

Amendment to Request for Quote

August 20, 2018

This document is an amendment in question and answer form to the Request for Quote (RFQ) issued by the United States Tax Court on August 2, 2018, No. 18-0018. It contains supplemental information and Q&As 1, 8, 15, and 16 revise certain specific statements in the original RFQ.

Q1: The RFQ states: "Technical submissions must consist of a technical proposal of no more than four (4) pages, a staffing plan of no more than three (3) pages plus resumes and signed letters of intent to participate, and references to one or more source code samples. Technical submissions may also include user research plans and design artifacts." Question: What, if any, page limits or restrictions apply to the user research plans and design artifacts?

A1: User research plans and design artifacts may be no more than 30 pages combined. The second sentence in the "Technical Submission" section on page 14 of the RFQ is amended to read: "Technical submissions may also include user research plans and design artifacts of no more than 30 pages combined."

Q2: Re Similar Experience: the RFQ states "In evaluating an Offeror's similar experience, the Court will consider the extent to which the Offeror has recently provided software development services for projects that are similar in size, scope, and complexity to the project described in this RFQ, and the quality of those services. How does the Government define "recently"?

A2: The Court prefers examples from services provided during the past 3 years.

Q3: Similar Experience is listed as an evaluation factor, but the RFQ only asks for information on Technical Approach, Staffing Approach (Plan) and Price. What is the best way for the bidder to explain their similar experiences and would that count towards the page count?

A3: The Court expects that the extent to which the Offeror has recently provided software development services for similar projects, and the quality of those services, will be revealed primarily from the Offeror's source code samples and any user research plans and design artifacts provided, as well as from the substance of the Offeror's technical proposal and staffing plan, including resumes. In addition, in considering an Offeror's similar experience, the Court may also consider information from any other source, including the Offeror's current and prior customers and public websites. Submissions should not include any other separate discussion of similar experience.

Q4: Evaluation Criteria — Interview. The RFQ states: "Both of the Offeror's proposed Key Personnel must participate in the interview." Question: Can other members of the team, in addition to both of the Key Personnel, participate in the interview, or is it limited to only the Key Personnel? If other team members can participate, are there any limits or conditions that apply to who participates?

A4: Other individuals whom the Offeror is proposing to be part of the development team may participate in the interview, but the Court would prefer to limit Contractor interview participants to five (5) or less.

Q5: Do specific requirements exist for background and experience of Key Personnel?

A5: No, there are no specific background or experience requirements for the Key Personnel.

Q6: Re Documentation: Are we correct in assuming that source code samples will be evaluated for the extent to which they are well-documented and in line with the performance standards described in the Deliverables section? (Reference to "All dependencies are listed and the licenses is documented....")

A6: Yes, the Court will be considering how code samples compare to the standards outlined in the RFQ.

Q7: What can you tell us about the "FedRAMP-certified cloud storage" environment(s) that USTC will provide for staging and production environments (Azure, AWS, custom built private cloud with virtual machines, etc)? Any additional details you can provide would be helpful in both defining the technical solution components, and in scoping the development environment the Contractor will provide.

A7: The Court expects that in the near future it will enter into an agreement with AWS GovCloud (US) for it to provide cloud services in connection with this software development project.

Q8: Will the contractor be responsible for the costs in setting up a FedRAMP'ed Development Environment? E.g.- Hosting, Services, etc.

A8: The Contractor will be responsible for any costs associated with creating, maintaining, and managing its own development environment for this project. However, the Contractor's development environment need not be FedRAMP-certified. The last sentence in the "Environments" section on page 5 of the RFQ is amended to read: "The Contractor's development environment must mirror the Court's staging and production environments, except that the Contractor's development environment need not be FedRAMP-certified."

Q9: Is the Court planning on supplying Government Furnished Laptops to the contracting staff?

A9: No, the Court does not intend to supply laptops to the Contractor's staff. The Court expects the Contractor to provide its own computing equipment necessary to perform the software development for this project.

Q10: Does USTC currently use a specific CI tool (Jenkins, etc) that can be made available to the Contractor for this project?

A10: The Court is currently exploring the use of several CI tools, and is willing to make one available to the Contractor for this project. The Court will seek input from the Contractor before doing so.

Q11: Page 3, Paragraph 5 discusses the Court providing an individual as the project Scrum Master. Can the Contractor provide their own certified Scrum Master?

A11: The Contractor may provide their own Scrum Master.

