United States Tax Court (USTC)

Request for Information

For Supporting the USTC Digital Environment

December 2024

Release Date:

December 19, 2024

Response Due Date:

January 6, 2025

Contents

1 Purpose and Contacts

1.1 This is a request for information (RFI) for planning and market research purposes only.

1.2 This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This request for information does not commit the Government to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Further, the United States Tax Court (hereinafter "the Tax Court" or "the Court") is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Respondents are advised that the Court does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI, all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, if any is issued. It is the responsibility of the potential offerors to monitor these sites for additional information pertaining to this requirement. Please note, although "offer" and "offeror" are used in this Request for Information, your response will be treated as information only. It will not be used as an offer. The solicitation is issued for the purpose stated in §2.

1.3 To the maximum extent possible, please submit non-proprietary information. Any proprietary information submitted should be identified as such and will be properly protected from disclosure. The Government shall not be liable for damages related to proprietary information that is not properly identified. Proprietary information will be safeguarded in accordance with the applicable Government regulations. Responses to the RFI will not be returned.

1.4 RESPONSES: Responses to this RFI should be provided in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF via email to ITprocurement@ustaxcourt.gov by 5p.m. Eastern Standard Time on January 6, 2025.

1.5 Please include the email subject heading of "RFI RESPONSE: Support for the USTC Digital Environment"

1.6 Sensitive personal information, such as account numbers or Social Security numbers, or names of other individuals, should not be included. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

1.7 The information provided in this RFI is subject to change and is not binding on the Government.

2 Background

2.1 The United States Tax Court (hereinafter "the Tax Court" or "the Court") is an independent Federal court headquartered in Washington, D.C with thirty-eight unmanned facilities across the country. The Court provides a national forum for the expeditious resolution of disputes between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service that allows for careful consideration of the merits of each case and ensures a uniform interpretation of the Internal Revenue Code. The Court is committed to providing taxpayers, most of whom are self-represented, with a convenient place of trial and, when their disputes involve relatively small amounts of tax, simplified procedures. In terms of personnel, the total size of the Court fluctuates between 220 and 250 people over the course of a typical year, the fluctuation being due to interns, externs and overlapping law clerks.

2.2 The automation of Tax Court judicial and non-judicial operations are generally enabled with the Court's Case Management System, DAWSON (dawson.ustaxcourt.gov / https://github.com/ustaxcourt/ef-cms) and cloud-based services including Amazon Web Services (AWS), Azure, and a myriad of other cloud services such as Meraki, mFax, Eagle Eye, Printix, etc. There is very limited technology deployed on premises. The breadth of the Court's technologies is primarily supported by the Office of Information Services (OIS) in which a solicitation would be supported.

2.3 OIS is organized into three offices:

2.3.1 Office of the CIO: the organization that conducts the business of IT, cyberoperations, and enterprise architecture.

2.3.1.1 Two civil servants

2.3.1.2 3.5 contractor FTEs

2.3.2 Infrastructure and Operations: the organization that performs the daily administration and management of the Court's endpoints, infrastructure, and modernization projects (excluding pure software based solutions). ,

2.3.2.1 Two civil servants (team leads)

2.3.2.2 6.5 contractor FTEs

2.3.3 Enterprise Applications: the organization that leads the technical operations of the Court's software development efforts for DAWSON, Web Apps, Public Website, and no-code/low-code solutions.

2.3.3.1 Three civil servants (team leads)

2.3.3.2 18 contractor FTEs

2.4 The primary goal of a potential solicitation would be to acquire professional services (staff augmentation or shared services) that are able to support the breadth of the Court's technology and IT requirements. For the purposes of the solicitation, the Court has logically consolidated the requirements into four different segments collectively referred to as the Court's Digital Environment:

- DAWSON Segment
    - Operations and Maintenance (O&M): Providing software developers as well as UX Researchers and Designers to work as integrated government/contractor agile development teams to perform O&M of the open-source DAWSON codebase including troubleshooting, bug fix, minor patches, minor feature development, minor changes for deprecated libraries, etc.

- Major Feature Development: Providing Software developers as well as UX Researchers and Designers to work as part of integrated government/contractor agile development teams to produce major features changes to the DAWSON codebase.

- Help Desk Segment
  - Operations: The day-to-day employment of the configuration of the existing technology baseline in direct support of Court's judicial and non-judicial mission. This includes full-service desktop support such as configuration management, asset management, software break/fix support, tier 1 to tier 3 problem resolution, Meraki based LAN and WAN administration, Exchange Online administration, SharePoint Administration, Entra Administration, performance monitoring, print services, security systems, and all IMAC (install, move, add, change) services.

- Modernization Projects / CIO Support Segment
  - Infrastructure Operations and Maintenance : An ongoing effort to maintain the existing technology baseline including upgrading and patching software on servers and end points, refreshing infrastructure hardware (e.g., printers, VoIP, kiosks, network appliances, network cabling, security cameras, intercoms), maintaining infrastructure configurations through admin consoles or Infrastructure as Code practices (e.g., LAN, WAN, Zscaler, endpoint protection policies, logging, VoIP, printers, AWS, Azure) Further
  - Software Engineering and Development: the daily DevOps related to the Court's code base (e.g., Public Website, custom Web-Apps, no-code solutions), SharePoint, User Experience research and Graphic Design, Form and document management; Analytics, reporting and digital services delivery.

