

Massachusetts School Building Authority
Request for Responses to Provide IT Software Development and Support Consulting Services
Addendum No. 1: Questions and Answers
MSBA-RFR-ITConsultingServices-2022
August 24, 2022

1. **Question:** Will we be collaborating directly with in-house web developers?

Answer: Yes.

2. **Question:** Is the cost proposal to be submitted separately or as part of the proposal package?

Answer: The cost proposal should be submitted as part of the proposal package.

3. **Question:** In the "Approach to providing services" section, you ask us to address specific timelines. Can you clarify what that's referring to?

Answer: When addressing the "Approach to Providing Services" Respondents do not need to address any specific timelines. Assigned tasks are expected to be completed in an agreed upon timeframe.

4. **Question:** You ask for detailed resumes and profiles and rates of each member of our team who will be involved in the project. Since this is a general consulting services request and not for a specific project, I'm not sure what staff we will need. Can you clarify expectations around the size/scope/needs of the engagement that will help us identify our staffing plan?

Answer: The MSBA is open to entertaining different staffing options depending on qualifications, skills, expertise and the Respondents' proposed solutions. We are anticipating no more than 2-4 qualified resources with collective expertise in the technologies stated in the RFR. The MSBA's final decision will be subject to the best solution for the Authority provided by the Respondents.

5. **Question:** How many Resources are you requesting to address this RFR?

Answer: The MSBA is open to entertaining different staffing options depending on qualifications, skills, expertise and the Respondents' proposed solutions. We are anticipating no more than 2-4 qualified resources with collective expertise in the technologies stated in the RFR. The MSBA's final decision will be subject to the best solution for the Authority provided by the Respondents.

6. **Question:** How long do you need the Resources for?

Answer: The duration of any contract that may result from this RFR will be for one year with three one-year options to renew, at the MSBA's discretion.

7. **Question:** Is there an estimated contractual duration/timeline for the Resource/Team?

Answer: The duration of any contract that may result from this RFR will be for one year with three one-year options to renew, at the MSBA's discretion.

8. **Question:** Can you give us an idea of what the Resource or Team will be responsible for on a daily basis onsite or offsite?

Answer: The desired resource(s) will be responsible for collaborating with the existing MSBA IT staff on tasks associated with software development including design, development, testing, deployment and support as needed. We do not anticipate the need for onsite support as in office work is not required to perform the scope of services set forth in the RFR.

9. **Question:** Do you need 24/7/365 support of the applications hosted in Microsoft Azure?

Answer: No.

10. **Question:** Are there any restrictions with the team's location (Onsite, Offshore, nearshore)?

Answer: The MSBA will accept Responses from Respondents in countries that are legally authorized to conduct business in the United States and are able to connect via a US IP address; however, onshore resources will best meet the business needs of the MSBA. Resources are expected to be available during the MSBA's business hours and off hours as needed for scheduled and unscheduled IT production support.

11. **Question:** Can you provide more context around what would be needed in an onsite setting?

Answer: The MSBA does not anticipate the need for onsite support as in office work is not required to perform the scope of services set forth in the RFR.

12. **Question:** Is there a list of Legacy Applications and Web sites to support?

Answer: The legacy applications consist of a suite of custom designed and developed applications and website(s) to support the MSBA business processes. Additional details of the applications will be provided to the selected Respondent(s).

13. **Question:** Is there a list of projects or tasks identified to be done on these legacy applications?

Answer: Tasks include performing analysis, design, development, testing, and implementation of both enhancements and new features for the current applications as required. Tasks also include performing technology platform version upgrades as needed.

14. **Question:** Are there any specific details of the versions of .NET, Drupal/PHP and any other frameworks used?

Answer: The MSBA is looking for resources with experience with .NET 4.5 and also resources with experience using Drupal versions 8 and above, and PHP versions 7 and above.

15. **Question:** We aren't a certified minority business, but we do subcontract with one. Are any points awarded for this use case?

Answer: The Attachment D, Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Plan Form, has been updated on the MSBA website and COMMBUYS on August 17, 2022. Points will be awarded to Respondents that clearly demonstrate the existence or an intent to develop a relationship with one or more certified diverse businesses. Points awarded will be based on the information provided by Respondents in Attachment D.

16. **Question:** Is this a new contract and if not, please share the last spending of this contract?

Answer: This is a new contract.

17. **Question:** Please clarify if MSBA is looking for “staffing-based” services, or “consulting-based” services or “both” under this contract.

