TO: ALL OFFERORS

FROM: SHANNON WROBEL
STATE CONTRACT PROCUREMENT OFFICER

SUBJECT: ADDENDUM TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO.:
GSS19853-SEARCH, SEARCH PLATFORM FOR DELAWARE WEBSITES

ADDENDUM # 1

May 29, 2019

The purpose of this addendum is to answer questions received regarding the solicitation.

1. What should I do next?

In order to be considered for award a proposal in response to the solicitation, taking into consideration all of the requirements must be submitted by the bid due date.

2. Although I am very interested in the bid that you reached out to us about, but I believe we would like to approach it as a subcontractor to a Prime Contractor. I see on page 27 of RFP that you are looking for Veteran Owned Small Business which I’m sure is why you reached out to us initially. We are current and actively pursuing our renewal for our VOSB. So, I guess my question is can we act as a subcontractor? And, is there a way for me to reach out to the staffing agency awarded the work?

The solicitation is open to all vendors; with no preference given to a diverse business. Someone bidding on the contract could utilize a subcontractor; identifying them through the subcontractor form, Attachment 6.
3. Where are the data attributes housed at the moment?

   Mostly HTML and PDF.
   Second tier: Word, Powerpoint.
   Third tier: some video files (mp4 and wmv).
   Other file types are rare.

4. Are you wanting to maintain/upgrade your existing legacy system to meet your business requirements?

   Not exactly. Our current system is cloud based and is not ‘legacy’. We have outlined our business requirements for the new contract in the request for proposal. We are open to commercial-off-the-shelf solutions.

5. Is there a reason why you don’t want to change the code language?

   We have not expressed this.

6. Are there multiple databases? If so, how many?

   There is one cloud platform that we currently use. The only distinction needed is that we need a global search and individual site searches across our 400+ domains.

7. Are you looking to migrate the multiple databases into one?

   There is one cloud platform that we currently use. The only distinction needed is that we need a global search and individual site searches across our 400+ domains.

8. Is this a FFP or T&M contract offering?

   We are looking for a fixed monthly price for the term of the contract.

9. Section number- C, Criteria Weight, Paragraph number – Paragraph 1, Page number- Page 11

   The qualifications and experience of the persons to be assigned to this effort including prior experience in similar scope and content. The ability to meet the level of support stated in the scope of work. The functionality of the service offered, and the ability to meet the detailed requirements identified in the scope of work.

   Please confirm you are looking for product and no services are needed to implement besides for training of overall solution?

   Yes, a commercial off-the-shelf product. Services needed would be training and support, but our internal team would do the actual implementation.
10. Section number- I, Overview, Paragraph number – 1st paragraph, Page number- 1

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals Date: June 11, 2019 3:00 PM (Local Time)

Is the State of Delaware GSS open to changing the due date from June 11th, 2019 by 3pm to a later date?

No. Bids are due no later than 3:00 pm local time June 11, 2019.

11. P43 1 - D

D. BACKGROUND
In 2016, GIC wanted better control and analytics than what our current search solution provided at the time. We researched and found a new cloud-based search provider, and started to use this platform for our new sites and redesigned sites. However, this company was bought by a separate company, and during the transition changed their pricing model. The new pricing structure would increase our cost multifold. Therefore, we need to request bids for site search options.

a. What is your budget on this project?

We prefer to not exceed $75,000.00 annually.

b. Who is your current vendor?

Swiftype.

c. Who bought this vendor?

Elastic Search Inc.

d. How much was the State paying the current vendor?

$24,000.00 - $48,000.00 per year based on usage

e. What was the cost after the multifold increase?

Three to four times more than current pricing, also due to increase in usage and traffic.

f. What is the name of the product (currently in use)?

Swiftype.
G. CUSTOMER SERVICE
The Supplier(s) should provide each of the State and the Contract Users a single point of contact (and a backup) to handle questions or problems that may arise. At least one Customer Support Representative must be available during Supplier’s operating hours. Representatives should be available by email and phone both during and after implementation.

a. What are your operating hours?

   Our team works between 7:30 am - 6:00 pm EST, but we also have staff that must be available around the clock.

b. Do you need support on Weekend as well?

   Weekend support would be limited, other than if there is a severe weather event or statewide emergency which spikes our traffic and use on all of our websites.

c. When do you expect to make a decision and choose a vendor?