Q12: Re CSPO/Scrum Master: Is the Court able to elaborate on the experience and background of the to-be-provided CSPO and Scrum Master? A sense of the size and types of projects they have worked on in the past will help us formulate a project team that complements their skill sets and recommend the best possible blend of resources from both the Court's team and ours.

A12: This will be the first software development project for the CSPO, but she has extensive subject matter expertise, having been involved in case processing at the Court in several capacities and having been an external user of the legacy system as a practitioner. The Court-offered Scrum Master has 5+ years as an Agile Coach to various Federal Government Program Management Offices, supporting projects ranging from \$100k short-term single release projects, to \$23M multi-year, multi-release projects. For three of those years, he also served as a Scrum Master for smaller projects.

Q13: Page 3, Paragraph 4 discusses the project Product Owner. Will the Product Owner have a backlog in place upon execution of the contract?

A13: The Product Owner will have an initial backlog in place prior to award. The Product Owner will continually refine and prioritize the backlog in collaboration with the Contractor throughout the course of the project.

Q14: Re User Stories, page 6. Which user stories in the RFQ are part of MVP?

A14: The user stories set forth at pages 7–9 of the RFQ will be the starting point for the development of software to be provided as part of this project. The Court expects that all of the functionalities described in those user stories will be part of an MVP.

Q15: Page 5, For Tested Code in the Acceptable Quality Level column it states” Minimum of 90% text coverage of all relevant code”. Does “all relevant code” include all code delivered by the Contractor or is there another criteria for relevant?

A15: The “Acceptable Quality Level” of “Tested Code” in the Deliverable and Performance Standards section on page 5 of the RFQ is amended to eliminate the word “relevant”, so that it now reads: “Minimum of 90% test coverage of all code”.

Q16: Page 6, For Accessible in the Performance Standard(s) column it refers to “(WCAG 2.0 AA) standards” and in the Acceptable Quality Level column it states “WCAG 2.1 AA standards.” Is the requirement the 2.0 or 2.1 guidelines?

A16: The requirement is for WCAG 2.1 AA standards. The “Performance Standard(s)” of “Accessible” in the Deliverable and Performance Standards section on page 6 of the RFQ is amended to read: “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA (WCAG 2.1 AA) standards”.

Q17: Page 6, For Accessible in the Acceptable Quality Level column it states “0 errors reported for WCAG 2.1 AA standards using an automated scanner and 0 errors reported in manual testing”. As 100% compliance can be difficult to achieve, is this a hard requirement or is the Court willing to consider areas of non-compliance on a case-by-case basis?

A17: To the extent this inquiry suggests the Court relax this deliverable quality level requirement, after careful consideration, the Court declines to do so.

Q18: Application design and development must use plain language to the extent practical. Can the Court define "Plain Language"?

A18: The term “Plain Language” for purposes of the RFQ is defined by the Plain Writing Act of 2010, Pub.L. 111–274. Additional information can be found at plainlanguage.gov.

Q19: Can USTC provide an expected levels of system usage, perhaps based on the usage of the current system –

- a. How many internal users access the system per day? **Approximately 200.**
- b. How many external users access the system per day? **Approximately 500.**
- c. How many page accesses would be expected per day? **Unknown.**
- d. How many payments processed per day/week/month? **Approximately 25,000 per year.**

Q20: Can USTC provide any current metrics on the legacy system, including:

- a. Storage size (GB/TB) of the transactional database. **Approximately 12 TB.**
- b. Number of documents currently managed by the system. **Approximately 5 million.**
- c. Storage size (GB/TB) of the documents managed by the system. **Approximately 12 TB.**

Q21: Re Computing Resources: What insight can the Court provide at this time into the peak computing periods? I.e., when is the EF-CMS expected to be busiest from a resourcing standpoint? With about 22,000 open cases and 27,000 filed during the last FY, and 25,000 registered Tax Court practitioners, having clarity into “the busy season” would be tremendously helpful in making our recommendations.

A21: The Court expects that peak usage of the new EF-CMS will take place during normal business hours (M-F), year round. The Court does not have a “busy season”.

Q22: Re the availability of users for research and testing: How many internal Court Representatives are expected to participate in internal user testing, and how will they interact with the system (especially with regard to initial development goals including identity and access management, case initiation, payment of fees, search functionality, e-signatures, notes, and content management)? Are all representatives located in Washington, DC?

A22: The Court expects that over the course of the project, approximately 20 different internal Court users will perform user testing. Testers will observe sprint reviews and perform subsequent hands-on testing of the System. The Product Owner will add to the backlog any additional modifications required as a result of the hands-on testing. All internal Court users work at the Tax Court building in Washington, DC.