- Cybersecurity Segment
  - Chief Information Security Officer (CISO): A lead for developing a Court cybersecurity program that monitors and manages the court's risks as well as imagines and proposes cybersecurity policies and procedures to protect the Court's sensitive information and its availability. Monitor compliance of information and systems to internal controls and security standards.
  - Cyber Operations: Day-to-day cyberoperations such as maintaining the currency of cyber related policies (e.g., Intune Compliance Policies, Defender policies, Conditional Access policies, endpoint protection policies), monitoring for security issues, email security monitoring, facilitating the adjudication of requests to access websites, software, etc., incident management, responding to the Security Operations Center (SOC – provided by the Dept of Justice Cybersecurity Shared Services Program (CSSP)), etc.

2.5 Although the Court logically separates the digital environment into these four segments, the intent is that the daily operations and maintenance of the Court's digital environment be performed by teams that can self-organize across the segments as required to accomplish the various daily operations as well as work related to larger projects.

2.6 The US Tax Court, as an Article I Court, monitors trends in industry, legislation, regulations, and policies for best practice that may be adopted when they will benefit the mission of the Tax Court. Examples include:

2.6.1 The Office of Management & Budget (OMB), produced the September 2018 Federal Cloud Computing Strategy, "Cloud Smart," which outlines the impetus and benefits of migrating to cloud services, including cost savings, better security and delivery of faster mission-enabling services. The three complementary pillars of the new strategy integral to promoting cloud adoption are security, procurement and workforce. "Cloud Smart" embraces best practices from both the federal government and the private sector, ensuring agencies have the capability to leverage leading solutions to better serve agency mission, drive improved citizen services and increase cyber security."1

2.6.2 The Modernizing Government Technology Act promotes modernization projects in Federal organizations.

2.6.3 The Delivering a Digital-First Public Experience OMB memo with guidance on how to implement the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act

2.6.4 The National Institute of Science and Technology Risk Management Framework

2.6.5 supporting continuous assessment and management of risk.

2.7 If the Court were to release a solicitation, the current cost estimate ceiling is $42,000,000.00 over five years for a firm fixed price contract expected to be awarded in Q2FY25.

[1] https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/omb-announces-cloud-smart-proposal/

3 Requested Information

3.1 In your response, provide background on your company, including but not limited to its name, address, primary products and services, and customers similar to the size and scope of the Tax Court. Further, identify common certifications held by your personnel and that may relate to the scope of a potential solicitation.

3.2 Note that the Court intends to retain in-house institutional knowledge of the end-to-end architecture, how it is supported, and rights to the data describing Information Technology (IT) supporting the Court. Further, the Court procures the equipment, licenses, and subscriptions for the technology baseline where-as the intent of this procurement would be to provide the labor (e.g., staff augmentees, shared services) to operate and maintain the system capabilities.

3.3 Provide responses to the following questions which the Court seeks to answer from this RFI.

3.3.1 Describe your ability to provide the professional services for supporting the breadth of technology and information services at the Court as described in the RFI.

3.3.2 To what degree would vendors need to partner to be able to compete on a level playing field? What are the risks and advantages in an omnibus singular solicitation versus breaking the requirements out into multiple, smaller solicitations? Would you only bid if the identified categories were a standalone solicitation?

3.3.3 Are there small businesses equipped with the capability, capacity, and reach back to subject matter experts that can support the size and scope of the Courts digital environment?

3.3.4 Is it feasible and cost effective for the Court to establish a multi-year (e.g., 5-years) firm-fixed price award for supporting the Court's IT? For instance, how should the acquisition be structured that will capitalize on breakpoint/tiered pricing, economies of scale, etc., that would maximize the Courts cost savings of a multi-year award?

3.3.5 What industry terminology should be used (e.g., "as a Service") to ensure clear communication of the Court's requirements for each segment or in general? Is the logical organization used in this RFI sufficient, or is there a better approach for segmenting the Court's digital environment that would better align with business service models, economies of scale, or other efficiencies?

3.3.6 One intent of a solicitation would be to use job categories as a determinate for what is technically acceptable. Is it feasible for respondents to map their existing labor categories to the Court identified labor categories (see section 4) and in a response to the solicitation provide sample resumes for personnel who have previously held those position? Alternatively, is there a recommended common set of labor categories the Court should use to communicate the requirement such as those labor categories enumerated by the bureau of labor (https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm#15-0000) or the CIO-SP3 (https://nitaac.nih.gov/gwacs/cio-sp3/cio-sp3-labor-categories).

3.3.7 Is there a recommended approach to include in a solicitation requirements for continuity of operations such as in the absence of a contracted technical staff members due to periods of paid time off, prolonged illness, away for training, position vacancies, or otherwise unavailable?

3.3.8 Given the exploration of a multi-year, FFP award, are there terms or conditions, or specific requirements that can be included in the solicitation that would allow for flexibility in coordinating changes to the labor categories/requirements throughout the PoP as the technology baseline evolves? For instance, if the Court were to move from Cisco WAPs to Meraki WAPs, or DAWSON and Web Apps were to move to different software libraries.

3.3.9 Given the breadth of technology and services within scope of a proposed solicitation, what could be included in the solicitation that would enable reach back to vendors who are not necessarily needed in daily operations such as bringing in expertise to troubleshoot issues with the Court's physical access control system? Alternatively, would it be better to exclude or highly limit these intermittent/non-recurring requirements from the scope, and for them to be competed as required?

3.4 Provide an enumeration of standards, certifications, service levels, and any other references specific to each Segment that, if cited as requirements in a solicitation, will increase the probability of a successful acquisition.

3.5 What is the best approach to organize and convey the scope of the solicitation to avoid unforeseen limitations? That is, the government will consider any suggestions on rewording, removing, additions, clarification, etc., for any part of this RFI if it increases the probability of a successful acquisition throughout the lifespan of an award.

