

## RFP Interactive Guidelines on the Web

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### *Vendor Questions and USSC Answers received before and during the Bidders Conference*

1. In price proposal Table A has Task 6 cost column. However, in the RFP document there is no mention to Task 6, hence clarification? – **This was an error in the RFP there is no task 6. We will be removing the reference from the RFP on GSA.**
2. Can you share information of environment and product version?  
**Hardware is HP blade environment.**  
**Virtualization-Each host is a Virtual Machine running in a VMWare environment (version 5.5 transitioning to 6.0 in the near future).**  
**Website-Drupal 7, Apache 2.2, Red Hat Enterprise Linux v6.**  
**Database-MySQL Enterprise Edition 5.6.35, Red Hat Enterprise Linux 6.**  
**Search Engine- Apache Solr 4.5.1, Red Hat Enterprise Linux v6.**  
**Caching-Nginx (on webheads) handles HTTPS caching.**
3. Do you have any plans to modify the theme and user experience? – **The new features requested in this RFP must act as an extension of the current online guidelines manual. The features should integrate into the online manual and should follow the same form and style as the Commission’s existing website.**
4. How are registered users handled today? - **There are no externally registered users, and internally registered users are restricted to designated staff. Any internal user profiles are all created by a Drupal administrator, and there is no self-sign up or registration internally controlled.**
5. What are the different user roles and privileges available? - **Currently we have two basic groups of users. Admins and contributors/publishers. The contributors and publishers will eventually be separated into two categories as we continue to fine tune our publishing process but, at the moment, this group enjoys a slightly elevated set of privileges to allow manipulation of menus, content types, and other features to facilitate content manipulation.**
6. Can you give us the volume of assets? (PDF’s documents, images)- **Our website offers a large volume of PDFs (for the Guidelines Manual and a wide range of other topics) and we can provide the specific number of PDFs for the website as a whole, for the Guidelines Manual or any of the other topics, if the scope of the project requires this information. We do not offer other types of documents (Microsoft Word, Excel files) on the Commission’s website. Our use of imagery is fairly light at this time.**

7. Will you need advanced document search capability? – **No. The only required interactive features are those set forth in the RFP. Advance searching, beyond basic search functionality available in most common browsers, is not required for the requested features.**
8. How are you planning to upload all the appendix contents to the system? Will you need any automatic migration from our end? - **Drupal and IMCE, modules control and model handing, and we will push that content up through the various stages from UAP, to production. Automatic migration is welcome for large volume content manipulation as long as the automated process correctly folds into our existing tagging/taxonomy schema.**
9. Are you using a MySQL database? - **Yes. MYSQL Enterprise edition 5.6.35.**
10. Will newly/edited amendments need to be updated retroactively in the documentation? **Past versions of the Guidelines Manual retain the information that applied to them. The Interactive Guidelines Manual would be a reflection of the current year's Guidelines and would be updated annually to reflect the latest amendments.**
11. Any user limitation to who can view the data? - **There are no restrictions for visitors to our website. All published content is viewable. Direct access (signing on with an account) can only be accomplished to our Test and Stage servers from inside the U.S Court's network using accounts assigned by the Drupal Admin.**
12. Technical objective #5 states that all changes must take into account the overall security posture of the Commission's website. Can you please provide details on the current security posture? **Before this project can go live, we would have to stand up a production-ready server on the DMZ with any modifications in place. It would then be locked down and the AO's information and technology security office would run a battery of scans to make sure it does not violate any rules or regulations before it can be used as an actual production server.**
13. Can you confirm that when Appendix C is migrated/converted to HTML; the target environment for the HTML content is to be within the Drupal system? If so, can you share the content types and other important configuration settings of the Drupal site? - **Yes, we would share a complete copy of our website.**
14. Will the government provide answers to submitted questions only on August 4 or on a rolling basis between July 26 – August 3 as questions are submitted. In other words, if we submit questions on July 27 or thereafter, is there a possibility we receive an answer earlier than August 4? - **Yes, there is certainly possible you will get the answers before then. The cumulative list of questions and answers will be distributed all at the end.**

