

General Services Administration

Federal Acquisition Service

Technology Transformation Services

1800 F St NW | Washington, DC | 20405

Questions and Answers

TTS BPA for Dev, Design, and Research

RFQ1357535

1. Upon reviewing the RFQ Agreement document, I saw below in page 3. I am not able to access the RFQ Technical Response Form. It gives me access denied error. Please let me know if I miss anything.
 - a. [Please ensure you are utilizing a Google account to access the document.](#)
2. The requested documentation is not onerous and it seems like you tried to make it fairly easy to respond to the RFQ. However, we are working on multiple proposals which were released a couple of weeks earlier. As a small business, we have limited people who can gather the information required and spend time writing and editing the documents before we submit them to you and those people are already working on two other proposals. If this RFQ had been released 2 weeks ago, we could have quickly pulled everything together but now we are overwhelmed. Unless there is a compelling reason to keep 2-week turnaround, we request an extension.
 - a. [See Amendment 0001 to the RFQ released April 2, 2019](#)
3. We have 2 commercial projects which meet the evaluation criteria but we can not submit sample code since it is proprietary to the commercial customer. Is there another way we can talk about this experience?
 - a. [We believe strongly that determining a vendor's ability to deliver source code is by evaluating source code that they have produced directly. We find that reviewing repositories as part of the evaluation allows us to conduct those evaluations efficiently, effectively and understand the capabilities of potential vendors.](#)

We recognize that many source code repositories aren't open-source. In those cases, we'd suggest requesting private access for our team to review.

As a reminder, the code repositories do not need to be from government projects.

4. Is there an incumbent on this contract? If so, please provide the incumbent name, current contract number, period of performance and value of the contract.
 - a. No incumbent, this is a new government need.
5. Is the subject solicitation a recompetes of the Multiple Award Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) for Agile Delivery Services (ADSI) (RFQ No. 4QTFHS150004) that was awarded in 2015?
 - a. No, the Agile BPA was specific for external use for other agencies, this BPA is for internal TTS use for ongoing projects
6. The majority of our agile development has been with an agency. However, they do not use github as their source code repository for the majority of their projects. Instead, they use RTC, which is their standard tool. Contractually, we are not allowed to share any code without their express approval. Our partner has previously requested this for a number of projects, and each request has been denied. This was mainly related to security issues. Given this, how would we possibly respond to this RFQ?
 - a. We believe strongly that determining a vendor's ability to deliver source code is by evaluating source code that they have produced directly. We find that reviewing repositories as part of the evaluation allows us to conduct those evaluations efficiently, effectively and understand the capabilities of potential vendors.

We recognize that many source code repositories aren't open-source. In those cases, we'd suggest requesting private access for our team to review.

As a reminder, the code repositories do not need to be from government projects.

7. In order to provide Source code links of repositories of our customers will GSA provide Non - Disclosure agreements in the name of our customers as the information in the repositories will have proprietary information.
 - a. See answer to questions #3 and #6

8. In order to provide Source code links of repositories of our customers will GSA have personnel reviewing code repositories having clearance at DOD Secret level to be able to review code if allowed by our customer.
 - a. [See answer to questions #3 and #6](#)
9. It is not clear if the offeror is required to submit pricing with its initial Phase I submission. Will you clarify if pricing is required at the time of initial phase 1 submission or after the Orals.
 - a. [Please submit pricing with Phase 1, the RFQ has been updated for clarification. See Amendment 0001 of the RFQ.](#)
10. Since the source codes are proprietary to the government, it stops us from sharing the code outside and some of the codes we cant even copy to our private GitHub to show case how we did perform the Agile methodologies with version controls.
 - a. [See answer to questions #3 and #6](#)
11. Vendor has a proprietary software currently being used by federal agency where they have used myriads of open sources technologies. However, source codes is proprietary to vendor.
 - a. [See answer to questions #3 and #6](#)
12. Where some of the security restrictions stops us to share the source codes to the others, will Government please let us know the alternatives?
 - a. [See answer to questions #3 and #6](#)
13. Will government extend the submission date by a week?
 - a. [See Amendment 0001 of the RFQ](#)
14. Can the prime offeror use one or more CTA partner's schedule 70 rates to propose for this solicitation.
 - a. [Yes.](#)
15. Are we required to submit the CTA with our initial response or is it due before the award.
 - a. [Yes.](#)
16. Could we use only a teaming agreement in place of a CTA agreement as a CTA agreement will take a longer legal process and given a short turn around of response it will be easier to do a teaming agreement.
 - a. [See Amendment 0001 to the RFQ released April 2, 2019. Vendors may have a subcontractor, however the prime contractor must be a GSA schedule holder and quote ONLY GSA schedule rates with requested discounts.](#)
17. There's a labor category for "User Experience Researcher/Designer" and one for a "User Experience Researcher" in the price sheet. In the PWS, there's only a

description for a "User Experience Researcher/Designer." Should the "User Researcher" be removed from the price sheet?