3.6 Questions specific to the DAWSON Segment

3.6.1 To avoid risk of outside impacts to the O&M of DAWSON, the Court requires the resources associated to DAWSON to be fully dedicated to DAWSON with assurances that they will not be impaired or distracted by work in other segments. Further, DAWSON will continue to grow and integrate into Court workflows, M365, infrastructure services (via APIs), and data from other custom Court web apps. That said, what are the advantages and disadvantages of including the lifecycle software development of DAWSON in a larger IT solicitation for the Court's digital environment versus the Court maintaining DAWSON support in a separate solicitation?

3.6.2 Is there a maximum or minimum amount of time that should be specified in a solicitation for the vendor to be fully staffed from date of award?

3.6.3 Once fully staffed, how much time should be specified in a solicitation for overlapping the incumbent with a new vendor to minimize risks associated with maintaining the codebase and production of new features?

3.6.4 Is it possible as a determinate of technical acceptability, that a response to a solicitation include case studies and/or customer references for software development efforts that are equivalent or greater than DAWSON in regards to the size and complexity of the code base?

3.6.5 If the intent is to use a vendors experience with specific programming languages, frameworks, and tools, can vendors provide in their response a list of the tooling typically used by their personnel, and (if not exactly the same) map those to an enumerated list of the Court's anticipated tooling?

3.6.6 Are there recommendations for how to express in a solicitation that the vendor must provide contracted technical staff with expertise with the AWS Services used by DAWSON (e.g., Lambda, S3, RDS, SQS, API Gateway, and CloudWatch)?

3.6.7 To what degree should specific requirements be included in a solicitation to ensure that the contracted technical staff will have sufficient experience with processes that ensure scalability, security, and reliability of delivered solutions?

3.6.8 What experience do you have with public-facing applications, and if so at what scale (Local, State, Federal)?

3.7 Questions specific to the Help Desk Segment

3.7.1 How much time would you recommend for overlapping the incumbent with a new vendor once fully staffed?

3.7.2 What service levels should the Court identify that are specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, and time-bound for help desk operations noting that the Court utilizes Zendesk for its ticket management? Are there recommended service levels commonly used in contracts?

3.7.3 What additional information would need to be included in the solicitation to align the skillsets for the help desk to your organization's labor categories?

3.7.4 Is there a way to assess to what degree vendors that respond to a solicitation have retained skillful personnel that were previously contracted by an incumbent?

3.7.5 How will the technical-support staff level be structured?

3.7.6 What would be the availability of the technical staff on-site & off-site?

3.7.7 How do you build up the knowledge base of the technical-support staff?

3.7.8 How do you increase the efficiency of technical-support staff troubleshooting skills?

3.7.9 To what degree would a solicitation need to include hours for training or reliance on the vendor to maintain the currency of the contracted technical staff's skills necessary to perform the work in scope?

3.7.10 What approach do you provide to the Government to demonstrate the capability & efficiency of the technical-support staff to deliver the service?

3.7.11 How do you proceed to backfill when a technical-support staff is not available (ill, on vacation, etc.)?

3.7.12 Are there any recommended requirements, terms, and/or conditions to be included in the solicitation that would facilitate government requests to replace contracted technical staff who are not performing?

3.8 Questions specific to the Modernization Projects / CIO Support Segment

This segment includes software engineering to build web apps and no-code solutions in Microsoft 365 environment (e.g., Power Apps, Power Automate, SharePoint, Dataverse). Teams are expected to follow agile development processes. Each team will include a government lead with contractor support. Some teams may have equal numbers of contractors and government workers.

3.8.1 How much time would be required for overlapping the incumbent with a new vendor?

~~3.8.2~~ Are there any advantages or disadvantages to including requirements for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a solicitation? Is it possible for vendors to provide examples of how they have leveraged AI in past software development projects?

3.8.3 What software development third party tools and technologies are important for the government to consider using? Why?

One consideration for determining if a vendor is technically acceptable would be an evaluation of examples of software code from previous projects or to a stated problem (reference 3.8.3.1). If in the solicitation the Court were to make available a private GitHub repo, would vendors be able to submit code samples from past projects? Are there any recommendations for using code samples for determining technical acceptability of a vendor?

3.8.3.1 For example, would you be able to provide a code sample to the following problem if it were included in an RFQ? – Provide a code that demonstrates Single Sign-On (SSO) authentication using Microsoft Entra ID. The sample should include integration with SharePoint to interact with Lists. The implementation should use Node.js for the backend and any framework that uses React.js for the frontend. The code must be deployable on Amazon AWS, with deployment instructions or necessary configuration provided in a README file.

3.8.3.1.1 The code should demonstrate reading and writing to SharePoint Lists.

3.8.3.1.2 The code should authenticate users via Microsoft Entra ID and retrieve an access token.

3.8.3.1.3 The code should be submitted via a Zip file in an Email to ITProcurement@ustaxcourt.gov containing all required files and documentation.

3.8.3.1.4 Evaluation Criteria:

3.8.3.1.4.1 Functionality: Successfully authenticates users and interacts with SharePoint Lists.

3.8.3.1.4.2 Code Quality: Readable, maintainable, and adheres to best practices.

3.8.3.1.4.3 Deployment: Includes clear instructions and successfully deploys to AWS.

3.9 Questions specific to the Cybersecurity Segment

3.9.1 How much time would be required for overlapping the incumbent with a new vendor?

3.9.2 Are there any certifications, education levels, or other requirements that the Court should cite specific to the staff augmentation requirements for cybersecurity?

3.9.3 Describe your cyber security experience and capabilities.

3.9.4 What cyber role(s) do your cyber resources have experience with: Analyst | Specialist | Consultant | Management?

3.9.5 What are the cyber security tools your cyber resources had experienced over the past 3 years?

3.9.6 What cyber skill levels (1-5) have your cyber resource accumulated in the past 3 years: Administrator | Respondent | Hunter?