Answer: The MSBA will be evaluating Responses for both staffing and consulting-based services. In either case, the expectation is the resources will be working in collaboration with the current MSBA IT staff.

18. **Question:** Are there any incumbents on the contract? If yes, please share the name of the incumbent?

Answer: No, this is a new contract.

19. **Question:** Please share incumbent’s cost proposal. Please provide the previous rates, and historical spending?

Answer: This is not applicable as this is a new contract.

20. **Question:** Are there any pain points that the MSBA is facing with the current incumbents?

Answer: This is not applicable as this is a new contract.

21. **Question:** Can you share the approximate number of FTEs as per the job title mentioned in the solicitation?

Answer: The MSBA is anticipating no more than 2-4 qualified resources in total with collective expertise in the above technologies. The MSBA’s final decision will be subject to the best solution for the Authority provided by the Respondents.

22. **Question:** Would the MSBA share the job position/s that requires maximum FTEs?

Answer: The MSBA is seeking software developers experienced in the technologies listed in the RFR.

23. **Question:** Please confirm the number of vendors that the MSBA intends to award.

Answer: The MSBA intends to select one or more qualified Respondents to provide the services solicited in this RFR.

24. **Question:** Do we need to sign and submit the MSA along with the proposal?

Answer: Respondents do not need to sign and submit the Master Service Agreement along with the Response; however, the selected Respondent(s) will be required to execute the standard Master Services Agreement upon award of the contract. Respondents are required to specify any exceptions to the Master Services Agreement and to make any suggested counterproposal with their Response. A failure to specify exceptions and/or counterproposals will be deemed an acceptance of the Master Services Agreement's terms and conditions. The MSBA shall not be required to accept any exceptions to the Master Services Agreement.

25. **Question:** To get the advantage points as mentioned in Section C.1. Please confirm if we can use a subcontractor to fulfill the "Supplier Diversity Program"?

Answer: Points will be awarded to Respondents that clearly demonstrate the existence or an intent to develop a relationship with one or more certified diverse businesses. Prime bidders that are certified as an M/WBE, M/WNPO, VBE, SDVOBE, DOBE or LGBTBE may not list themselves or their affiliates as SDP Partners. Points awarded will be based on the information provided by Respondents in Attachment D.

26. **Question:** In the "ATTACHMENT B"- CERTIFICATION STATEMENT, in the section "Certification of Compliance with Massachusetts Child Care Law", we do not fall under any of the mentioned items. Can we respond to the section as "Not Applicable"?

Answer: If you feel you cannot certify compliance, please indicate this in your Response and provide an explanation.

27. **Question:** Please confirm if the cost proposal spreadsheet has to be attached in the Response document or to be sent separately. Also clarify if the cost proposal spreadsheet is exclusive of the set page limit?

Answer: The cost proposal should be submitted as part of the proposal package and is exclusive of the set page limit.

28. **Question:** Currently, how many applications are in asp.net?

Answer: The core set of legacy applications, approximately 15 with varying complexity, are in ASP.NET.

29. **Question:** What version of .Net Framework the current application developed?

Answer: The current version of the .NET Framework is 4.5.

30. **Question:** Currently, how many applications are in drupal platform?

Answer: There is currently one website utilizing a Drupal platform.

31. **Question:** Do you consider wordpress (similar to drupal framework) experience?

Answer: The MSBA is seeking resource(s) specifically with Drupal experience.

32. **Question:** Does the company need to be a Massachusetts registered company or registered anywhere in the USA?

Answer: The company does not necessarily need to be registered in Massachusetts. The MSBA will accept Responses from Respondents in the USA and from countries that are legally authorized to conduct business in the United States and are able to connect via a US IP address; however, onshore resources will best meet the business needs of the MSBA. Resources are expected to be available during the MSBA's business hours and off hours as needed for scheduled and unscheduled IT production support.

33. **Question:** Can the consultant work from a remote office located in the USA?

Answer: Yes.

34. **Question:** Currently, we don't have employees in Massachusetts and for Attachment E investing MA Form have question. Is that going to impact the RFR submission? Or after selection, can company hire staff from Massachusetts?

Answer: A rating of "Not Advantageous" on the Attachment E shall not prevent the MSBA from selecting a Respondent who otherwise demonstrates the knowledge, experience, and capacity to perform the requested scope of services.