   An award is anticipated to be made ninety (90) days after the bids are due.

d. When do you expect to launch with the new chosen vendor?

   The launch of the proposed solution is expected to be no later than July 1, 2020.

13. Section number: V. 7. ii. Paragraph number: 1

   Text of passage being questioned: “Purchase Card - The State of Delaware intends to maximize the use of the P-Card for payment for goods and services provided under contract.”

   We only accept payment via ACH, check, or wire. Would that be an issue?

   Vendors may elect to take minor exceptions to the specifications, terms and conditions of this request for proposal. Refer to section IV: Professional Services RFP Administrative Information, Item B: RFP Submissions, Number 23 Exceptions to the RFP for instructions.
Text of passage being questioned: “Termination for Convenience: The State may terminate this Contract at any time by giving written notice of such termination and specifying the effective date thereof, at least twenty (20) days before the effective date of such termination.”

Due to the nature of these types of projects, we do not offer a termination for convenience option during the agreed-upon terms of our licenses. Is that going to be a deal breaker?

Vendors may elect to take minor exceptions to the specifications, terms and conditions of this request for proposal. Refer to section IV: Professional Services RFP Administrative Information, Item B: RFP Submissions, Number 23 Exceptions to the RFP for instructions.

15. Section number: Attachment 7 Paragraph number: 1 Page number: 34

“Please identify your company’s timeline to implement the solution offered and the steps your company would take to achieve this timeline accurately and on time.”

Is a ballpark estimate along with description of approach acceptable for the RFP response, given we will need more details before formulating an official timeline?

The proposal must contain a timeline with a launch date no later than July 1, 2020 for consideration of award.

16. Section number: Appendix B - SCOPE OF WORK AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS Paragraph number: 4.a. Page number: 45
Text of passage being questioned: “The ability for our agency partners to log in, see only their data, and download/export it.”

#4a p45: Is the data and reports being referred to here talking about analytics data, such as top query terms? Or a different type of data?

Yes and more. See Appendix B section F-4 and F-5 (pages 45 and 46).

17. Section V (Contract Terms and Conditions), page 12, states “As a Service subscription license costs shall be incurred at the individual license level only as the individual license is utilized within a fully functioning solution. Subscription costs will not be applicable during periods of implementation and solution development prior to the State’s full acceptance of a working solution. Additional subscription license requests above actual utilization may not exceed 5% of the total and are subject to Delaware budget and technical review.”

Please provide the criteria and timeline for the State’s full acceptance of a working solution.

Evaluation criteria is on page eleven (11). The state anticipates making an award ninety (90) days after the bids are due.
18. Section V (Contract Terms and Conditions), page 24, states “The State of Delaware reserves the right to use equipment and material furnished under this proposal prior to final acceptance. Such use shall not constitute acceptance of the work or any part thereof by the State of Delaware”.

Confirm that the State of Delaware is not entitled to use confidential materials prior to final acceptance and/or award.

In consideration to final award, please refer to section IV: Professional Services RFP Administrative Information, Item B: RFP Submissions, Number 11 Confidentiality of Documents. The state is looking to purchase a commercial off-the-shelf product with services limited to training and support necessary for the state staff to implement the solution.

19. Section V (Contract Terms and Conditions), page 12. What is the anticipated contract award date?

The state anticipates making an award ninety (90) days after the bids are due.

20. Section VII (Attachments), page 27. Confirm that the submitted proposal should include attachments 7 and 8.

A complete Attachment 7, and a complete Attachment 8 are both needed in the bid submission.

21. Appendix B (Scope of Work and Technical Requirements). Is the Search Platform for Delaware Websites required to be FISMA-Low or FISMA-Moderate compliant?

Regarding the FISMA rating: All searches will be performed against public accessible webpages. For this reason, a FISMA-Low rating is appropriate.

22. Appendix B, Section D (Background). What is the value of the incumbent Socrata/Tyler Technologies contract?

This question is asking about a separate contract for an open data platform that is not applicable to the search platform that we are asking for in this request for proposal.

23. Appendix B, Section D (Background). Are the technical requirements and scope of work in this solicitation similar to the incumbent Socrata/Tyler Technologies contract?

