

LOC Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

To: Solicited Vendors for Letter of Configuration (LOC) Number 39612 & 39665, dated April 5, 2012 for the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office and the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (SOS and ITS)

From: Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D.

Date: April 19, 2012

Subject: Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

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The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

Question 1: Are there incumbents for the Secretary of State Positions?

Response: **The services are currently being performed by outside contractors, including Dorger Software and LMS Software.**

Question 2: Are we required to submit candidates for all the positions?

Response: **Vendors are not required to submit candidates for all positions. Please see Item 6.1 of the LOC.**

Question 3: What is the duration for these positions?

Response: **The initial contract period for each position will be from June 11, 2012 through June 10, 2013. Please see Item 7.1 of the LOC.**

Question 4: If the original candidate we submit on April 26 is no longer available on June 11, can we utilize another candidate with the same skills?

Response: No.

Question 5: There is a 46 day delay between the Proposals Due date of April 26, 2012 and June 11, 2012 when the Awarded Work is to Begin. What is State's policy on substitution after award of contract in the event that Candidates submitted in the LOC are no longer available at project start date?

Response: Please see response to Question 4.

Question 6: Section 5.5 of the LOC describes a resource who is a Microsoft .NET Junior-Level Developer/Project Manager. This is a most unusual combination of skills, and it is highly unlikely to find a resource with 3 years of overall IT experience and Project Management skills as well. Can you please give some clarification regarding what type of candidate we should be looking for to fill this role?

Response: In ITS' development environment, developers sometimes fill the roles of both developer and project manager. A portion of ITS' development projects are small, and the project budget doesn't always support multiple resources. The specific business skill set requirement is listed in Item 5.6.3 of the LOC.

Question 7: Under the "GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND"/" BFOCUS Application Support Specialist" section, the paragraph describes in the upper portion a description of the business purpose of the system, etc. In the lower portion of the same paragraph, the LOC seems to provide a description of general types of request/responsibilities the Candidate will need to provide. The text states:

"SOS requires support of BFOCUS/STAR.NET to perform critical and non-critical corrections/modifications to the system to ensure all filings are processed and proper notifications and reporting functions are in place. Proper notifications include email notifications such as acknowledgements and images from successful filings, rejection notifications of failed filings, credit card receipts, ACH payment report, and subscription renewals and expirations. Reporting functions include a variety of reports for customers and internal users including filing staff, customer service reps, and finance. The support will entail, but not be limited to, SQL queries and scripts for data correction and STAR workflow configurations."

Does this mean this "Applications Specialist" will 'generally'/on a normal day, provide services of: A) Setting up system generated emails, for the notification types listed and others as the need arises, B) Report development, and C) SQL scripts for data support/correction, since the role in the LOC was not defined as a 'Developer', rather an "Applications Specialist"?

Response: The applications specialist will provide all of these services.

Question 8: Under the "**GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND**"/" STAR.NET Application Support Specialist" section, the paragraph describes in the upper portion a description of the business purpose of the system, etc. In the lower portion of the same paragraph, the LOC seems to provide a description of general types of request/responsibilities the Candidate will need to provide. The text states:

"SOS requires support of STAR.NET to perform critical and non-critical corrections/modifications to the system to ensure all filings are processed and proper notifications and reporting functions are in place. Proper notifications include email notifications such as acknowledgements and images from successful filings, rejection notifications of failed filings, credit card receipts, ACH payment report, and subscription renewals and expirations. Reporting functions include a variety of reports for customers and internal users including filing staff, customer service reps, and finance. The support will entail, but may not be limited to, SQL queries and scripts for data correction and STAR workflow configurations."

Does this mean this "Applications Specialist" will 'generally'/on a normal day, provide services of: A) Setting up system generated emails, for the notification types listed and others as the need arises, B) Report development, and C) SQL scripts for data support/correction, since the role in the LOC was not defined as a 'Developer', rather an "Applications Specialist"?

Response: Please see response to Question 7.

Question 9: Under the "**GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND**"/" Elections Support Specialist" section, the paragraph describes in the upper portion a description of the business purpose of the system, etc. In the lower portion of the same paragraph, the LOC seems to provide a description of general types of request/responsibilities the Candidate will need to provide. The text states:

"SOS requires support of STAR.NET to perform critical and non-critical corrections/modifications to the system and to ensure all lobbyists are able to register and file statutory reports. The support will entail, but may not be limited to, SQL queries and scripts for data correction and STAR workflow corrections."

Does this mean this "Applications Specialist" will 'generally'/on a normal day, provide services of: A) SQL scripts for data support/correction, and B) Web Form Development to allow the lobbyists to register and file statutory reports, since the role in the LOC was not defined as a 'Developer', rather an "Applications Specialist"?

Response: Please see response to Question 7.

Question 10: Questions 7, 8, and 9 basically are asking what does the State deem to be, in so far as "Roles" and expected "Duties", the difference between the "Developer" and the "Application Specialist"? This could make a difference in so far as "Rates", because of necessary skill sets. Will these three be expected to do actual .NET (VB or C#) development OR implementing system generated emails, Report/Query creation, SQL script creation, etc?

Response: The applications specialist will be expected to provide .NET (VB or C#) development, implement system-generated emails, create reports/queries, create SQL scripts, etc.