35. **Question:** We are MWBE from other state. Still do we need to include other company for Supplier Diversity Program Plan from Massachusetts? What happens if we could not find one before the RFR submission to include as subcontractor? Is that going to impact the RFR submission?

Answer: The Attachment D, Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Plan Form, has been updated on the MSBA website and COMMBUYS on August 17, 2022. Points will be awarded to Respondents that clearly demonstrate the existence or an intent to develop a relationship with one or more certified diverse businesses. Points awarded will be based on the information provided by Respondents in Attachment D. A rating of "Not Advantageous" on this component shall not prevent the MSBA from selecting a Respondent who otherwise demonstrates the knowledge, experience, and capacity to perform the requested scope of services. Respondents that do not complete Attachment D will not receive points under this section.

36. **Question:** The key personnel we have to provide is the staff that will manage the contract or the actual resources that will do the projects?

Answer: The key personnel requested are for all resources that will be working with the MSBA which include the IT resources as well as any hands-on lead/management role running the engagement.

37. **Question:** Is the MSBA looking to fulfill staff augmentation needs or just project-based resources?

Answer: The MSBA is looking to support staff augmentation needs.

38. **Question:** Will the MSBA release projects through task orders or scope of work?

Answer: The MSBA will work with the selected Respondent(s) to determine the best method for documenting services based on the nature of the services being requested.

39. **Question:** In attachment B under Certification of Compliance with Massachusetts Child Care Law, point 1 states "employs fewer than fifty (50) full-time employees" is this referring to employees only in Massachusetts or overall?

Answer: If you feel you cannot certify compliance, please indicate this in your Response and provide an explanation. Please provide a breakdown of your overall employees and those working in Massachusetts.

40. **Question:** If we do not meet some points in Attachment B under the certifications, will that affect our ability to win a contract with MSBA?

Answer: This question would require further review. Please complete this form to the best of your ability. If you feel you cannot certify compliance, please indicate this in your Response and provide an explanation.

41. **Question:** How many vendors is the MSBA looking to award?

Answer: The MSBA intends to select one or more qualified Respondents to provide the services solicited in this RFR.

42. **Question:** Is this a new initiative or is there an existing incumbent? If there is an existing incumbent, could you provide the incumbent information?

Answer: This is a new initiative.

43. **Question:** For Cost, is the MSBA looking for specific positions or overall project costs?

Answer: All Respondents must submit a detailed explanation of the firm's cost proposal for the provision of services requested by this RFR. Respondents must provide a detailed spreadsheet that itemizes the type of fees or expenses expected to be incurred and the basis for the fee or expense (i.e., hourly rate, flat fee, per transaction fee, percentage-based fee, etc.). Respondents must include, as part of its proposed fee, the costs for all incidental expenses including, but not limited to, travel expenses, sustenance, and mobile phones. In addition, all Respondents should submit an hourly rate for each proposed team member for the work included in the Scope of Services as well as additional tasks that may arise from time to time in the provision of the software development and support consulting services.

44. **Question:** Who developed the legacy applications and websites for which we have to provide support in the event of an awarded contract?

Answer: The legacy applications and websites were custom built by internal resources with the assistance of consultants as needed.

45. **Question:** How many projects is the MSBA looking to complete?

Answer: The specific projects and tasks are to be determined based on MSBA prioritization and overall resource allocation.

46. **Question:** Is there an overall allocated budget for this contract?

Answer: The MSBA is prepared to allocate the necessary funds to support the needs requested in this RFR. The MSBA does not currently have a finalized budget and will not be releasing this information as a part of the vendor selection process.

47. **Question:** Will the vendors who developed the legacy applications and websites be allowed to bid on this RFR?

Answer: The majority of the applications were internally developed. The MSBA is not limiting anyone from responding to this RFR.

48. **Question:** Could you kindly grant an extension to the proposal deadline?

Answer: The MSBA has decided to extend the Response deadline to Friday, September 9, 2022 by 12:00 PM EST.

49. **Question:** For the resumes, do we have to provide these for the resources we plan to provide or for staff that will manage the overall contract?

Answer: The MSBA is requesting Respondents provide resumes for all resources that will be working with the MSBA which includes the IT resources as well as any hands-on lead/management role running the engagement.

50. **Question:** If we have to provide resumes for proposed resources, can these be changed if they are no longer available at the time of a potential contract?

