

KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR

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March 13, 2023

To: All Potential Bidders
From: Mike Nolan, Issuing Officer
Subject: RFP #0223-185-01 - Broadband Support

Amendment One

Please amend the subject RFP to include the answers to the following questions.

This Amendment One shall supersede, modify, and/or change all requirements to the contrary in the RFP and associated documents. All other parts of the subject RFP remain in effect.

1. Does the OCIO believe that providing attest/audit services to local governments, including single audit services, preclude the respondent from section 4.3.1.5 on community engagement? We would likely have to subcontract or fully scope out services to those entities, and would like an opportunity to work with OCIO on the right approach.

Normally providing both engagement support and audit services for the same community of interest would be something that the Office might restrict due to the potential conflict of interest. This does not restrict you from providing your approach to providing both services in your RFP response in order to maintain separations of duties and avoid any potential conflicts of interests.

2. Should a respondent request a Limitation of Liability under 6.2.2 of the contract terms under their cost proposal? If so, should a respondent show the blended hourly rate with limitation and one without a limitation?

Any limitations of vendor liability agreed to by the State pursuant to this RFP will be consistent with applicable State of Iowa laws.

If Vendor seeks to add, amend, or strike any standard contract clauses, please follow the process for submitting such requests pursuant to Section 3.2.9 of the RFP.

If Respondent provides alternative blended hourly rates based upon specific assumptions, Respondent is encouraged to detail with specificity the assumptions upon which any such alternative rates are based. The Office is under no obligation to entertain Cost Proposals offering blended rates using erroneous, faulty, or non-conforming assumptions.

- 3. Does the OCIO have a yearly hourly budget timeline to allow for better cost estimating? For example, does the Department believe that Community Outreach will be a majority of hours in years 1 and 2 of the contract, but Grant Administration will be a majority of years 2 and 3. If so, does the OCIO have a sample budget of hours for each subject matter areas under 4.3.1.2?**

OCIO does not have a sample budget for each subject matter. The Office anticipates that more community engagement will be required earlier in program development than in the years associated with grant funded project buildout.

- 4. Can a respondent list other State of Iowa projects with other agencies for similar services to show expertise, but not list them as an official reference nor give contact information?**

Yes. The Office will consider the listing of other State of Iowa projects to show experience.

- 5. Would the state be open to a more granular pricing structure that allows for a variety of roles/rates within each scope area to accommodate different levels of specialization of skills and experience level? Additionally, would the state consider a minimum monthly budget to maintain team continuity?**

Yes. Please include any additional more granular details. For scoring purposes, the blended rates of all the rolls that will be working in each scope area is still required.

- 6. For section 4.3.2.1, does the state have an estimate of how many community requests may be needed on average per month?**

In the past year, the Office has received a few community requests per month. As planning continues for the purposes of applying for federal funding, the Office anticipates community engagement and requests for assistance may become more frequent.

- 7. For sections 4.3.2.3 and 4.3.2.4, does the state have an estimate of how many community stakeholder events may take place in person or does the state envision the support from the vendor to be communication and coordination via online and email communication?**

The Office anticipates that most community engagement activities will be in-person meetings. As plan content is developed and shared with stakeholders, it may be more appropriate to share content via social media, website postings, and virtual meetings.

- 8. For section 4.3.4, is program compliance and monitoring needed for programs currently awarded under ARPA and state funding, if so, how many subrecipients are expected to be monitored? Have those already been awarded undergone risk assessments and implemented controls based on risk?**

Yes, the Office requires compliance and monitoring for grant programs awarded under ARPA as well as state-funded grant programs. Currently, the Office has approximately 59 state-funded subgrants, and 128 ARPA-funded subgrants. The ARPA-funded subgrants have undergone risk assessment and risk-based controls. The number of future federally-funded subgrants is unknown.