3.9.7 What cyber vulnerabilities| threats | attacks were your cyber resources involved in and contributed to the remediation, mitigation and resolution initiatives?

3.9.8 How acquainted are your cyber resources with NIST or JISF implemented into an environment over the past 3 years?

3.9.9 What security controls assessment do your cyber resources have experience with?

3.9.10 What cyber reports have your cyber resources produced & released with initiatives, incident, breach responses?

4 **Contract Scope**. -

4.1 **General Scope**

4.1.1 IT Service Management including all its process-activities including service management, incident management, change management, asset management, continuous service improvement, etc.

4.1.2 IT Service Management: Continuous improvement of customer service support for the Court's end users with a government led support team, documented processes, practices, procedures, tooling, etc., that can be tracked and monitored against Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with continual improvement. Activities include full-service desktop support such as configuration asset management, software break/fix support, tier two problem resolution, LAN administration, email, premise network, system monitoring tools, hardware maintenance, file and printer servers and devices, and all IMAC (install, move, add, change) services.

4.1.3 Key Personnel:

4.1.3.1 Delivery Manager: Works across the contract supporting the multiple cross-functional product teams (squads) to ensure the contracted technical staff success in delivery, primarily by helping to identify and remove impediments impacting the ability to deliver.

4.2 DAWSON Segment Description and Scope

4.2.1 Description: This section of the Court's digital environment delivers tested software solutions to an open-source project written in TypeScript and SCSS, with configuration managed with Terraform, and operations supported by Shell scripts. Work is completed employing an Agile software development methodology where User Stories are crafted and prioritized by the Court's Product Owner, manually tested by the Court's Product Specialist, and reviewed and deployed by the Court's Tech Lead. As directed by the Product Owner, UX Researchers and Designers meet with end users to identify pain points, advise the Product Owner for ways to improve UX, collaborate with developers to design and deliver solutions to User Stories. Developers work collaboratively to solve User Stories by completing Acceptance Criteria, where applicable writing automated integration tests and unit tests, and writing any pertinent documentation.

4.2.2 Scope includes:

4.2.2.1 Lifecycle maintenance of the Court's case management system (DAWSON).
4.2.2.2 Integrating with other services procured by the Court including, but not limited to, Microsoft Azure, Office 365, Microsoft Dataverse, Pay.gov, Monday.com, CircleCI, and GitHub.
4.2.2.3 Designing, developing, and implementing new functionalities to enhance the user experience and automate manual processes.

4.2.3 Key Personnel:

4.2.3.1 Targeted Labor Categories:

4.2.3.1.1 DevOps Engineer: Backend engineer with specialty of ensuring application deployment, automated continuous integration testing, and ensuring visibility of performance and key metrics to inform developers' decision making.

4.2.3.1.2 Delivery Manager: Managing team resources, identifying blockers and tackled, and ensuring delivery of solutions.

4.2.3.1.3 Senior Web Developer: Full-Stack Developer with expertise in TypeScript, Node.js, React.js, Terraform, CSS, and AWS Services.

4.2.3.1.4 Systems Engineer: Full-Stack Developer with expertise in AWS Services, Terraform, TypeScript,

4.2.3.1.5 UX Researcher / Designer:

4.2.3.1.6 Web Developer: Full-Stack Developer with experience in TypeScript, Node.js, React.js, CSS and

4.2.3.2 Contracted Technical Staff

Labor Category	Years of Experience	Min Degree	Number
DevOps Engineer	6	Bachelors	1
Delivery Manager	10	Bachelors	1
Senior Web Developer	7	Bachelors	5
Systems Engineer	5	Bachelors	3
UX Researcher / Designer	4	Bachelors	1
Web Developer	4	Bachelors	1

4.3 Help Desk Segment Description and Scope

4.3.1 Description: This segment of the Court's digital environment engages daily with end users to provide Tier 1 through Tier 3 support from initial deployment to retirement of equipment, licenses, and subscriptions used in the conduct of judicial and non-judicial operations with very few exclusions such as DAWSON, research services provided by the Court's library, and a small number of third-party systems (e.g., Department of Interior's Interior Business Center systems).

4.3.2 Scope includes:

4.3.2.1 Configuration and support for IT equipment used by end users (e.g., scanners, printers, windows laptops, MacBooks, smartphones, BYOD, VoIP Phones, intercoms, engravers, Point of Sales systems, Library systems, production multi-function devices, RFID). This includes escalating issues to any organizational reachback or the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) when required for warranty claims, OEM support, etc.

4.3.2.2 Software used by end users including locally installed applications as well as Software as a Service (e.g., ZoomGov, M365 services, Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, Zscaler Client Connector, CrowdStrike, Splunk, Defender for Endpoint, Printix, FTP, InDesign, Microsoft Great Plains)

4.3.2.3 Configuration and employment of court provided helpdesk tooling (e.g., TeamViewer, endpoint manager/Intune suite, Zendesk, PatchMyPC, Poly Lens, M365 Admin consoles, Printix admin, Zscaler ZDX, Entra, Azure AD DS, mFax Admin, Everbridge, Android Management, Apple Business Manager).

4.3.2.4 Climbing ladders and physically moving equipment in and around the court including oversized equipment requiring two-person lift, putting equipment on pallets to be

excessed, receiving equipment, swapping equipment (e.g., monitors, printers, scanners, computers, peripherals) for end users.

4.3.3 Key Personnel

4.3.3.1 Senior Full Stack Engineer: this key personnel position is responsible for routinely working on end user issues from Tier 1 to Tier 3, as well as has the depth of experience with Microsoft 365, Microsoft Office, Windows, iPhone, MacBooks, etc., to be the go-to for the help desk to resolve the most challenging end-user issues.