a. [Yes, the User Researcher should be removed from the price sheet. Please see corrected Price sheet dated 04092019](#)

18. Can you please confirm that the invoicing schedule will be defined in the call orders? This section could be interpreted that the vendor will invoice once at the end of the entire period of performance. Does GSA anticipate a billing period of performance to be monthly or per sprint?

a. [Invoicing will be detailed at the order level.](#)

19. Under Participants, GSA is asking for "proposed personnel" to attend the oral interview. Is GSA looking for proposed personnel and resumes/letters of intent to be identified in Phase 1 - Technical Response?

a. [The letters of intent will need to be provided at the order level. See updated section 3.2.2 Phase 2 - Oral Interview General Information.](#)

20. Please confirm that the page limit for EACH relevant project is 3 pages. If a vendor is submitting 5 relevant projects, we will be able to submit 15 pages for the relevant experience section, correct?

a. [Confirmed, three \(3\) pages per relevant project.](#)

21. If submitting as a Prime, must the respondent have both GSA Schedule IT-70 SINs detailed in Section 1.0 RFQ General Information to be eligible for award?

a. [Yes.](#)

22. There are four points to cover under the Submittal Requirements for the Usability Research Approach. Will GSA consider expanding the response to be longer than 750 characters?

a. [No, the government believes the contractor can outline a high level plan within the character limit.](#)

23. "The response must be limited to 750 characters (please note that Google Forms considers punctuation e.g., commas, semi-colons, quotation marks, etc.). Quoters will be evaluated based on the Government's confidence relative to the submissions received for this criteria." Is the User Research Approach supposed to be responded to in a google form or as a PDF?

a. [User Research Approach can be submitted either the google form or PDF.](#)

24. For code written on sensitive or classified systems, is there a way to meet the code submittal requirements without submitting actual code? Would pseudo-code suffice?

a. [The government is interested in actual code completed by the proposing contractor.](#)

25. Is this solicitation is a re-compete, and is there is a dollar amount.

- a. See answer #4, the estimated dollar amount is listed in the RFQ BPA Terms and Conditions section 2.7 Estimated Quantities - Funded Call Orders

26. Reference: RFQ section 3.2.1 Criteria 1 – Relevant Experience, quoter shall submit source code examples via GitHub.

Question: Our code repository resides on the Government's DI2E system, we request the government gains access to DI2E system. It is our understanding that any government employee with a CAC card is able to establish access. Please follow this link to establish access, and confirm that you are able to use the DI2E for this effort.

- a. GSA cannot access this terminal

27. Question: Can you provide a timeline as to when the BPA award is intended to be given?

- a. No estimated timeline for award is determined at this time.

28. Can an offeror submit more than one source code example for a given project?

- a. Please see RFQ section 3.2.1 Phase 1 - Technical Response, to five (5) examples can be provided.

29. Does the Government want the design related artifact(s) embedded in the document or provided as a link?

- a. The design related artifacts should be provided as a link.

30. Does the Government want offerors to use a 11 or 10 point font for the submissions?

- a. Please see updated RFQ, 11 point font is required.

31. Can GSA confirm the format of the Relevant Experience component of the submission? Bidders are to submit a 3-page Relevant Experience narrative supported by up-to five 3-page project narratives for a total submission of up-to 18 pages of Relevant Experience.

- a. Along with the source code submissions, contractors must submit a minimum of one (1) to a maximum of five (5) relevant experience narratives discussing their projects in detail (no more than 3 pages per each narrative). It would be a total of 15 pages for relevant experience.

32. Do each of the relevant projects have to cover at least 10 functional experience areas — or can bidders submit projects that cumulatively cover all functional experience areas?

- a. Yes, each relevant project should demonstrate at least 10 of the functional experience areas.