- 9. For section 4.3.4, is the state contemplating site visits as part of the compliance monitoring scope (e.g., multiple visits to higher risk grantees, closeout visit for asset verification for all grantees)?**

The Office anticipates that in rare circumstances, a site visit may become necessary to verify project completion and/or monitor for compliance with the awarded terms and conditions of project buildout.

- 10. Is program compliance and monitoring for future rounds of federal funding in scope for this proposal, and if so, how many expected subrecipients will be awarded?**

Yes, program compliance and monitoring for future rounds of federal funding is included for this proposal. The Office anticipates that the number of subrecipients will be consistent with past grant offerings from NOFAs 6 and 7.

- 11. For section 4.3.4.8.3 “Perform audits on sample populations of subrecipients.” Is this a deeper assessment on a sample of subrecipient quarterly reports (e.g. desk audits) and reimbursements or a true financial audit?**

It is intended to be a deeper assessment on the sample of the subrecipient quarterly report.

- 12. For section 4.3.5.3.6, what types of public-facing broadband content needs does the state anticipate needing?**

Types of public-facing broadband content needs can include technical assistance for potential applicants to the program. Past examples include application checklist, infographics, presentations, video tutorials, and virtual conferences.

- 13. We understand that there are incumbent vendors currently working with the OCIO on mapping, data collection and compliance. Can you identify the current scope and will the incumbents maintain their current roles and work in coordination with the awarded RFP vendor?**

Current contracts for Broadband Strategy and Planning Services are expiring on September 30, 2023. Contracts can be found at the OCIO website at <https://ocio.iowa.gov/information-technology-procurement/awarded-contracts>. Any vendors currently working or working with the office in the future on any services related to the Broadband Program will be expected to work with any other vendors when necessary to meet the scope of the services.

- 14. Does the OCIO support offshore development for all functions?**

No, OCIO does not believe it would be appropriate to offshore work funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.

- 15. Can you identify dedicated staff from the OCIO that will be assigned to the engagement? To better understand reporting and compliance requirements, can you provide a full list of the Federal sources of funding that are included in this project scope, as well as any State sources of funding?**

State employees and/or contracts will be dedicated to the engagement. At this point we can not identify specific individuals that will be dedicated to the engagement.

The Federal sources of funding that are included in this project scope are Capital Projects Fund (CPF), Building Equity Access and Digital Services (BEAD), and Digital Equity and Access (DEA).

- 16. Section 4.1.2 (p. 19) mentions “Scope of Work set forth above”. There is no definition or reference to “Scope of Work” prior to this. Please clarify how the Agency defines “Scope of Work” vs. being a winning respondent, i.e. will winning Respondent of the RFP create a Master Contract with individual “Scope of Works” to be executed based on work?**

The outcome of this RFP will create a Master Agreement with Respondent(s) in which the Office can negotiate specific scopes of work .

- 17. Sect 4.3.1.5 (p. 21) This certification alludes to a potential conflict of interest situation. Does this certification also presume that the Respondent shall not provide “Broadband Services” to State, County, Community or Political Subdivision of the State? If this is a requirement for the awarded Respondent, we suggest adding clarification to this section.**

Correct. This requirement is to minimize the potential conflict of the interest situation. The Office’s concern is that a firm that is providing support for the Office in defining, developing, and managing the State’s broadband program could also be advising broadband providers simultaneously on how to best utilize the State’s broadband program.

- 18. Attachment #1 Cost Proposal - Section III – Cost Proposal Contents (p. 42): Is the agency simply looking for one hourly rate for each “Area” by the Respondent, vs any additional project plan/estimated hours/rate by resource?**

Correct. For purposes of evaluating the RFP the Office is asking the Respondent to provide one hourly rate for each “Area” they are responding to.

- 19. Attachment #1 Cost Proposal - Section III – Cost Proposal Contents (p. 42) How does the Agency reimburse for required travel/per diem expenses? (Outreach/audits could involve physical travel that are difficult to estimate)**

Costs associated with travel should be included in your cost proposal’s blended rate. The Office will not be reimbursing for required travel/per diem expenses.