4.3.4 Targeted Labor Category Descriptions

4.3.4.1 Computer User Support Specialists: Provide technical assistance to computer users. Answer questions or resolve computer problems for clients in person, via telephone, or electronically. May provide assistance concerning the use of computer hardware and software, including printing, installation, word processing, electronic mail, and operating systems. (SOC 15-1232)

4.3.4.2 Network and Computer Systems Administrators: Install, configure, and maintain an organization's local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), data communications network, operating systems, and physical and virtual servers. Perform system monitoring and verify the integrity and availability of hardware, network, and server resources and systems. Review system and application logs and verify completion of scheduled jobs, including system backups. Analyze network and server resource consumption and control user access. Install and upgrade software and maintain software licenses. May assist in network modeling, analysis, planning, and coordination between network and data communications hardware and software. (SOC 15-1244)

4.3.4.3 Contracted Technical Staff

Labor Category	Experience (mapped to GSA)	Number
Tier II Engineer	IT Consultant	2
Tier III Sr. Engineer	Sr. IT Consultant	1
System/Cloud Administrator	Sr. IT Consultant	1
Project/Program Management	Project Manager	0.25
Chief Architect	SME Level V	1

4.4 Modernization Projects / CIO Support Description and Scope

4.4.1 Description: This segment of the Court's digital environment includes the design, implementation, operations, and maintenance of the entirety of the Court's IT infrastructure (excluding DAWSON) from network cabling in the buildings to cloud services. The operations and maintenance of the court's enabling infrastructure (e.g., AWS and Azure services via Infrastructure as Code, on-premises Cisco Meraki LAN, WLAN and WAN network, Cisco host platform, Microsoft Hypervisor, virtual machines, software applications development, low-code/no-code automations, physical access control systems, video-camera surveillance, intercoms).

4.4.2 Scope Includes:

4.4.2.1 Software Engineering: Software engineering excluding the DAWSON code base including custom web applications, Public Website built with Wagtail and deployed on AWS, low-code/no-code solutions built on the Microsoft Power Platform, Infrastructure as Code employing Court APIs, PowerShell scripts, custom software deployment packages, artificial intelligence projects, etc.

4.4.2.2 User Experience and Design: Formulating a comprehensive understanding of end user needs for Court-maintained Software Applications as well as crafting the visual elements of User Interfaces to help fulfill those needs.

4.4.2.3 Employment of Court provided tooling: AWS tenant services, Azure tenant services, M365 tenant services, GitHub, JavaScript software libraries, as-a-service admin consoles (e.g., Meraki, EagleEye, Brivo, Poly Lens, RoomAlert, Printix, Zscaler),

4.4.2.4 Infrastructure Equipment, Licenses, and Subscriptions: The deployment, configuration, and retirement of infrastructure equipment, licenses, and subscriptions such as Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS), onprem Servers (e.g., Windows hypervisor, Windows Server, RedHat), virtual servers, cloud tenants, security cameras, intercoms, badge readers, physical and virtual networking, reverse proxies, firewalls,

4.4.2.5 Business and Data Analysis: the modeling and analysis of the court's judicial and non-judicial operational workflow and data to identify inefficiencies and supporting the Court to manage the implementation of solutions. Includes developing and maintaining the Court's Enterprise Architecture that provides line-of-sight from Court's judicial and non-judicial operations to the user stories and technical requirements of the digital environment. This is inclusive of business process modeling, business process reengineering, data modeling, and data science.

4.4.3 Key Personnel

4.4.3.1 Delivery Manager for Modernization Projects

4.4.3.2 DevOps Engineer

4.4.3.3 Sr. Web Developer

4.4.4 Targeted Labor Category Descriptions:

4.4.4.1 Computer Network Support Specialists: Analyze, test, troubleshoot, and evaluate existing network systems, such as local area networks (LAN), wide area networks (WAN), cloud networks, servers, and other data communications networks. Perform network maintenance to ensure networks operate correctly with minimal interruption. (SOC 15-1231).

4.4.4.2 Network and Computer Systems Administrators: Install, configure, and maintain an organization's local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), data communications network, operating systems, and physical and virtual servers. Perform system monitoring and verify the integrity and availability of hardware, network, and server resources and systems. Review system and application logs and verify completion of scheduled jobs, including system backups. Analyze network and server resource consumption and control user access. Install and upgrade software and maintain software licenses. May assist in network modeling, analysis, planning, and coordination between network and data communications hardware and software. (SOC 15-1244).

4.4.4.3 Computer Network Architect: Design and implement computer and information networks, such as local area networks (LAN), wide area networks (WAN), intranets, extranets, and other data communications networks. Perform network modeling, analysis, and planning, including analysis of capacity needs for network infrastructures. May also design network and computer security measures. May research and recommend network and data communications hardware and software. (SOC 15-1241)

4.4.4.4 Computer Systems Analysts: Analyze science, engineering, business, and other data processing problems to develop and implement solutions to complex applications problems, system administration issues, or network concerns. Perform systems management and integration functions, improve existing computer systems, and review computer system capabilities, workflow, and schedule limitations. May analyze or recommend commercially available software. (SCO 15-1211)

4.4.4.5 Data Scientists: Develop and implement a set of techniques or analytics applications to transform raw data into meaningful information using data-oriented programming languages and visualization software. Apply data mining, data modeling, natural language processing, and machine learning to extract and analyze information from large structured and unstructured datasets. Visualize, interpret, and report data findings. May create dynamic data reports. (SOC 15-2051)