This question is asking about a separate contract for an open data platform that is not applicable to the search platform that we are asking for in this request for proposal.
24. Section number: B. ITEMS ARE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT, Paragraph number 2, Page number 43

Implementation of the search platform. GIC will need implementation instructions to distribute to agency partners, but the vendor selected is not expected to do implementation on the 400+ domains across the state.

a. Implementation – you request a timeline for implementation, please advise if you would like software installed only or if you would like us to provide optional pricing for the implement the software to one website of your choice and train you to roll out the software across your 400+ websites?

   Our internal team will do the implementation across the 400+ websites. We are anticipating that the solution will be easy to implement, since we will need to roll it out across so many sites. Please feel free to include optional pricing for implementing on one website of our choice and then training for the rest of the sites as you mention.

b. Would you like information on our optional training course?

   Yes, please include as optional information.

25. Section number OVERALL FEATURES, Paragraph number 1, Page number 44

The search engine will work for all sites and applications in multiple environments (and in our Dev, Test, and Production environments), across different browsers, mobile responsive, and be Section 508 and WCAG AA compliant. We are looking for a COTS solution that should provide as many of the following solutions as possible. Service must start on 7/1/20.

Is it your intention to procure a hosted solution or would you consider an on premise solution?

   Either. If it is a hosted solution, then the Cloud Terms and Conditions document applies. If it on premise, the Cloud Terms and Conditions document does not apply.

26. Section number N/A, Paragraph number N/A, Page number N/A, Text of passage being questioned N/A

Has a budget been specified for the project?

   We prefer to not exceed $75,000.00 annually.
27. Section number: 3.b. Paragraph number: 1 Page number: 12

As a Service subscription license costs shall be incurred at the individual license level only as the individual license is utilized within a fully functioning solution. Subscription costs will not be applicable during periods of implementation and solution development prior to the State’s full acceptance of a working solution. Additional subscription license requests above actual utilization may not exceed 5% of the total and are subject to Delaware budget and technical review.

a. Should estimates of licensing costs be included in the initial proposal or should this information be presented at the stage of negotiations with the state?

The costs for any licenses should be factored into the bidder’s monthly charge. There shall be no additional charges for licenses.

b. Is there a budget form that we should use with the submission of the proposal?

Attachment 8 must be utilized to list your company’s monthly cost.

28. Section number: 7.a. Paragraph number: 2 Page number: 14

It may be at the State of Delaware’s discretion as to the location of work for the contractual support personnel during the project period. The State of Delaware may provide working space and sufficient supplies and material to augment the Contractor’s services.

a. Can the bulk of the contract work be conducted remotely?

Yes, but not offshore.

b. What % of work will need to be performed in Delaware?

We do not expect that most of the work from the awarded vendor will need to be performed in Delaware. This is standard language that applies to all contracts. We are seeking a product, not a custom software solution developed from scratch.

c. When will the State of Delaware determine if a local office in Delaware is needed?

An office in Delaware is not needed for this contract.

d. If a local office in Delaware is mandatory, will technical resources and software engineering talent be required to be on site?

An office in Delaware is not needed for this contract.
e. How many resources will need to be there?

   An office in Delaware is not needed for this contract.

f. How often will the resources need to be there?

   An office in Delaware is not needed for this contract.

29. Section number: Appendix B – Section E., Paragraph number: 1, Page number: 44

   The search engine will work for all sites and applications in multiple environments (and in our Dev, Test, and Production environments), across different browsers, mobile responsive, and be Section 508 and WCAG AA compliant. We are looking for a COTS solution that should provide as many of the following solutions as possible. Service must start on 7/1/20.

   a. Is there a preference for free and open source technologies or licensed commercial technologies?

      There is not a preference; we are open to both options.

   b. Can the solution be a mix of custom code and configuration of off the shelf technology?

      Yes, but it doesn’t have to be a mix. We are expecting a product that is off-the-shelf, but could have some customizations to it. We are not expecting a custom solution built from the ground up.

   c. Will upgrading existing hosting platforms be included in the solution?

      No.

   d. What development methodology is expected, Waterfall or SAFe Agile?

      We are expecting a product, not a custom software development. Should any software development be needed, then we would prefer Agile methodology.

   e. What is the primary software for development (e.g. Rational, Jira)?

