload data over the expected life of the system

New System Environment

The RFP should describe State agency's expectations of the new IS and detail all of the requirements identified under General System Design. If a general system design was developed for the IAPD, it may be attached in the RFP.

- _____ Itemize improvements that the agency expects to gain
 - New capabilities
 - Upgraded existing capabilities
 - Elimination of deficiencies
- _____ Illustrate proposed data flow and overall view of planned capabilities

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- _____ Functions required in qualitative and quantitative terms
 - _____ Requirements for interfaces with the operating environment (equipment, communications network, software)
 - _____ Itemized equipment required (and statement that any equipment prices offered must be equal to or lower than those currently available to the state from the same vendor under other contracts.)
 - _____ Relationship of proposed equipment with other systems
 - _____ Proposed integration of new equipment with currently installed equipment state expects to retain
 - _____ Requirements for provision of operating software, performance of operating software, and implementation of operating software modifications and revisions
 - _____ Database management requirements
 - _____ Security and privacy requirements
 - _____ Safeguards against fraud, waste, and abuse
 - _____ Performance requirements
 - Data and accuracy standards (mathematical, logical, legal, transmission)
 - Data validation
 - Timing (response time and processing time)
 - Flexibility in design to provide interfaces with other software and hardware and allow for future growth, changes and improvements
 - _____ Requirements of the system for:
 - Throughput requirements
 - Storage capacity
 - Transaction, input/output volumes, frequency
 - Telecommunications transmission rates
 - Data or processing sequencing requirements
 - Timing or turnaround restrictions
 - _____ Other performance requirements (stated to assure open competition)
 - _____ Commitment to OSI standards to minimize negative effects of proprietary systems
 - _____ Constraints and limitations in terms of program requirements, organization, and cost
 - _____ Offered solutions should use tried and tested state-of-the-art technology (unless a unique, untested option is specifically sought)
 - _____ Clearly delineate between mandatory requirements and optional features sought
 - _____ Bidders must disclose any proprietary tools needed to read or modify system code
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_____ Bidders must disclose cost history/trend of licensing fee changes for any products proposed which involve such fees, such as Oracle

_____ Bidders library (& cost of copying/right to photocopy)

Solicitation Instructions and Conditions

The RFP shall describe specific procurement processes and requirements related to the submission of proposals and itemize all conditions that will be imposed in the resulting contract.

_____ Issuing office and agency manager responsible for procurement

_____ Submission requirements, such as

- Time and date proposals due
- Office to which proposals must be sent
- Number of copies required
- How proposals must be separated and sealed

_____ Details on additional events and processes, such as

- Pre-proposal conference
- Presentations/demonstrations
- How questions may be submitted, when and how State will respond
- Rejection of proposals
- Late proposals
- Period of validity for proposals

_____ Standards for Subcontractors; stipulation that subs are the responsibility of the prime

_____ Contract termination provisions/procedures (both parties)

_____ Performance bond requirements

_____ Performance expectations, prescribed remedies and penalties that protect the State in the event of a failure in performance by the vendors

_____ “State and FNS reserve royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use and authorize others to use for Federal Government purposes, the copyright in any software and associated documentation developed under the resulting contract.”

_____ Contract must assure FNS access to the system during design, development, and operation and to pertinent cost records of contractors and subs as FNS considers necessary

_____ Contractor must sign contract w/ clause prohibiting discrimination against employees on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, and national origin.

_____ No Federal funds may be used for lobbying

_____ Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Debarment Act

- _____ State's standard procurement clauses (see "other" below)
- _____ Any additional conditions applicable to the selected bidder
- _____ Contract period
- _____ Turnover provision or non-transferability
- _____ EEO provisions
- _____ Notice to Cure
- _____ Hold harmless
- _____ Force Majeure
- _____ Procedure to resolve disputes
- _____ Governing law/jurisdiction
- _____ Taxes
- _____ Modification and renewal clause
- _____ Whole RFP may be canceled
- _____ Subject to availability of Federal funds
- _____ Right to waive technicalities
- _____ Precedence of documents (RFP outranks proposal)
- _____ Bidder may not publicize
- _____ Insurance
- _____ State may contact secondary references
- _____ Conflict of Interest
- _____ Confidentiality
- _____ Contractor must disclose if they've ever been terminated (for "cause" or for "convenience")
- _____ Any tasks that must be done on site vs. at contractor's offices
- _____ Alternative proposals allowed or not allowed
- _____ State's right to negotiate "best and final"

_____ Bidders prohibited from contacting state staff other than procurement office

_____ Other system contractors or providers with whom bidder must agree to cooperate

Proposal Structure and Content

The RFP shall provide a description of the format and organization for the technical and business proposals.

_____ Require a statement, including personnel background and experience information, of the contractor's proposed project staff.

_____ Require a statement of corporate financial resources, a history of prior involvement in similar projects, and information regarding pending litigation, debarment or suspension

Require bidders to provide a line-item cost statement, covering both development and operational costs, for the expected life of the system

_____ Provide details on general proposal appearance and organization

_____ Include a listing and description of all attachments, supplements, and other supporting documentation required

_____ Provide copies of all specific forms, charts, and worksheets that the bidder is required to submit for both the technical and business proposals

_____ Headings and Titles (do not construe content)

_____ Organization and flow

- Does the document demonstrate an understanding of FNS requirements?