4.4.4.6 Delivery Manager

4.4.4.7 Software Full Stack Engineer

4.4.4.8 Dev Ops Engineer:

4.4.4.9 Senior Web Developer

4.4.4.10 Web Developer

4.4.4.11 UX Researcher

4.4.4.12 Graphic Design and CSS engineering

4.4.5 Contracted Technical Staff

4.4.5.1 Automations Team

Labor Category	Years of Experience	Min Degree	Number
DevOps Engineer	6	Bachelors	1
Senior Program Manager	10	Bachelors	1
Senior Web Developer	7	Bachelors	1
UX Researcher / Designer	4	Bachelors	1
Web Developer	4	Bachelors	1

4.4.5.2 Web Apps Team

Labor Category	Years of Experience	Min Degree	Number
DevOps Engineer	6	Bachelors	1
Senior Program Manager	10	Bachelors	1
Senior Web Developer	7	Bachelors	2

UX Researcher / Designer	4	Bachelors	1
Graphic Designer	6	Bachelors	1
Web Developer	4	Bachelors	1

4.4.5.3 Infrastructure Team

Labor Category	Years of Experience	Min Degree	Number
DevOps Engineer	6	Bachelors	
Senior Program Manager	10	Bachelors	
Senior Web Developer	7	Bachelors	
UX Researcher / Designer	4	Bachelors	
Graphic Designer	6	Bachelors	
Web Developer	4	Bachelors	

4.5 Cybersecurity Segment description and Scope

4.5.1 Description: Although the Court is supported by the Dept of Justice's cybersecurity shared services, there are daily cyberoperations that are performed such as adjudicating end user requests for software and website access, developing and maintaining system security plans, monitoring risks in the Court's digital environment and proposing mitigations, etc.

4.5.2 Scope Includes: The typical duties of the CISO, ISSO, and daily cyberoperations such as monitoring for risks, adjudicating end user requests, coordinating with third parties (e.g., Dept of Justice), planning/implementing/monitoring execution of the Plan of Actions and Milestone for systems, development and maintenance of system security plans, incident response, cybersecurity planning, etc.

4.5.3 Key Personnel

4.5.3.1 Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) to perform the typical CISO duties for the Court, lead the daily cybersecurity operations, lead engagement with the DoJ SOC, and perform hands-on-keyboard cyberoperations work such as maintaining compliance policies and adjudicating end user requests (e.g., whitelisting websites, clearing cloud apps, assessing risks of new software, facilitating international access).

4.5.3.2 Cybersecurity Analyst to perform the typical ISSO duties as well as perform hands-on-keyboard cyberoperations work such as maintaining compliance policies and adjudicating end user requests (e.g., whitelisting websites, clearing cloud apps, assessing risks of new software, facilitating international access).

4.5.3.3 Targeted Labor Category Descriptions

4.5.3.3.1 Information Security Analyst: Plan, implement, upgrade, or monitor security measures for the protection of computer networks and information. Assess system vulnerabilities for security risks and propose and implement risk mitigation strategies. May ensure appropriate security controls are in place that will safeguard digital files and vital electronic infrastructure. May respond to computer security breaches and viruses. (15-1241).

5 Period and Place of Performance

5.1 General

5.1.1 The Period of Performance (PoP) will be 60 months from the date of award.

5.1.2 All solutions and service support should focus on servicing Court personnel regardless of their location. The primary work location for supported court personnel is at the Washington, DC courthouse (400 2nd Street NW; Washington, DC 20217); however, the Court's endpoints are mobile and often used from home offices or federal facilities. Further, the Court has a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program enabling the use of personal devices to access the Court's information services. Lastly, the following facilities are supported remotely by the Court's Office of Information Services (OIS).

5.1.2.1 Most Frequently Used Field Courtrooms: five leased Court facilities resident within GSA-owned Federal buildings (e.g., Federal Courthouses, Custom Houses, other Federal buildings). These facilities have an internet circuit as well as Local Area Network (LAN) services, Wireless LAN, and Audio/Video services. The number of facilities considered Most Frequently Used may increase during the PoP. Within scope is remotely monitoring and managing these services as well as providing remote to support to Judge's and Trial Clerks working in these facilities.

5.1.2.2 Least Frequently Used Field Courtrooms: 27 leased Court facilities resident within GSA owned Federal buildings. These facilities require periodic service during Trial Sessions for network, voice, and print which is accomplished by the Court shipping these items. Within scope of this agreement is responding to the Judge or Trial Clerk's support requests during a trial session.

5.1.2.3 Borrowed Courtroom Facilities: Geographically there are 37 locations throughout the United States that the Court holds Trial Sessions, but has no leased Court facility. These Trial Sessions can occur in any one of a number of facilities in the geographic area for a total of 64 different facilities where the Court routinely, yet temporarily, borrows space. These are serviced in the same manner as the Least Frequently Used Field Offices.

5.1.3 Those contractor positions that are required to be onsite (whether full-time or periodically) should be available to be onsite at the Court's Washington DC headquarters Monday through Friday from 7 am to 5pm as scheduled by the government team lead. Contractors not required to be onsite must be available at least during the Court's core business hours which are 9am – 3pm Monday through Friday (Eastern).

5.2 DAWSON Segment

5.2.1 Personnel supporting the DAWSON segment are generally remote and are not required to work in a government facility.

5.2.2 The teams supporting DAWSON are government led and self-organizing as required.

5.2.3 The Court may provide Government Furnished Equipment when required or desired by the vendor.

5.2.4 The Court's team lead will generally identify and provide the DevOps tooling and define the DevOps cadence. For response purposes, use the following as a baseline: GitHub Actions, CircleCI, AWS Amplify, and Azure DevOps.

