

Questions and Answers

1. The last paragraph of page 28 of the “Request for Proposals RFP #16-007” nysed-rfp-16-007-admin-review-final.pdf states “NYSED provides an assumption about the number of hours for unanticipated work in the Cost Proposal worksheets and this same number of hours will be used to calculate the cost of additional services based on each Bidder’s hourly rates.” We did not find the number of hours of unanticipated work in the Cost Proposal worksheet.

The assumption of labor hours for unanticipated work is 2000 hours (40 hours per week multiplied by 50 weeks per year). This assumption is provided within the “Add'l Labor and Support Costs” tab in Attachment 5.3 – Cost Proposal Workbook.

2. We can include all the supplemental modules in our proposal but the cost of the supplemental modules is higher than the cost of the primary module. Can you share the budget for this project so that we can decide if we should include the supplemental modules in the proposal or not? Also, the number of points awarded for supplemental modules seem low relative to the cost of the supplemental modules. The evaluation criteria seems to favor proposals that do not include supplemental modules.

As stated in the RFP, bidders are asked to provide a solution for each of the supplemental modules in their proposals. NYSED will not eliminate Bidders who fail to propose a supplemental module(s) or Bidders whose proposed supplemental module(s) do not provide the functionality described in Attachment 5.4 – Section 2; however, failure to demonstrate how a functional requirement will be met will result in a lower evaluation score.

The technical proposal accounts for up to 70 points (65 points through the written technical proposal and 5 points through the oral demonstration) of the 100 total evaluation points available. Of the 65 possible points for the written technical proposal, the technical solution description – which includes the supplemental modules – contributes 34 points, or about one half, toward the total amount of points for the technical proposal. The Cost Proposal will be scored based upon the grand total cost of the Cost Proposal Summary and has a maximum point value of 30 points. NYSED has not established a budget amount for this project.

3. Is there a budget that can be communicated to the bidders?

This is a competitive “best value” procurement where cost accounts for 30% of the overall score. A budget figure will not be disclosed.

4. Please explain how the costs for the supplemental modules factor into the 30 points for the entire cost evaluation.

The financial criteria portion of this RFP, the Cost Proposal, will be scored based upon the grand total cost of the Cost Proposal Summary. Please see section 3 of the RFP Evaluation Criteria and Method of Award. See also Attachment 5.3 – Cost Proposal Workbook.

5. For bidders that include Production Records, Menu Planning, and Nutrient Analysis supplemental modules, how many users of these products are planned? Could you please include the number of school districts, schools, and total users of each product?

RFP#16-007: Administrative Review System and Services

NYSED is required to offer licensing of each procured module to all School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in one or more child nutrition program administered by NYSED. NYSED does not currently have an estimated volume of users to provide at this time and requests that bidders use the license coverage figures of 75 NYSED users (CNP Office staff) and 12,000 Local Educational Agency (LEA) users as stated in the RFP and Attachment 5.3 – Cost Proposal Workbook.

6. A bidder that does not include any supplemental modules is more likely to have the lowest cost. Please explain how scoring is evaluated for the technical evaluation if no supplemental modules are included in the bid. a) How many points could be deducted from the technical evaluation if the bidder does not include any supplemental modules? b) How many points could be deducted from the technical evaluation for each of the six individual supplemental modules? For example, how would scoring be evaluated if a bidder includes five of six supplemental modules? What if this is compared to a different combination of five supplemental modules?

Bidder proposals will be evaluated against all criteria specified in this RFP. Bidders that propose each of the desired supplemental modules have the potential to be awarded more points in the technical evaluation than those that do not propose one or more supplemental modules, or the proposed modules do not provide the functionality described.

- a. The maximum number of points that may be awarded for the supplemental modules is approximately 3 out of the 65 points that may be awarded through the written technical proposal. In addition, the evaluation committee may also ask bidders questions related to the supplemental modules during the oral demonstration, which is worth a total of 5 possible points.
- b. The point breakdown (out of 65 possible points) for each supplemental module in the written technical proposal is approximately one half a point.

7. Is it an expectation that bidders only use NYSED provided templates in their responses (i.e. Attachment 5.2 Technical Proposal Narrative) or can bidders use alternative formats for some proposal elements? If it is expected that bidders only use the provided templates, what guidance can NYSED provide for editing template pages? For example, can bidders add identifying information such as the firm name to the header and/or footer of the various templates?

It is expected that bidders use the NYSED provided templates to organize their responses, as these attachments will facilitate the review process. Bidders may add pages and/or attach additional documentation (such as project management plans or training documentation, etc.) necessary to fully describe their proposed product within Attachment 5.2 – Technical Proposal Narrative provided that the attachments are clearly labeled and referenced. Bidders should not alter or modify template content and/or formulas in any of the RFP Attachments. Bidders may include their firm name in the header/footer of templates, but should avoid the use of elaborate promotional materials.