33. May we create a CTA with a company with a GSA 70 Schedule who is not a small business for this response?

- a. No, all team members must meet the socioeconomic status for the set-aside and the limitations on subcontracting (FAR 52.219-14) applies.
- 34. all of our source code repositories are hosted on Government networks. Access by external parties is prohibited. Please advise as to whether or not there exist any other options for providing you with our source code?
 - a. See answer to questions #3 and #6
- 35. The PWS includes contract line item numbers (CLINs) for each labor category. Does the Government anticipate issuing orders off the BPA using these CLINs?
 - a. Yes.
- 36. If so, is the Government open to issuing FFP orders that include broader CLINs that are not segmented by labor category, in addition? This will allow the vendor to adjust their labor mix based on empirical evidence during performance to what is best suited to reach favorable outcomes and meet the Government's objectives, rather than being bound to a prescriptive staffing approach (outcome versus staffing based pricing structure).
 - a. This will be determined at the order level, FFP or LH orders may be issued. The Government may modify additional labor categories as needed per the scope requirements.
- 37. RFQ states "[The] letter(s) of intent and resume(s) will suffice for proposed personnel currently not employed by the quoter, or its teaming partners or subcontractors." As there is no Phase 1 requirement to submit a letter of intent or resumes for Labor Categories CLIN0001-0010 and nothing specifically requesting the same in Phase 2 for submittal requirements, will the letter of intent and resumes be required as part of Phase 1 or 2?
 - a. See answer to question #19
- 38. Links provided in RFQ text are not active. Please provide URLs or active links to these referenced items.
 - a. All attachments required to respond are available in ebuy to download. Also ensure you are utilizing a Google account to access the forms.
- 39. Links provided in PWS text are not active. Please provide URLs or active links to these referenced items.
 - a. All attachments required to respond are available in ebuy to download. Also ensure you are utilizing a Google account to access the forms.
- 40. CLIN 0010 Data Scientist. In our industry and geographic location, we have found that AI scientists and data scientists are two separate roles with specific specialties for each. As the PWS does not outline specific AI responsibilities, can the Govt clarify these infrastructure-related questions: 1) Is there a current IT system GSA TTS plans on using to integrate AI software, and if so, what is it? 2) is GSA TTS planning on using Cloud computing solutions for your AI application

and/or do you have in-house computational resources for this type of software?

3) Can the Government identify what problems you are facing that you feel AI can solve?

a. This type of information will be determined at the order level.

41. Source Code: Is there a specific requirement in regard to how much source code needs to be submitted? Do you wish to see all source code for the project or can we select a portion of the source code that relates to a page or feature of the project?

a. The contractor is encouraged to include whatever elements are needed to demonstrate the contractor's relevant experience.

42. Who will have access to the GitHub repository in the event we provide a link to a private Git repository? Is it one person, multiple persons, government only or person(s) outside the government?

a. The evaluation panel and the contracting officer will have access to the repository.

43. RFQ Agreement-TTS BPA for Dev Design and Research

04222019.1554242417011 document on Page 5 statement; “*Note: TTS may also consider information from any other source, including Offeror’s prior customers and public websites” – May we submit this information in place of the source code for one major project that meets the requirements set forth in this RFQ if we are not permitted to submit source code per instruction by our customer?

a. The contractor is encouraged to include whatever elements are needed to demonstrate the contractor's relevant experience.

44. Will this still count as one of the up-to-five project examples with a write-up as required and other detail with NO source code submitted?

a. Vendors must submit source code samples per the RFQ section 3.2.1 Submittal Requirements.

45. The RFQ states that “Along with GitHub source code submissions, quoters may submit a three (3) page narrative discussing its general relevant project experience. Narratives must correspond with GitHub source code submissions. Each project example narrative shall be no more than three (3) standard pages...” Please clarify if offerors should submit a three-page general narrative in addition to three-page narratives relative to each cited project, or if offerors should only submit a three-page narrative relative to each cited project. In addition, should all narratives be provided in one or multiple files?

a. Along with the source code submissions, contractors must submit a minimum of one (1) to a maximum of five (5) relevant experience

narratives discussing their projects in detail (no more than 3 pages per [each](#) narrative). It would be a total of 15 pages for relevant experience.