5.3 Help Desk Segment

5.3.1 Support is provided from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm EST Monday – Friday, with team members working staggered shifts to cover the full 10 hours. Contracted technical staff supporting the help desk should expect to be onsite in the DC courthouse full-time (i.e., no remote work); however, the court will consider any proposed schedules for occasional remote work.

5.4 Modernization Projects / CIO Support Segment

5.4.1 Excluding software developers, contracted technical staff supporting this segment are expected to be onsite at the DC Courthouse at least three time each week, and as scheduled by the government team lead. The court will consider any proposed schedules for occasional remote work.

5.4.2 Software developers engaged in developing Web Apps and no-code/low-code solutions, User Experience, Graphic Design and Delivery Managers can be full time remote, anywhere within what the Court defines as the United States as long as they are available to work during the established core hours of the court: 9AM-3PM Eastern.

5.5 Cyberoperations Segment

5.5.1 Contractors supporting this segment are expected to be onsite at the DC Courthouse at least three time each week, and as required by the government team lead. The court will consider any proposed schedules for occasional remote work.

6 Current Environment

6.1 See Appendix A for judicial and non-judicial operation information. In general, the Court's digital environment currently consists of:

- Case Management System (DAWSON) that employs AWS native services with the open source code base available at https://github.com/ustaxcourt/ef-cms
- Modern endpoints including Court owned devices (e.g., Windows, Macbooks, iPhones, Samsung) and Bring Your Own Device (Windows, iOS, MacOS, Android).
- Cloud managed peripherals and appliances including Printix, EndPoint Manager/Intune Suite, TeamViewer, Defender for EndPoint, Crowdstrike, PatchMyPC, Poly Lens, etc.
- Networked devices (Internet of Things) in the Court's facilities with an expectation the number of things will grow including security cameras, badge readers/intercoms, physical access control panels, point of sale systems, library systems, conference room/training room displays, environmental sensors, A/V equipment, Wireless Access Points, etc.
- The US Tax Court is an Independent Court under Article I, but follows the Procurement policies in Volume 14 and Volume 15 of the Administrative Offices of U.S. Courts' (AOUSC) Guide to Judiciary Policy.
- Nearly all network traffic traverses Zscaler (FEDRAMP Moderate) which is administered by the DoJ Cybersecurity Shared Services Program (CSSP), on behalf of the Court.

7 Constraints and Restraints

7.1 Cybersecurity. Contractors must adopt and use cybersecurity best practices to protect the Court's interest such as being authenticated using multi-factor authentication or a "Smart", risk based authentication.

7.2 Contracted technical staff that are required to be onsite (whether full-time or periodically) must be available Monday through Friday from 7 am to 5pm to work onsite as scheduled by the government team lead.

7.3 Personnel Security Clearances and Access Control

7.3.1 Compliance with "Personnel Screening for Information with Special Protection Measures" security control for supporting personnel as defined in the latest version of the National Institute of Science and Technology Special Publication 800 – 53 (NIST SP800-53). Risk levels for personnel can be determined using GSA ADM 9732.1C. Only appropriately cleared personnel are assigned to positions that meet these criteria.

7.3.2 Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12) requires that all federal entities ensure that all contractors have current and approved security background investigations that are equivalent to investigations performed on federal employees. Examples of background checks for Federal employees include:

- (Low Risk) National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI) which includes a National Agency Check, law enforcement check, records search, credit check, and written inquiries of previous/current employers, education, residence, and references
- (Moderate Risk) Minimum Background Investigation (MBI) which includes NACI plus a candidate interview.
- (High Risk) Full Background Investigation (BI) which includes MBI plus a review of candidate's employment, residential, and education history for the preceding five years with potential of in person interviews with sources.

7.3.3 A Contractor Information Worksheet (CIW) (GSA Form 850) will be provided for each contractor which is forwarded to the Federal Protective Service (FPS). FPS will then contact each contractor with instructions for completing required forms and releases for the particular type of personnel investigation requested.

7.3.4 Supporting personnel must be a United States citizen or Permanent Resident. All work must be performed within the location the Court deems the United States. At no time will contractors support the Court when outside these locations.

7.3.5 Disposal of any and all equipment, regardless if it is owned by the contractor or by the government, will be in-line with industry best practices and Federal standards such as NIST SP 800-88 Guidelines for Media Sanitization for ensuring it is infeasible to access government information for a given level of effort for media and devices used by the Court.

7.4 Non-Disclosure Agreements

7.4.1 Contractors will have non-disclosure agreements to protect against the release of government information related to future plans, sealed course cases or case file as well as any other information otherwise not yet disclosed to parties of a case or the public. Personnel who have privileged access to Court information (e.g., file stores, email, backups, case databases) will also have non-disclosure agreements to protect sensitive case information.

7.5 Data

7.5.1 Records and data shall be documented in deliverable reports (electronically). Any databases/code shall be delivered electronically and become the sole property of the United States Government. All deliverables become the sole property of the United States Government. The Government, for itself and such others as it deems appropriate, will have unlimited rights under this contract to all information and materials developed under this contract and furnished to the Government and documentation thereof, reports and listings, and all other items pertaining to the work and services pursuant to this agreement including any copyright.

7.5.2 Unlimited rights under this contract are rights to use, duplicate, or disclose data, and information, in whole or in part in any manner and for any purpose whatsoever without compensation to or approval from the provider. The Government will at all reasonable times have the right to inspect the work and will have access to and the right to make copies of the above-mentioned items. All digital files and data, and other products generated under this contract, shall become the property of the Government.

7.5.3 All Contract participants shall sign a non-disclose and non-compete agreement to restrict use and protect confidential and proprietary information.