15. Can you confirm you have the “source” documents of the Appendix C PDF...in Word? Or shall we use the PDF document as the source? **Currently, Appendix C is divided into 4 volumes. One volume is available as a Word document. The other three volumes are available as WordPerfect files. If someone prefers to work in PDF we can provide them that.**
16. Do you have a preferred template or format for the work plan that we are to submit with the proposal? **No.**
17. Is it a 1-to-1 mapping of amendment to sub-section? Or will there be a 1-to-many mapping of amendment to sub-section? - Will an amendment apply to more than one section? **The scope of each amendment varies. Many amendments apply to only one specific provision, but others apply to multiple provisions. It is also possible that a specific amendment could apply to multiple provisions within the same guideline or to provisions in different guidelines. As discussed in Question 40 below, it is for this reason that the Commission welcomes feedback on whether the vendors solution is best accomplished through mapping information provided by guideline provision (i.e., §2B1.1(b)(2) impacted by Amendments 617, 647, 653, and 792) or is the information best provided by amendment (i.e., Amendment 801 - affected §§2G2.1(b)(3), 2G2.1(b)(4), 2G2.2(b)(3), 2G2.2(b)(4), 2G3.1(b)(1)).**
18. For the responsive design; what are the form factors you expect to need to support? It appears the current site supports two break points. – **As noted, because the interactive features must seamlessly interact with the Commission’s website, the new responsive design must match the current website in form and style.**
19. What is the number of hours you expect to be needed to reasonably be able to do this work? **This will depend in large part on the vendor’s proposal, and the Commission has not estimated a total number of work hours. As noted in the RFP, the Commission envisions that this will be a collaborative process with work being done by both the vendor and Commission staff. Working with the vendor, Commission staff will do much of the work on mapping specific amendments with vendor guidance to make the process as efficient and least time-consuming as possible. The Commission’s general counsel team will work with the vendor on identifying the necessary legislative history to the guidelines.**
20. How much of it they expect to have happen at your site? - **We expect the initial testing to be done externally, and at the same time working towards standing up a server internally on the AO’s hosting environment. This internally hosted server will need to be developed and hardened to pass the AO’s security screening.**

21. Is there a current effort underway, or have any attempts been made to date? - **Currently, there are no other technological efforts underway to accomplish the new interactive web features set forth in the RFP.**
22. Are you open to moving the solution to the Cloud? - **No, the code and software needed for the new interactive features must be hosted in the Commission's web server environment.**
23. Why is this a separate solicitation than the USSC Mobile App Development project? - **This is a different project, looking to add enhanced functionality to the Guidelines Manual that we have on the website. Unlike the mobile application, the new features required by this project must be incorporated into the Commission's current web server environment. The mobile application could be hosted internally or in an external or cloud based environment.**
24. 508 compliance not required? – **The Rehabilitation Act does not apply to the judicial branch, so there is no requirement that the mobile app be 508 compliant.**
25. What are the conversion tools used? - **As of the date of the RFP and provision of these responses, the Commission has not used any conversion tool to convert the source documents to HTML.**
26. What is the source of the guidelines manual and the appendices? - **The Guidelines Manual is already available in HTML format on the website. Appendix C is divided into four volumes, totaling 1,564 pages. Three of those volumes are available as WordPerfect files, and one as a MSWord document.**
27. Is this a small business set aside? - **No.**
28. Is there a current contractor on this project? If yes, who is the current contractor? **No.**
29. Can you share the current and/or anticipated contract value? -**Budget will be solidified when the Commission awards.**
30. Will the vendor be given a data dump to work on the website? **The Commission will provide a copy of its current website and current online version of the *Guidelines Manual* to serve as the base of the vendor's work on the new interactive features required by the RFP. In terms of the data that will underlie the new information callout boxes (i.e., the specific amendments that apply to each guideline provision), the Commission has not yet completed the process of identifying which specific amendments apply to each of the various guideline provisions. The Commission could provide a small sample if that would be of assistance to vendors in preparation of their bids. The Commission is seeking information in the bid as to the process by which such**