Answer: The MSBA expects the resources included in the Response to be the resources assigned. However, the resources can be changed if the initial resources requested are no longer available with the understanding that the new resources have the same or comparable resumes and experiences.

51. **Question:** Who has maintained and supported the current suite of legacy applications and websites?

Answer: Internal MSBA resources have maintained and supported the current suite of legacy applications and websites.

52. **Question:** How many users do the website and applications have?

Answer: There are approximately 500 active users of the MSBA applications. Additional external website usage to be provided to the selected Respondent(s) later as needed.

53. **Question:** How many MSBA IT team members have access to the website and applications?

Answer: Currently less than 10 MSBA IT team members have access to the website and applications.

54. **Question:** Do we have to provide the license to do business in Massachusetts with our submission or can it be provided upon a potential awarded contract?

Answer: By providing a Response and signing the certifications required in the RFR, you are representing that you are legally authorized and licensed to provide the services that are being requested. If there is a unique situation, please note this in your cover letter and we may be able to discuss the matter further.

55. **Question:** How many MSBA IT team members will require training?

Answer: Less than 10 MSBA IT team members will require any training needed as a result of or related to work completed by resources from this RFR.

56. **Question:** Is there any W/S/MBE requirement for this solicitation? If yes, could you please disclose the percentage of participation?

Answer: Respondents that clearly demonstrate the intent to further the development of the business enterprises and organizations listed above or the existence of a relationship which does further those goals may receive favorable consideration. Completion of a Supplier Diversity Program Plan Form (Attachment D) by a Respondent is NOT mandatory for the purposes of the MSBA's review of a Response. However, if a Respondent is a certified SDO business or has an SDO partner, the Respondent should complete the form to the extent possible.

57. **Question:** If we do not provide a Supplier Diversity Program Plan, will we be disqualified or just lose the 5 evaluation points?

Answer: Respondents that do not provide a Supplier Diversity Plan will not receive the five (5) evaluation points. Please note, a rating of "Not Advantageous" on this component shall not prevent the MSBA from selecting a Respondent who otherwise demonstrates the knowledge, experience, and capacity to perform the requested scope of services. Respondents that do not complete Attachment D will not receive points under this section.

58. **Question:** We are MBE certified by NMSDC in California, do we need to be certified by the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office to apply for the 5 points?

Answer: Please complete Attachment D providing information about any related certifications that you or your firm may have and the MSBA will review the information upon receipt. Please note, a rating of "Not Advantageous" on this component shall not prevent the MSBA from selecting a Respondent who otherwise demonstrates the knowledge, experience, and capacity to perform the requested scope of services. Respondents that do not complete Attachment D will not receive points under this section.

59. **Question:** Is it mandatory to provide the copy following certifications at the time of submission?

- a. Certification of Compliance with Massachusetts Child Care Laws

- b. Certification of Compliance with the Revenue Enforcement and Protection Program.
- c. Certification Regarding Companies Doing Business in Northern Ireland.
- d. Certification of Disclosure.
- e. Certification of No Conflicting Relationship.
- f. Certificate Statement Regarding Criminal Actions and Pending Litigation
- g. Certification of Solvency
- h. Certification of Good Standing and Licensure
- i. Statement of Compliance with RFR Requirements
- j. Statement of Confidentiality"

Answer: All Respondents must include the information and documents listed in Section IV. Item 1. of the RFR.

60. **Question:** If the answer is No, will we be in compliance if we just submit the Attachment B?

Answer: The Mandatory Certifications that are listed Section IV. 1. (n.) is referring to the Attachment B. Attachment B must be completed at the time of submission by the Response deadline. Successful completion and submission of Attachment B meets the requirement of Section IV. 1. (n.).

61. **Question:** Do we have to provide a separate document with the written statement for Certificate Statement Regarding Criminal Actions and Pending Litigation?

Answer: The Respondent shall provide a written statement as to the status of any pertinent judgment, criminal action, investigation or litigation under federal law or by any state against the Respondent or registered principals of the responding firm within the year preceding the date of your response or a statement that there are none.

62. **Question:** If we do not comply with any of the options in the Certification of Compliance with Massachusetts Child Care Law, will we be disqualified?

Answer: This question would require further review. Please complete this form to the best of your ability. If you feel you cannot certify compliance, please indicate this in your Response and provide an explanation.