7.6 Confidentiality, Security, and Privacy

7.6.1 In accordance with the Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR) clause 52.239-1, the Contractor shall be responsible for the following privacy and security safeguards:

7.6.1.1 The Contractor shall not publish or disclose in any manner, without the Contracting Officer’s written consent, the details of any safeguards used by the Contractor under the resulting contract or otherwise provided by or for the government.

7.6.1.2 To the extent required to carry out a program of inspection to safeguard against threats and hazards to the security, integrity, and confidentiality of any non-public government data collected and stored by the Contractor, the Contractor shall afford the government access to the Contractor’s facilities, installations, technical capabilities, operations, documentation, records, and databases.

7.6.1.3 If new or unanticipated threats or hazards are discovered by either the government or the Contractor, or if existing safeguards have ceased to function, the discoverer shall immediately bring the situation to the attention of the other party.

7.6.1.4 The Offeror's solution must comply with the GSA CIO IT Security Procedural Guide CIO-IT Security-09-48, Security Language for IT Acquisition Efforts as required for a Moderate Impact system.

7.6.1.5 Work on this project may require or allow contractor personnel access to Privacy Information. Personnel shall adhere to the Privacy Act, Title 5 of the U.S. Code, Section 552a and applicable agency rules and regulations.

7.6.1.6 All data at rest will reside within the contiguous United States, the District of Columbia, and Alaska (CONUS) with a minimum of two data center facilities at two different and distant geographic locations

7.7 Accessibility. Requirements for accessibility based on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d) are determined to be relevant. Information about the Section 508 Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) Accessibility Standards may be obtained via the Web at the following URL: www.Section508.gov . The Government Product/Service Accessibility Template (GPAT) is found in

Attachment 7 of this solicitation. Generally accepted inspection and test methods corresponding to the identified Section 508 standards are reflected in the EIT Acceptance Guide found at Attachment 8.

Appendix A: Court Judicial and Non-Judicial Operations Description

The United States Tax Court is an independent Federal court with headquarters at 400 Second Street, N.W., in Washington, D.C. The Tax Court provides a national forum for the resolution of disputes between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The Tax Court conducts trial sessions and hearings in Washington, D.C., and in 73 other cities throughout the United States. The vast majority of Federal tax litigation takes place in the Tax Court. Tax Court cases are tried by Judges without a jury.

The scope of the Tax Court's jurisdiction is set forth in various provisions of Title 26 of the U.S. Code (the Internal Revenue Code). The Court's jurisdiction includes income, estate, gift, and certain excise tax deficiencies, collection due process cases, claims for spousal relief from joint and several liability, partnership proceedings, declaratory judgments, disclosure cases, interest abatement actions, review of awards under the IRS whistleblower program, and review of denial, revocation, or limitation of a passport due to delinquent taxes.

The Court maintains a data network that operates in a Windows environment and supports approximately 250 internal users. The Court currently contracts with Iron Bow Technologies, LLC, for a broad variety of network-related services.

21,882 cases were filed with the Court during the government fiscal year ending September 30, 2023, and the Court closed 31,585 cases during the same time. Approximately 21,000 cases are open right now.

A Tax Court proceeding commences with the filing of a Petition. A "Petitioner" is the party who initiates the case; the IRS is always the "Respondent". Approximately 80% of Petitioners are self-represented. Petitioners can choose their location of trial from any of the 74 places of trial where the Court holds sessions across the country.

A Tax Court case is not automatically assigned to a Judge when the Petition is filed. A Tax Court case is maintained in the "general docket" under the supervision of the Chief Judge until it is calendared for trial or assigned to a Judge.

The Court requires certain specified categories of case filings to be made electronically. The Court also allows for in person and electronic access to most categories of case records.

The Bar of the Tax Court includes all attorneys and non-attorneys who are admitted to practice before the Court on behalf of either a Petitioner or the IRS. There are currently approximately 25,000 registered Tax Court practitioners.

The following Court units currently support and oversee the various aspects of the Court's current case management processes:

- *Office of the Chief Judge*: General Docket Attorneys under the Chief Judge provide legal advice to the Court and assist with the Court's general docket.
- *Intake Section*: The Intake Section ("Intake") is responsible for receiving and processing all incoming mail before its distribution.
- *Petitions Section*: The Petitions Section ("Petitions") receives and processes all Petitions and any accompanying documents as part of the case initiation process.
- *Docket Section*: The Docket Section ("Docket") receives and processes documents (other than Petitions) and maintains the "docket record" for each case. A docket record lists every document that is part of the Court's official record in the case.
- *Records and Reproduction Section*: The Records and Reproduction Section ("Records") is both the Court's copy center and responsible for maintaining the Court's official case records.

- *Calendar Section*: The Calendar Section ("Calendar") prepares term calendars, schedules cases for trial, and issues trial notices and orders.
- *Trial Clerks*: A trial clerk attends each trial session with a Judge. While at a trial session, the trial clerk calls the calendar of cases, swears in witnesses, processes documents submitted at the session, orders the official transcripts of the proceedings, prepares a minute sheet of the proceedings, and prepares draft orders for the Judge.
- *Reporter's Office*: The Reporter's Office reviews all opinions before release to ensure stylistic conformity with Tax Court standards. It also processes all opinions for filing, both in slip opinion format and electronically, on the Court's Intranet and on its Internet Website. The Reporter's Office coordinates publication of Division Opinions and Court-reviewed Opinions in the United States Tax Court Reports by the U.S. Government Publishing Office.
- *Admissions Section*: The Admissions Section ("Admissions") processes new applications to be admitted to the Court's Bar. Admissions is also responsible for assisting with the administration of the Court's Bar, verifying that practitioners appearing on behalf of a Petitioner are admitted to practice and in good standing before the Court, and administering the biannual non-attorney examination.