



DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

IT SERVICES

Questions concerning this RFQ must be received by email to Keandre Haywood at procurement@dra.gov

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. CST on April 30, 2024. DRA reserves the right to not answer questions received after that time.

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Table of Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**
 - 2. Background**
 - 3. Terms and Definitions**
 - 4. Compliance Checklist**
 - 5. Evaluation Criteria**
 - 6. Submission Procedures**
 - 7. Review and Evaluation Process**
 - 8. RFQ Terms and Definitions**
 - 9. Warranty and Independence**
 - 10. Board and Staff Communication**
 - 11. Period of Contract**
 - 12. Cost of Developing and Submitting Response**
 - 13. Acceptance of RFQ Content**
 - 14. Facilities**
 - 15. Assignment and Delegation**
 - 16. Property**
 - 17. Proprietary Information**
 - 18. Governing Law**
 - 19. Addendum and Updates**
- APPENDIX A: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for: IT Services

Federal Agency: Delta Regional Authority

RFQ Number: [RFQ-002-2024]

Issue Date: March 29, 2024

Submission Deadline: April 30, 2024

1. Executive Summary

This RFQ solicits proposals for Managed IT Services to elevate the Delta Regional Authority's operational capabilities. Our aim is to secure a partnership that ensures robust, high-quality IT support tailored to our unique blend of physical and remote work environments. We seek comprehensive services, including 24/7 help desk support, advanced cybersecurity measures, and cloud services management, to enhance efficiency and security. Proposals are invited by IT firms, with a keen interest in solutions that align with our mission to drive economic development across the Delta region.

2. Background

Delta Regional Authority DRA was created by Congress by the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000, as amended, as a federal/state partnership comprised of 252 counties and parishes within the eight states of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee. DRA is designed to remedy severe and chronic economic distress by stimulating economic development and fostering partnerships that will have a positive impact on the Region's economy by improving the health of our citizens, training a competitive workforce, investing in 21st century infrastructure, and supporting our small businesses and entrepreneurs. The Authority's enabling legislation can be found in the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000, as amended. DRA's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in the Delta region.

DRA funds projects to address the three goals identified in the Authority's Regional Development Plan IV (RDP IV):

1. **Improved Workforce Competitiveness:** Advance the productivity and economic competitiveness of the Delta workforce.
2. **Strengthened Infrastructure:** Strengthen the Delta's physical, digital, and capital connections to the global economy.
3. **Increased Community Capacity:** Facilitate local capacity building within Delta communities, organizations, businesses, and individuals.

Each year, DRA provides funding for nearly one hundred projects in the Delta region in areas such as transportation infrastructure, basic public infrastructure, workforce development, and small business development, community development, and entrepreneurship. These projects are estimated to create and retain thousands of jobs; improve local water and sewer systems; enhance talent pipelines through industry-driven workforce development; expand access to healthcare;

improve the movement of goods and services; and provide technical and managerial assistance to emerging businesses and entrepreneurs.

Additional information about the Delta region and DRA can be found at www.dra.gov.

3. Terms and Definitions

- **Managed IT Services:** Comprehensive monitoring and management of an organization's IT infrastructure by an external provider.
- **SaaS/PaaS/IaaS:** Delivery models for cloud computing services: Software as a Service, Platform as a Service, and Infrastructure as a Service, respectively.
- **Cybersecurity:** Strategies and technologies employed to protect systems, networks, and data from cyber attacks.

4. Compliance Checklist

Respondents must ensure their proposals meet the following compliance requirements:

- Strict adherence to federal IT security protocols and standards.
- Full compliance with data protection and privacy regulations, including GDPR and CCPA where applicable.
- Acceptance and agreement to the DRA's contractual terms and conditions, emphasizing data security, service reliability, and ethical business practices.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be assessed based on:

- **Experience and Expertise:** Demonstrated success in managing IT services for organizations with similar scope and complexity. Include case studies or examples.
- **Quality of Proposed Solution:** Innovation in approach, scalability of solutions, and strength in cybersecurity practices. Detail how your services will meet our specific needs.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Provide a comprehensive pricing model that offers value for money, including any scalable options or packages.
- **Client References:** Evidence of past client satisfaction and reliability, preferably within the government or public sector.