information should be gathered, compiled and provided to the vendor in order to allow for the most efficient completion of the tasks in the RFP. For example, does the vendor's solution require submission of the mapping information in Excel, Word, or some other formatting? Also, is mapping information best provided by guideline provision (*i.e.*, §2B1.1(b)(2) impacted by Amendments 617, 647, 653, and 792) or is the information best provided by amendment (*i.e.*, Amendment 801 - affected §§2G2.1(b)(3), 2G2.1(b)(4), 2G2.2(b)(3), 2G2.2(b)(4), 2G3.1(b)(1), ). As part of the RFP, the Commission also seeks any proposed solution (including specific software) to make the work of the Commission staff in mapping the guideline provisions more efficient, if possible.

31. Can you clarify the key personnel section? -**A modification to the RFP has been posted on GSA for this section.**
32. Is this the same project except smaller scope as the "Guidelines Manual Mobile Application Development"? **No, this is a distinct project with a different purpose. Among other differences, the Interactive Guidelines features required in this RFP must work in the Commission's current web environment and in conjunction with the Commission's website. The new features must reside in the Commission's server environment. Conversely, the Mobile Application Development was open to offsite and cloud based approaches.**
33. Is there an incumbent vendor who did the re-design work, last year, or was the re-design done in house? – **Yes, The Commission's website updating and maintenance contract was previously awarded to New Target, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia**
34. Based on the previous server setup question. Does the vendor need to create a nearly identical server setup for development use, then the Vendor will be required to move that setup to be in-house at the end of development? **Correct. It is assumed that initial configuration and testing will take place externally and that this development server will be migrated to a server hosted on the Court's hosting environment**
35. Based upon our assessment of Appendix C, there are no pictures, graphics; can you confirm Appendix C is only text? **Correct, Appendix C is an entirely text-based document with no picture or graphics.**
36. Item 4 on the Objective states to "apply responsive design principles as set forth by the U.S. Sentencing Commission". We know that the current USSC site uses responsive design which we can continue to support. But do you have a documented/defined set of responsive design principles we shall use in formulating our response? **No. The interactive elements of the Guidelines Manual should be mobile friendly and follow the responsive design principles of the current website as seen from external users.**
37. Can you please confirm the frequency of modifications to the *Guidelines Manual* is annual (e.g., provisions amended and updated, application notes amended and

updated)? **The amount of changes will vary from year to year. Estimate around 10 amendments per year, could be higher or lower. However, a single amendment may affect more than one guideline. The following link provides access to a reader-friendly version of the 2016 amendments showing the type of changes an amendment brings about: <http://www.ussc.gov/guidelines/amendments/reader-friendly-version-amendments-effective-november-1-2016>**

38. How many individuals do you anticipate receiving training? **The Commission has not fully determined how many individuals will require training, and the answer depends in part on the vendor's solution. If the vendor identifies a technological process for completing the necessary amendment mapping, training may be required for the Commission's legal staff working on the mapping process (approximately 10-15 staffers). Upon completion of the process, a smaller number of staff would need to be trained on maintaining the new functions and adding new amendments to the system in the future. This would likely be 5 or fewer staff members.**
39. Do you have expectations/requirements on the materials created for training and knowledge transfer? **At a minimum, we would expect a working reference guide that specifically applies to this project (i.e., we are NOT looking for a generic copy-and-paste intro to Drupal guide) coupled with a guided walkthrough – local or remote sessions are acceptable.**
40. We understand that the Commission staff will work with the vendor to identify those amendments that apply to each guideline provision. Does the Commission already have a mapping of the amendments that apply to each guideline (or partial mapping)? Or in our response and pricing, shall the vendor assume there is no current mapping and we will need to create it anew as part of this statement of work? **The Commission has not yet completed the process of identifying which specific amendments apply to each of the various guideline provisions. The Commission could provide a small sample if that would be of assistance to vendors in preparation of their bids. The Commission is seeking information in the bid as to the process by which such information should be gathered, compiled and provided to the vendor in order to allow for the most efficient completion of the tasks in the RFP. For example, does the vendor's solution require submission of the mapping information in Excel, Word, or some other formatting? Also, is mapping information best provided by guideline provision (i.e., §2B1.1(b)(2) impacted by Amendments 617, 647, 653, and 792) or is the information best provided by amendment (i.e., Amendment 801 - affected §§2G2.1(b)(3), 2G2.1(b)(4), 2G2.2(b)(3), 2G2.2(b)(4), 2G3.1(b)(1)). As part of the RFP, the Commission also seeks any proposed solution (including specific software) to make the work of the Commission staff in mapping the guideline provisions more efficient, if possible.**
41. In "Technical Approach" instructions in the Technical Proposal Requirements, the Commission is requesting a "work plan" to complete Tasks 1- 5. Can you please clarify if you are looking for a Gantt-chart style project schedule/plan in the proposal response?