Q23: Will 18F have a role on the product delivery team for EF-CMS?

A23: The Court expects that 18F will advise and consult with the Court during the development process, including supporting the Product Owner and the Contractor in setting up an agile delivery cadence, and providing coaching assistance to the Court’s technical lead on reviewing and accepting code.

Q24: Will the Government consider solutions that contain software that is Open Source, but not free?

A24: The Contractor must obtain Court permission before delivering software under this task order that incorporates any software that is not both free and open source.

Q25: Can USTC elaborate on its desire for open source solution components – for example would the expectation be that the server operating systems be open source, or that the solution components (application code, database code, etc) be open source and royalty free?

A25: With respect to server operating systems, the System will be hosted on a FedRAMP-certified cloud storage solution controlled by the Court. With respect to solution components, the Contractor must obtain Court permission before delivering software under this task order that incorporates any software that is not both free and open source.

Q26: Would USTC consider using commercial software for the database components of the custom solution (ie SQL Server) or must these database components be freeware?

A26: The Court will consider the recommendation of the Contractor before making decisions regarding the database components of the System. The Contractor must obtain Court permission before delivering software under this task order that incorporates any software that is not both free and open source.

Q27: Would USTC consider using commercial software for the eSignature components of the custom solution (ie DocuSign) or must the eSignature be freeware/custom built?

A27: The Court will consider the recommendation of the Contractor before making decisions regarding the eSignature components of the System. The Contractor must obtain Court permission before delivering software under this task order that incorporates any software that is not both free and open source.

Q28: The RFQ states that the Court will not consider quotes that include fees for license or subscriptions, but later states that the Contractor will have to obtain Court permission before delivering software that incorporates any software that is not free and open source. What is the process to request the Courts permission for any software that is not free and open source? Could permission be requested in the RFQ proposal? If so, how?

A28: If the Contractor seeks to incorporate in its delivered code any code that is not both free and open source, the Contractor must request Court permission in writing. That request must explain the reason for that request, state what alternatives are available, and any associated cost. To the extent that an Offeror's proposed solution includes the incorporation in delivered software of any software that is not free and open source, the Offeror should make that clear in its technical proposal, and include any associated costs, to be paid by the Court. The Court is certainly willing to consider such a solution, but award to an Offeror that has submitted such a solution will not constitute formal written permission, which must be requested in writing by the Contractor after award.

Q29: Re Analytics: All actions in the system have to be tracked and recorded per OWASP. This can provide the basis for any statistical and historical analytics. Are other analytics expected that provide more user-related information, such as browsers, time online, etc.? Should the system also track users statistics, such as the number of users on the public side of [the] application?

A29: Yes, the Court will discuss the need for other analytics to be incorporated in the System with the Contractor post-award. The Court has not yet fully determined what the capabilities of the System should be regarding analytics.

Q30: Does USTC have analytics KPIs, KRIs and other metrics identified or would the definition of those metrics be part of the initial phase of this project?

A30: The Court has not yet identified specific analytics metrics for the System, but the Court expects to develop them in collaboration with the Contractor.

Q31: Does USTC have a preferred 3rd party web analytics partner (Google Analytics, Adobe Analytics) or would USTC prefer an in house solution for the analytics functionality?

A31: For analytics, the Court is considering the use of the no-cost [Digital Analytics Program](#) offered by the General Services Administration.

Q32: Re User Access and Control: As the cases are routed and each person/team conducts their reviews, will notes, comments, etc. be accessible to all users with access to the case or will control be administered on each piece of content (e.g., “Note A” requires “Access Level A,” while “Note B” requires “Access Level C” or lower)?

A32: The System must have modifiable access and permissions for notes and other content items.

Q33: Re User Access and Control: Is there a central database of users (e.g., court practitioners) that can be accessed to verify the identity of users?

A33: The Court expects that the Contractor will develop a new practitioner database that will be integrated with the System.

Q34: Routing Questions: The routing defined (in the RFQ) is assumed to be in place, but is there also a need for accommodating the following:

- a. Impromptu routing where the user defines a new flow? **Yes.**
- b. Exception or temporary routing based on business rules that can be updated and changed at a moment’s notice, such as including an external review? **Yes.**
- c. Ability to create standard routing templates that can be stored in a “Library” for user access or applied to certain situations based on business rules? **Yes.**

Q35: Re Automated Testing: Does the Court require the use of pre-approved automated testing software not otherwise described in the RFP (i.e., in the way pal ly and HTML_CodeSniffer have been identified for Accessibility assessment)?