8. Section 1.4 Desired Services: Can you provide information pertaining to the most common vendor product names and versions used by New York Districts related to NYSED's desire to interface the Supplemental Software Modules referenced in the RFP?

Through this RFP, NYSED intends to procure an administrative review module that will integrate with the supplemental modules. Specifically, NYSED desires the ability to integrate school data (as inputted by

SFA users) from the supplemental software modules to the administrative review module in order to streamline the review process and to better provide technical assistance to schools. NYSED does not seek to interface the supplemental modules with other vendor products used in New York districts through this RFP.

9. Can NYSED assure read only access to 3rd party data sets on behalf of LEAs as required by USDA regulations, for districts receiving federal funds?

The system being procured will integrate with NYSED's current electronic system, Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS), which is accessible only to authorized LEA users and NYSED staff. New York State does not have an electronic student database containing student education records at this time and does not intend to integrate the new system with other third party systems used by LEAs. This system will be used for child nutrition program purposes only, and any release of data will be in accordance with applicable federal regulations as well as NYS Education Law §2-d, referenced in Appendix R – Data Security and Privacy Plan of the RFP.

10. Section 3.1 Criteria for Evaluating Bids: Please provide information regarding the roles of the evaluation committee—IT, State Agency, LEA, Finance, etc.

The evaluation committee will include NYSED staff from the child nutrition program office, IT, and the Contract Administration Unit. Child nutrition program and IT staff will utilize a scoring rubric to evaluate each bidder's technical proposal that meets the minimum qualifications and mandatory requirements stated in the RFP. The cost proposal will be evaluated by NYSED's Contract Administration Unit. LEAs will not participate in the evaluation of bids.

11. Requirement G15 states: "The Contractor shall maintain an on-site presence of designated staff, as agreed upon by the Contractor and NYSED during contract negotiations, during the entire project (including maintenance and support) at the NYSED headquarters location in Albany to facilitate knowledge transfer to State staff." However, RFP Section 1.5.8.1 Application Warranty states: The Contractor shall provide staff support on-site, as needed, for 60 days following full system acceptance. Please clarify the extent to which the on-site support is required for planning and cost purposes.

Requirement G15 describes NYSED's expectation that the vendor make designated project staff available on-site to assist NYSED with system support, if needed, at any point during the term of the contract. NYSED does not anticipate the necessity of an on-site presence under conditions of normal system functioning. The extent of on-site presence shall be determined during contract negotiations. The terms described in the application warranty referenced in RFP section 1.5.8.1 apply to the warranty period only, which begins when the system is accepted and ends after 60 days.

12. Requirement G16 states: "The Contractor shall utilize NYSED-provided workstations to connect to the NYSED network while on NYSED premises." And ... "NYSED will provide workstations for Contractor staff." Are these 'workstations' cloud-hosted or otherwise able to provide access via Remote Desktop for Contractor's IT engineering staff? Or does this actually mean that Contractor staff may only access these workstations by being physically on site within NYSED facilities?

The contractor will be able to connect to the NYSED network while physically on NYSED premises through NYSED-provided workstations only. Workstations are not cloud-hosted and no remote access to the network will be provided to contractor staff.

13. Requirement SI11 states: “The Contractor shall provide and implement a methodology for the integration and user acceptance testing (UAT) of the overall solution in a pre-production test environment. The test environment shall be representative of the architecture of the production environment.” In order to scope the work, does this require physically separate hardware stacks and network infrastructure, or only separate instances of software deployment and databases?

The contractor shall provide separate instances of software deployment and databases only.

14. Mandatory item #338 states: “The solution shall allow system administrator(s) to perform mass updates to user profiles based on defined business rules.” Could we see a couple of examples of both the ‘business rules’ and the types of ‘mass updates’ which would need to be implemented?

Requirement #338 in Attachment 5.4 – Verification and Traceability Matrix refers to the system’s ability to perform updates to all user profiles based upon user role. Some examples of business rules relevant to this RFP include the ability to assign access rights by role (i.e. NYSED user, LEA user) as well as the ability to present information that is appropriate for each user (i.e. NYSED users have access to all LEA data; LEA users do not have access to another LEA’s data). An example of a mass update would be the addition or restriction of user access rights based upon user role.

15. Mandatory item #379 states: “The solution shall comply with NY State security policy and standards ...” Upon reviewing chain of referenced documents, we found one sub-requirement for which we would like additional details. That requirement states that” “Security-related information from all systems... must be transferred to a consolidated log infrastructure.” Is there existing API documentation for the ‘consolidated log infrastructure’ which can be provided to further our understanding of this requirement?

NYSED does not have API documentation for consolidated log infrastructure to share at this time, but expects systems to have the ability to log events in a consistent manner as well as the capability of working with a log aggregation product.