46. The RFQ states that “..quoters are required to provide how they will meet the objective and tasks identified in the Performance Work Statement.” The proposal instructions only allow for 3-page relevant experience narratives, a 3-page staffing approach, and a 750 character Usability Research Approach. Is there a requirement for a separate technical approach that addresses the PWS?

a. [The Government will assess this by assigning a confidence rating based on the information provided by your firm from the evaluation criteria.](#)

47. At the Oral Interview phase, the RFQ requests “all proposed personnel currently employed,” attend the interview. Later, the RFQ confirms “The letter(s) of intent and resume(s) will suffice for proposed personnel currently not employed by the quoter, or its teaming partners or subcontractors.” Proposed personnel and resumes are not indicated anywhere else in the requirements. Please clarify what the requirements are for proposing personnel, which phase they should be proposed, and specifically where they should be addressed in the proposal.

a. [Please see answer to question #19](#)

48. The requirement for making source code examples available publicly via Github will, by definition, eliminate dozens of potential exceptional-rated offerors that do work solely on Federal Government contracts where the government is the owner of the work product. In all of these cases, contractors are not allowed to use the government-owned work product in pursuit of other work in the Federal Government. If this approach is used, the pool of high-quality, experienced offerors will be limited to those that have not had to meet such stringent requirements. Is the government willing to change the requirement to a challenge-specific coding use-case where the source code for the use-case could be created and submitted by all offerors to ensure a level playing field for evaluations? From an evaluation perspective, it would be easier and more beneficial for the government to create such a specific coding challenge and see how all evaluators respond to that specific challenge (comparing apples to apples), than by trying to evaluate and compare many different use-cases (apples to oranges)?

a. [No the government does not want to run a challenge-specific code use case. Please see the updated RFQ section 3.2.1 Submittal Requirements.](#)

49. What are the pain points in the current website?

a. [This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.](#)

50. What are the major functionalities that are present in the current website?

- a. This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.
51. We see that the current website is in Drupal 7.53. Is there any vendor working on the maintenance?
- a. This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.
52. What is the average number of hours monthly that is spent for the website maintenance?
- a. This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.
53. Where is the current website hosted? What are the current challenges like downtimes, outages, support issues etc with the current hosting provider?
- a. This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.
54. What is the current server H/W specification?
- a. This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.
55. Are there any specific expectations on support & maintenance like dedicated Hosting Support, 24*7 support, Specific Service Level Agreements etc.?
- a. This question does not relate to the proposed Blanket Purchase Agreement, if website work is required from the awardee, this will be determined at the order level.
56. What is the anticipated timeline for this project?
- a. See answer to question #27 for award.
57. Please elaborate the kind of team structure that you are envisioning for the website redesign? Would you prefer a completely onsite resources?
- a. Please reference RFQ - BPA Terms and Condition Section 4.0 Location of Work to be Performed.
58. Are both SINs required or will having 132-51 without 70-500 be acceptable to the TTS?
- a. See answer to question #21
59. Can the solicitation be changed to "Contract Vehicle: GSA Schedule 70 Special Item Number (SIN) 132 51 – Information Technology Professional Services or SIN 70-500 - Order Level Materials (OLM)"

- a. No.
- 60. Is this new requirement?
 - a. Yes.
- 61. Who is the incumbent ?
 - a. See answer to question #4
- 62. When is this BPA planned award date?
 - a. See answer to question #27
- 63. Is this BPA RFQ for all small businesses with IT70 Schedule with SIN 132.51 or SIN 70-500?
 - a. See answer to question #21
- 64. Is submitting technical response via google form is mandatory? Or can we email our quote to CO directly?
 - a. Submitting via the Google form is not mandatory, vendors may submit, directly to the CO (Joseph.Dorsey@gsa.gov) or via Ebuy, in addition to the Google form.
- 65. The google form is not accessible. Should we need to request for granting access?
 - a. You will need a Google account to access the form. If you are still having issues, please see alternative submission requirements in question #64 above.
- 66. What is the maximum number of project we can submit?
 - a. Please review RFQ section 3.2.1 Phase 1 - Technical Response.
- 67. Can you please elaborate the criteria (like backend, api, UI, database design) on how the 5 source code examples to select and share?
 - a. The contractor is encouraged to include whatever elements are needed to demonstrate the contractor's relevant experience.
- 68. Can the 5 source code examples be related to 1 relevant project experience?
 - a. The contractor is encouraged to include whatever elements are needed to demonstrate the contractor's relevant experience.
- 69. On Page 4 of RFQ Agreement - TTS BPA for Dev Design and Research 04022019.1554242417011 document says as follows- Should we need to submit price quote also as part of Phase1?
 - a. See answer to question #9
- 70. If the code examples have been written on government-owned software applications, are the vendors expected to submit code that is the intellectual property of the federal government?
 - a. See answer to questions #3 and #6
- 71. How will the government verify that the code examples submitted were written by the submitting vendor?