A35: The Court does not require the use of any automated testing software not otherwise described in the RFQ. The Court may determine, in collaboration with the Contractor, that it will be necessary to use one or more specific automated testing systems, which the Court would furnish.

Q36: Does the Court have the necessary testing tools to perform 508 and Load Testing?

A36: The Court intends to test WCAG (508) compliance using either HTML_CodeSniffer or Pa1ly. The Court has not yet selected a load testing tool, because the correct tool will depend on the technical approach taken by the Contractor, but the Court is likely to use one of the leading open source programs in this space, such as ApacheBench, Locust, Selenium, or Gatling.

Q37: Re Calendar Functions: Should the system support Outlook, iOS, and/or other calendaring systems for invites?

A37: The Court has not yet decided whether the System must support Outlook, iOS, and/or other calendaring systems. The Court welcomes practical proposals on this issue as part of submissions.

Q38: Re Calendaring Functions: Does the Court currently coordinate the scheduling of space and staff resources within the existing case management system, or is there a separate software/manual system that tracks courtroom availability?

A38: The Court currently uses an electronic system to track courtroom availability and coordinate the scheduling of courtroom space, and a separate manual system to assign staff. Neither system is part of the Court's legacy case management system.

Q39: Re Calendaring Functions: Will users be able to set their own availability so the system knows when they are available, or should it integrate with other systems for this information?

A39: The Court does not currently expect the System to allow users to set their own availability.

Q40: Re Descriptions of Work to Be Performed, page 3. Does the EF-CMS need to support internationalization? If so, which languages?

A40: The Court does not expect that the System will need to function in any language other than English. English is the official language of the Court.

Q41: Re General Requirements, page 4. Is the fee payment system going to be pay.gov?

A41: The System must integrate with pay.gov.

Q42: Re Description of Work to Be Performed, page 3. How much of the new system needs to be searchable? Does all of the content in the PDFs need to be searchable?

A42: The Court expects that all content in the System will be searchable.

Q43: What support SLAs are expected from the Contractor during the implementation and post-deployment of the new EF-CMS? This includes response times to tickets as well as hot fixes, security patches, etc.

A43: Support SLAs are not contemplated as part of this RFQ. Any required support SLAs will be issued as a separate contract or task order.

Q44: Does USTC have any specific anticipations of any travel (beyond local travel to DC HQ) for this project?

A44: The Court does not expect that there will be a need for any of the Contractor's representatives to travel to any location other than the Court's building in Washington, DC.

Q45: Page 4, Paragraph 2 discusses the license that supports the legacy system. Will the Contractor have access to requirements, design, architecture, etc. documents of the legacy system?

A45: No, due to proprietary licensing restrictions, the Contractor will not have access to requirements, design, architecture, etc. of the legacy system. The Court expects the Contractor to develop a completely new System.

Q46: The RFQ, Page 4 states "...the Contractor will not be able to view or access the current system (except for those aspects that are currently accessible by the public)...". Could USTC please provide some details about "those aspects that are accessible by the public", either by identifying sections of <https://www.ustaxcourt.gov/> driven by the legacy solution, or by providing public facing URLs if different from <https://www.ustaxcourt.gov/>?

A46: The publicly accessible aspects of the legacy case management system can be found at <https://www.ustaxcourt.gov/> under the tabs titled "Today's Opinions", "Opinions Search", "Orders", "Docket Inquiry", "Final Status Report", and "eAccess".

Q47: Re Description of Work to be Performed. How much of the data in the legacy system needs to be migrated in the first year?

A47: The Court, not the Contractor, will be responsible for importing case data, practitioner data, and any other necessary data into the new System.

Q48: Page 4, Paragraph 3 discusses minimal viable functionality. Will minimum viable functionality require a migration of legacy data? If so, who will be responsible for this considering the lack of access to legacy for the contractor?

A48: The Court, not the Contractor, will be responsible for importing case data, practitioner data, and any other necessary data into the new System.

Q49: The SOW states that the Contractor will not be responsible for importing any pending case data, practitioner data or other data into the new System. What is the Court's approach to handling the legacy system and its data during the implementation of the new EF-CMS and after the new EF-CMS is operational?

A49: The Court, not the Contractor, will be responsible for importing case data, practitioner data, and any other necessary data into the new System.