      We are expecting a product, not a custom software development. Should any software development be needed, then we would prefer Agile methodology.

   f. Does the contractor select the software or does the state?

      This RFP is for the software or product. The state will select from this RFP.
g. How many users or searches are expected to originate from mobile devices such as mobile phones and tablets?

   We expect about half of all searches to be coming from mobile devices. The proposed solution must work with all devices, regardless of usage.

h. What state are the requirements and acceptance criteria?

   The requirements are outlined in Appendix B of the request for proposal. Evaluation criteria is outlined on page eleven (11).

i. What is the expectation to start writing/delivering code?

   We are expecting a product, not a custom software development cycle.

j. Is there a high-level schedule for the base contract? (I.e., What is the estimate for going live and expectation for releases there after? Every 60-90 days, twice a year?)

   We need the search to be ready and launched no later than July 1, 2020.

30. Section number: Appendix B – Section C. Paragraph number: 2 Page number: 43

   GIC works with state agencies, municipalities, and state boards and commissions on their online presence, and each individual website domain includes an internal site search.

   Is the state’s compute architecture spread across multiple private clouds?

   The websites that are in consideration are hosted internally with the central technology agency.
31. Section number: Appendix B – Section E. Paragraph number: 3 Page number: 44

The global search will aggregate content from hundreds of domains using different platforms (some are straight PHP, some are custom CMS, some are .NET, some are Wordpress, there may be other platforms)

Will the solution team have direct access to cloud and compute resources for setup and configuration of the solution?

   The Department of Technology and Information (DTI) will work with the vendor to ensure appropriate access is available, however some actions may require they only be performed by DTI at the direction of the vendor. Vendors are not allowed to logon to any server with admin permissions, perform installation of any item or perform the configuration of any service on the server directly. Once a software or device is on the network they are able to access it through the software/device administration interface but cannot have direct access to any server or network device beyond an administration interface.

32. Section number: 7.d. (General Contract Terms) Paragraph number: 2 Page number: 15

In performance of the contract, the vendor will be required to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, codes, and regulations. The cost of permits and other relevant costs required in the performance of the contract shall be borne by the successful vendor. The vendor shall be properly licensed and authorized to transact business in the State of Delaware as provided in 30 Del. C. § 2502.

Are subcontractors required to have a license?

   The solicitation outlines what the awarded vendor must comply with; as they will be who the State has a legal relationship with.

33. Section number: Appendix B – Section C. Paragraph number: 3 Page number: 43

   Text of passage being questioned: GIC also is in charge of the Delaware.gov (also known as the “portal”) – and the new portal will feature a prominent search bar to access information from all state offices and domains (a growing list of domains – over 400 are expected). We use the Delaware.gov portal as a testing ground for the use of the new tools in order to continually improve government agency websites and use of the internet. It is important for the GIC to stay on the leading edge of internet technology.

   a. What is the current infrastructure of the Delaware home site? AWS? On-Prem? How was it designed for performance and scalability?

      On premise; hosted within the central technology agency. Yes, it was designed for performance and scalability. The search platform itself is scalable in the cloud.
b. What is the current infrastructure of the 400+ domains? How was it designed for performance and scalability?

The infrastructure uses a fully redundant three tier architecture based in a virtual machine environment which enables the quick addition of resources to meet demand. It is further fronted by a series of load balancing proxy devices allowing for the distribution of demand across the architecture.

34. Section number: Appendix B – Section D. Paragraph number: 4 Page number: 43

Our query counts have been growing in recent months as we have been implementing the current search across agency websites over the last few months. For future usage, we are looking at a potential of 400+ domains, more than 600,000 documents, and 25 million search queries each year.

a. What types of documents and how many of each? (E.g., PowerPoint, Word, PDF)

Documents also refers to html pages. Most of the content is html and PDF, with some in other formats like PowerPoint and Word. There are some video files (mp4, wmv). Other file types are rare.

b. How many of users do you expect each day, month, year?

The search metrics provided above are just for searches on existing websites. They do not represent individual users or overall site traffic. Site search data has peaks and valleys, depending on the business cycles (i.e. tax or reporting deadlines, licensing timelines, etc). As we are still rolling out new sites using the search platform, we do not have steady search patterns to rely on at this point.

All other terms and conditions remain the same.