Or by “work plan”, you intend the write-up of the technical approach to accomplishing the tasks. **No Gantt-style chart required, this is a write-up of the technical approach.**

42. In Item A. – Task One, Task Two, Task 3 – Fixed Price Table...should the columns with the headings of “Task 4”, “Task 5” as these tasks are handled in Tables B and C? **Correct – we will update the RFP accordingly.**
43. Can you provide details on the existing AO Hosting infrastructure? Hardware and software specs? **See answer to Question #2.**
44. Should Appendix A: Terms and Conditions be attached to the proposal as an appendix? **The vendor is free to attach Appendix A to the proposal, but this is not a requirement. However, even in the absence of attaching to the proposal, all Terms and Conditions will be deemed incorporated into a final award, unless the vendor identifies specific exceptions that are accepted by the Commission.**
45. Since the positions of Project Director/Project Manager, and Programmers are cited in this section, it is unclear who the USSC had determined to be key personnel. Can it be stated that *all* proposed staff are considered as key personnel by USSC? **The vendor should identify the person responsible for all work performed under this contract (for example the Project Manager, Project Director, etc.) as Key Personnel. Additionally, any programmers assigned to this project should also be identified as Key Personnel, and have a minimum of two years’ experience developing and maintaining websites or interactive elements of websites.**
46. In section 2, *Past Performance*, on page 11, it is stated, "The offeror shall identify the key personnel proposed to work on the USSC’s contract and shall submit the following items for each." QUESTION: This reference to key personnel seems more appropriate for section 3, *Key Personnel*. Is that what was intended? It seems that the “for each” applies to the Past Performance samples and not the key personnel. Is this correct? The **revised language for Requirement 2 (Offeror’s Past Performance) now states: “The offeror shall submit a minimum of three specific contracts under which the same or similar services were provided by the offeror. The offeror shall identify the key personnel proposed to work on the USSC’s contract and shall submit the following items for each:**
- a. **Reference Company/Contract Number**
  - b. **Contact Person**
  - c. **Telephone Number**
  - d. **Brief description of task, including a statement describing the similarity by scope and complexity of the task to the work required for this task.”**
47. It was stated during the proposal conference that the session was being recorded. QUESTION: Can a link to the session be sent to vendors via email as soon as

possible? **Yes, the audio and presentation from the bidder's conference will be available on GSA by 8/4/2017.**

48. QUESTION: Can a version of the RFQ which highlights the revisions of the modification 1 dated 07/27/2017 03:29:42 PM EDT be posted? It will be very cumbersome to identify what changed otherwise. I have identified the statement on page 11. If that is the only modification, perhaps you could verify? **Modifications were made to page 11, past performance, and page 12, Price Proposal.**
49. As was specified in the RFQ, "some work can occur at the vendor's location and some is required to be onsite at the offices of the Commission in Washington, DC." Would it be possible to get the repartition of the percentage of work to be performed at each location? (E.G. 70% offsite 30% onsite) **We cannot determine accurate percentage, as this will depend on the security access needed to accomplish each task.**
50. The price proposal and RFQ show that the first base year ends in September 2017. Is this an active contract, with a current incumbent that you are looking to replace? Was the contract put on hold, and is it now to be resumed? **No. This is a new solicitation that will use FY17 funds. Although we do not anticipate all task being completed in FY17, we do expect significant progress to be made in FY17 in order to obligate FY17 funding.**