- a. [The vendor is asked to submit version-controlled repositories.](#)
- 72. The Submittal Requirements for Criteria 1 - Relevant Experience, states that “three (3) page narrative discussing its general project experience.” Please confirm GSA requires one narrative total, not one narrative per project example offered.
 - a. [See answer to question #31](#)
- 73. The Submittal requirements for Criteria 2 - Staffing include the following: “Each page shall be no more than three pages...” Please confirm GSA intends to say “Each narrative shall be no more than three pages...”?
 - a. [This is confirmed, each narrative shall be no more than three pages. RFQ has been updated.](#)
- 74. The Submittal Requirements for Criteria 3 - Usability Research Approach, states that “the response must be limited to 750 characters.” Can GSA confirm if they mean 750 characters or 750 words? Would GSA consider increasing the character limit for this response to 3000 characters?
 - a. [No, please see answer to question #22](#)
- 75. Can GSA confirm that the response to the Usability Research Approach is limited to 750 characters? Would GSA consider increasing the limit to 3 pages?
 - a. [Please see answer to question #22](#)
- 76. In what format would GSA be able to accept code samples?
 - a. [A repository should be linked per the instructions of RFQ section 3.2.1 Submittal Requirements](#)
- 77. When is the anticipated award date?
 - a. [See answer to question #27](#)
- 78. “This criteria considers the extent that the quoter as the prime contractor or its GSA schedule teaming partner has provided software development services similar to those described in the Performance Work Statement (PWS) by submitting source code samples and corresponding project descriptions for similar agile development projects.” Does the term “GSA scheduling partner” apply to a subcontractor? Can the prime submit “source code samples and corresponding project descriptions for similar agile development projects” from its subcontractor(s)?
 - a. [GSA will consider the source code of the prime contractor and/or CTA agreement only](#)
- 79. The Submittal Requirements for Criteria 2 – Staffing Approach state that “Quoters must submit a three (3) page narrative. Each page shall be no more than three (3) standard pages (8 ½ X 11 with 1” margins and at least a 10 pt Font)...” Please confirm that the entire staffing approach document should be three pages or less.

- a. Confirmed, the staffing approach as a whole should be three pages or less
 - 80. The "Participants" paragraph states that letter(s) of intent and resume(s) will suffice for proposed personnel currently not employed by the quoter, or its teaming partners or subcontractors. How should those documents be submitted to the Government? In the first paragraph of Section 3.2.2, it states that quoters should not bring any written materials to the oral interview.
 - a. See answer to question #19
 - 81. Phase 3 – Price Response requires the quoter to submit labor hours for the services quoted. However, the Pricing Template tabs 1 – 5 do not include an area for labor hours, and tab 6 has the labor hours already provided by the Government. Please confirm whether the quoter is required to submit labor hour information in addition to what the Government has provided on tab 6.
 - a. Vendors should only quote the pre-established hours in the final tab of the pricing sheet. No other hours are required. The RFQ has been updated for clarity
 - 82. "...Contractor Teaming Arrangements (CTA) are permitted. CTA partners must also have a GSA schedule. If the quoter intends to team, a CTA is required by the closing date and time of the RFQ. However, a fully executed CTA will be formalized at time of award. Awardees are responsible in ensuring their CTA partner fully understands the terms and conditions of the BPA and the reporting requirements required by the CTA partner." In regard to forming and bidding as a CTA, would the Government please clarify what is precisely required "by the closing date and time of the RFQ?"
 - a. A complete CTA is required with submission of your quote, if you are planning on teaming with another schedule vendor
 - 83. Section 9.1 states that "The quoter will invoice one time (per Period of Performance, as applicable) for the amount matching the order amount once inspection and acceptance is complete." Please confirm how the length of each Period of Performance for T&M/Labor Hour (LH) and FFP Call Orders will be determined (weekly/monthly invoicing, by deliverable, percentage of completion, etc.).
 - a. T&M/Labor (LH) and FFP call orders should be billed on a monthly basis unless otherwise negotiated at the order level.
-