Question 11: Under the "GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND"/" Microsoft .NET Developer/Project Manager" section, the paragraph describes in the upper portion a description of the business purpose of IIS/ITS, etc. In the lower portion of the same paragraph, the LOC seems to provide a description of general types of request/responsibilities the Candidate will need to provide. The text states:

"ISS would like to augment the application development team with junior-level and intermediate-level Microsoft .NET developers/project managers with backgrounds in project planning and management, in all phases of the application development life cycle, and with specialized development experience and technical skills using a Microsoft platform."

Will ITS/IIS be doing the actual .NET development thru their existing application development team, and asking the Candidate to perform "Development" skills, as well, OR are they looking for an 'actual' Project Manager?

Response: The emphasis is on development, not project management. All proposed candidates must meet the requirements listed in Items 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10.

Question 12: Is there an incumbent?

Response: There are incumbents for the SOS positions. Please see response to Question 1. The incumbent for the ITS Microsoft .NET Junior-Level Developer/Project Manager position is Michael Strom with Implementation Technologies Consulting, Inc. There is no incumbent for the ITS Microsoft .NET Intermediate-Level Developer/Project Manager position.

Question 13: Is this a new project or a continuation of an existing project?

Response: The SOS roles are being requested to support an existing system/application. The ITS roles are being requested to augment the Development Team. This

team works on a combination of new development projects and maintenance of existing applications.

Question 14: If this is a continuation of an existing project, are the incumbents being considered?

Response: **Yes, proposals including incumbents will be considered.**

Question 15: Can interviews for this position be conducted via telephone or by Skype for non-local candidates?

Response: **If required, onsite interviews will be conducted at either the SOS or ITS office, not via telephone or Skype. Phone interviews are anticipated to occur before any onsite interviews.**

Question 16: If one of our consultants should not be available that we had submitted and we are awarded the bid, will we be able to backfill the same skilled candidates that meet all the requirements?

Response: **Please see response to Question 4.**

Question 17: Are these renewals for existing contractors/incumbents or are these completely new positions? Why are these positions open?

Response: **SOS is seeking to replace end-of-life contracts for their requested positions. Also refer to the responses to Questions 1 and 12.**

Question 18: What is the realistic start date for these positions?

Response: **The anticipated start date for each position is Monday, June 11, 2012. Please see Item 4.5 of the LOC.**

Question 19: If there is any training related to the project for the consultant provided, who pays for the cost?

Response: **SOS and ITS do not expect the need for training of the awarded individuals. Individuals proposed must meet or exceed the minimum experience requirements as outlined in the LOC.**

Question 20: Is there a budget or rate range already established for this position?

Response: **A budget range has not been established for these positions. However, all State Agency budgets are considered public record and may be viewed at www.dfa.ms.gov.**

Question 21: Can you please describe your existing SOS hardware & software environment in detail?

Response: Client machines run Windows XP, Vista, and Windows 7. The infrastructure is VMware, and all servers are virtual machines. The database server is SQL Server 2008 R2 for all environments. Most server operating systems are Windows Server 2008 Enterprise Edition, SP1. The development machine (where the source code is located) is Windows Server 2003. The development applications are Visual Studio 2008 and 2010. SOS uses a Dell EqualLogic SAN for storage. The Windows client software is compiled against .NET 2.0, while the web server is .NET 3.5.

Question 22: Can you please describe your existing ITS hardware & software environment in detail?

Response: ITS' development hardware environment consists of Dell and/or IBM machines. The software environment consists of Windows Server 2005 and 2008, SQL Server 2005 and 2008, Visual Studio 2005 and 2008, Rational ClearCase/ClearQuest, and Crystal Reports.

Question 23: Would a face to face interview be required for these positions?

Response: Proposed individuals may be required to attend an on-site interview. Please see Item 6.15 of the LOC. Also refer to the response to Question 15.

Question 24: Both ITS positions describe all the technical requirements but not a single skill related to PM. Do you want a VB.NET coder who has little bit of lead experience or someone who can do requirement gathering, documentation, meeting facilitation, etc?

Response: Please see response to Question 11.

Question 25: For the ITS positions, what percentage of the work will be doing the actual programming work and what percentage will be PM work?

Response: The work for these positions will entail 90% programming and 10% project management.

Question 26: For the ITS positions, what percentage of the work will be new development and what percentage will be maintaining existing applications?

Response: The work for these positions will entail 60% new development and 40% maintenance. Please note a large portion of the projects could be data conversion related.

Question 27: For the ITS positions, would this consultant be managing any x # of persons?

Response: The awarded candidates will not manage other developers. However, the individuals may be required to mentor other developers.

Question 28: Normally a PM Or Team Lead who is a hands-on developer usually is a very senior candidate, but ITS is seeking Junior or Intermediate candidates, which means the rates will be low. Are there rate ceilings established for these 2 positions?

Response: ITS isn't seeking team leads or project managers, but developers who meet the specific requirements listed in Items 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10. Please refer to the response to Question 11.

Question 29: How can one earn the "value add" 5 points? Does it have to do with the company or the consultant proposed?

Response: Value-Add points are typically not awarded on services-related procurements. The company and consultant proposed will be evaluated using the stated functional and technical requirements. Value-Add points would be awarded for services proposed beyond those requirements at no additional charge. Please refer to Item 9.1.3 of the LOC.

LOC responses are due April 26, 2012, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Teresa Washington at 601-432-8049 or via email at teresa.washington@its.ms.gov.

cc: ITS Project File Number 39612 & 39665