63. **Question:** It is mentioned in the RFP the following: "Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Women Business Enterprise (WBE), Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE), Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVOBE), Disability-Owned Business Enterprise, LGBT Business Enterprise, Minority Nonprofit Organization (M/NPO), or Women Nonprofit Organization (W/NPO) firms are encouraged to submit Responses. " It is referring to companies from Massachusetts or nationwide?

Answer: Please complete Attachment D providing information about any related certifications that you or your firm may have and the MSBA will review the information upon receipt. Please note, a rating of "Not Advantageous" on this component shall not prevent the MSBA from selecting a Respondent who otherwise demonstrates the knowledge, experience, and capacity to perform the requested scope of services. Respondents that do not complete Attachment D will not receive points under this section.

64. **Question:** For the IT Consulting Project, we hope that MSBA has secured the funding. Please confirm.

Answer: The MSBA is prepared to allocate the necessary funds to support the needs requested in this RFR. The MSBA does not currently have a finalized budget and will not be releasing this information as a part of the vendor selection process.

65. **Question:** You are open to use PHP or Drupal as technology. Is there a preference?

Answer: The MSBA currently uses Drupal/PHP as a technology.

66. **Question:** Would you now like to explore CMS? If yes, which one – VIX, WordPress or what?

Answer: The MSBA is not directly exploring new CMS platforms as part of this RFR. However, as noted in the RFR there may be the opportunity for the resource(s) to provide recommendations for potential future enhancements of the systems/technologies included in the RFR at the request of the MSBA.

67. **Question:** Who is your current vendor? Is this RFR a replacement exercise to find a new IT Vendor?

Answer: This is a new contract, and this is not to replace an existing IT vendor.

68. **Question:** From a Support perspective, please list the Support ASKs viz, App Support, Database Support, Content Support, Pics & Video Support etc.

Answer: Currently the MSBA internal IT staff is providing support for the applications and websites included in the RFR. Additional information can be provided to the selected Respondent(s) as needed.

69. **Question:** We are a UTAH HQ firm with our consultants across the USA including Boston, MA. Will this impact your decision because we are not HQ in MA?

Answer: This business model would meet the MSBA business needs, however, please see Attachment E, Invest in Massachusetts which is a standard part of all MSBA procurements.

70. **Question:** Is this a remote project or do you have onsite expectations? Please note, onsite or Boston native resources will be expensive, thus the ASK.

Answer: The MSBA does not anticipate the need for onsite support as in office work is not required to perform the scope of services set forth in the RFR. The expectation is resources will need to be able to connect using a US IP address and resources are expected to be available during the MSBA's business hours and off hours as needed for scheduled and unscheduled IT production support.

71. **Question:** Please share any addendum you have issued

Answer: As stated in the RFR, Respondents are solely responsible for obtaining and completing all required attachments that are identified in this RFR; for regularly checking both COMMBUYS and the MSBA’s website for any addenda or modifications that are subsequently made to this RFR or attachments; for obtaining, reviewing and appropriately responding to any such addenda or modifications to the RFR or attachments; and for acknowledging the receipt of any addenda in the cover letter. The MSBA accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who fail to regularly check for, obtain, review, and appropriately respond to addenda or modifications to the RFR and attachments, and then submit inadequate or incorrect Responses. Respondents are advised to check the MSBA’s website and COMMBUYS to ensure that they have the most recent RFR files. Respondents may not alter (manually or electronically) the RFR language or any RFR component files. Modifications to the body of this RFR, specifications, terms and conditions, which change the intent of this RFR are prohibited and may disqualify a Response.

72. **Question:** Please share the Assessment Criteria based on A) Technical Capabilities B) Past Performance C) Remote Vs Onsite D) Women, Minority, Veteran owned

Answer: The evaluative criteria are listed in Section V.C within the RFR.

73. **Question:** We have understood that you require the following positions associated against each technology mentioned below:

Technology	Role/Position	Level	No. of Positions	Duration
VB.Net	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
C#	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
ASP.Net	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
Microsoft technologies and web configuration in IIS (Web Application)	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
Microsoft Azure hosting environment	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
SQL Server backend and middle tier	Developer/DBA	Intermediate/Senior		
Drupal	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
PHP	Developer	Intermediate/Senior		
UI	Designer/Developer	Intermediate/Senior		

Feel free to suggest any positions not identified in the above table, and also correct those that have not been accurately represented.

Answer: The MSBA is anticipating no more than 2-4 qualified resources in total with

collective expertise in the above technologies. The MSBA's final decision will be subject to the best solution for the Authority provided by the respondents.

END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1