_____ References match within the document

- Do dates and dollar figures in text coincide with schedule or budget?
- Do text references to figures and appendices coincide with their titles?
- Have inconsistencies been eliminated?

_____ Integrity of technical information (Have needs been sufficiently articulated?)

Personnel Requirements

_____ Key project personnel (contractor) clause

- State gets to decide who is "key"
- State's right to approve replacements
- Requirement that bidder disclose all other project assignments and their timeframes of any staff proposed for this project
- State can reserve the right to apply liquidated damages if key personnel remain with the contractor but are not assigned to this project after they are proposed
- State cannot prevent termination of employees by the contractor, but can have stipulations on replacements

- Replacements must meet or exceed qualifications of proposed staff

_____ Contractor personnel résumés

Statement of Work

Remember that the Implementation RFP requires additional information than the Planning RFP.

Desired Schedule

_____ Organization and flow (Do the timetable and expected outcomes make sense?)

Contract Deliverables

The RFP shall provide a detailed summary of expectations and requirements during the life of the contract.

_____ Products and services the state expects contractor to deliver

_____ Explain project phasing and how phases relate to deliverables

_____ Allow for incremental installation of equipment where appropriate

_____ Identify documentation and operation standards expected

_____ Requirements for user training, caseload conversion, and system implementation and acceptance when applicable

_____ Stipulate contractor's responsibility for deliverables

_____ Require a schedule of proposed work with defined milestones and dates or timeframes

_____ State the review and approval period for each deliverable

_____ State review and approval times for deliverables (Caution: avoid blanket statements such as “all deliverables will be reviewed within 10 days of submission”—some deliverables are huge, and sometimes several are delivered simultaneously. Look for distinctions or an escape clause to the general statement.)

Installation, Conversion, Maintenance, and Personnel Requirements

The RFP shall address specific support requirements for the startup phase, system transition, routine operations, maintenance, and system changes.

_____ Location of the service or product to be delivered

_____ Site conditions and limitations

_____ Bidder must provide configuration details regarding space, weight, size, and other physical requirements for the system

- _____ Who is responsible for site preparation
- _____ Require a plan/schedule for orderly delivery, install and testing of equipment
- _____ State's requirements for parallel processing, phased implementation, caseload conversion, and uninterrupted service to users and/or clients

Requirements for data and application conversion or reprogramming

- _____ Responsible party and cost for conversion or reprogramming
- _____ Who provides space, facilities and system support to contractor staff?
- _____ Require a conversion plan including: issues, requirements, tasks, services, facilities, equipment, and personnel
- _____ Require a test plan including, but not limited to: unit testing, integration testing, performance testing, end-to-end testing, UAT, and regression testing
- _____ Training requirements – skills to be taught, number of users, location
- _____ Documentation requirements – user manuals, operating instructions, design descriptions; standards, numbers of copies
- _____ Specify operational use time in terms of equipment availability and minimum downtime
- _____ Requirements for on-site maintenance, on-call, and availability of replacement parts
- _____ Require onsite field modification of equipment on the same basis as furnished to other customers
- _____ Any need for operations or facilities management to be part of the contract?
- _____ Any need for additional hardware, software, maintenance or support?
- _____ Specify the period of availability for services required
- _____ Specify minimum personnel and experience requirements for development, maintenance, facilities management, or other contractor staff
- _____ Provide estimates of the level of effort anticipated in terms of person years or other reasonable indicators
- _____ Describe resources the state will make available

Functional Requirements Document (FRD) – Defines the proposed system and documents system goals, objectives, and programmatic requirements and describes what the new system and/or hardware should do.

Definitions are broken down into functional components in a logical sequence with proposed inputs, outputs, and processes.

_____ Describe how the bidder proposes to develop or meet the proposed functional requirements.

Management Plan

The RFP shall describe project oversight that will be provided by the State and the contractor reporting requirements.

- _____ State the functional title of the State Project Manager to whom the contractor will report
- _____ Type and frequency of expected project status reports
- _____ Plan for state review and approval of work performed
- _____ Billing method contractor is to use to ensure identification of costs for each Federal and State program
- _____ State vs. Contractor responsibilities

Evaluation Criteria of Proposals

The RFP shall provide a description of the method and criteria for evaluating the technical and business proposals.

- _____ Describe the method the State will use to evaluate proposals
- _____ Provide details on requirements for benchmarks and system demonstrations and on how the results will be factored into the evaluation process
- _____ Specify evaluation criteria and evaluation factor weight distribution
- _____ Indicate not only how points will be awarded for both technical approach and total cost, but also the weight that will be given to each of the two proposal components
- _____ Do the evaluation criteria specify geographic location? When contracting for architectural and engineering (A/E) services, geographic location may be a selection criteria provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms to ensure full and open competition.

Contract Award Procedures

The RFP shall provide a description of the method for negotiating and awarding technical and business proposals.

_____ Describe the general contract negotiation and award process, which includes:
Issuing letters of intent

- Negotiating contract language, if necessary, and
- Signing the contract
- Access to system documentation / bidders library

- _____ Limitations/stipulations imposed on all bidders, such as
 - Data disclosure and confidentiality
 - Cost of preparing proposals