6. Submission Procedures

The deadline for submissions in response to this RFP is 5:00 p.m. CST, April 30, 2024.

- Please submit a PDF copy of your response to procurement@dra.gov.
- Each Organization must submit a complete response (answer every information request) to this RFQ, as failure to do so will result in immediate disqualification and cause the response to not be scored. Further, the response must be signed by an authorizing officer of the

responding Organization, and the response must include a statement as to the period for which the response remains valid, which must be at least 90 days from the date responses to the RFQ are due.

Additionally:

- Telephone or fax responses will not be accepted for this RFQ;
- Submissions **MUST** be sent via email.
- Responses or unsolicited amendments will not be accepted after the closing date and time; and
- Requests for time extensions past any deadlines will not be considered.

7. Review and Evaluation Process

The Authority’s selection committee (“the Committee”) will review and evaluate only the responses that meet the following threshold items:

- The Organization’s willingness to explicitly follow the Authority’s guidelines in this RFQ;
- The experience and qualifications of both the Organization and its staff to be assigned to provide these services, regarding its described ability to successfully deliver IT Services
- Involvement and accessibility of the Organization’s staff to be assigned to these services;
- The Organization’s answers to the information requests outlined in “submission requirements” above.

Subsequent to the Committee’s evaluation, and at the sole discretion of the Committee, certain institutions may be selected for interviews. Those Organizations selected will be given not less than fifteen (15) business days’ notice, along with the date, time, and place for these presentations.

Each Organization selected for an interview will be allotted 30 minutes for its presentation, yet additional time may be allotted to answer any questions it may pose, to ensure the Organizations are evaluated on the basis of the criteria set forth in this RFQ.

DRA may then select the Organization based on the demonstrated competence, experience, knowledge, and qualifications of the Organization, as evaluated and proffered by the Committee.

DRA fully reserves the right to make this decision and the Authority’s decision on this matter is final.

8. RFQ Terms and Conditions

This RFQ is for the purpose of soliciting responses from organizations qualified to provide IT Services for the Authority.

No claim for adjustment of any provision of the RFQ shall be honored after the proposal has been submitted on the grounds that the proposer was not fully informed as the existing conditions or circumstances or any other related matter. However, by this RFQ, the Authority has not committed itself to employ an Organization for these services for any or all of the herein-described matters

and the Authority reserves the right to decide such after receipt, review and evaluation of all responses.

Additionally, the Authority reserves the right to:

- Waive or amend any portion of this RFQ by written notice to all Organizations;
- Negotiate all elements that comprise the information with the Organization (s) to ensure that the best possible considerations are afforded to all concerned;
- To waive any irregularities;
- Reject any and all responses to this RFQ;
- Select Organization(s) for specific purposes or for any combination of specific purposes; and
- Defer the selection of any Organization(s) to a time of the Authority's choosing.

9. Warranty and Independence

Organizations must warrant that no sums or anything of value has been or will be paid directly or indirectly to any officer or employee of DRA such as wages, compensation, or gifts in exchange for acting as officer, agent, employee, subcontractor, or consultant to the institutions in connection with any work compensated or performed.

DRA cannot and does not make any representatives or warranties with regard to the information, data, documentation, and material conveyed in this RFQ or otherwise provided by DRA. Organizations shall conduct their own independent investigations and analysis and make their own assessments, judgments, and decisions regarding this opportunity.

10. Board and Staff Communication

Under no circumstances shall any entity intending to respond to this RFQ contact any member of the Authority or DRA staff with the purpose of influencing the RFQ process. All RFQ related communication should be directed to **Keandre Haywood, Finance Program Manager**, the point of contact, during this process. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in immediate disqualification.

11. Period of Contract

While the contract will be offered for a term of one year, with a renewal option for two one-year terms subject to DRA approval, it is the intent to continue the contract on an ongoing basis, contingent upon, among other things, availability of funds, continued need, and satisfactory performance of services. At all times, the Organization will serve at the will and pleasure of the Authority.

12. Cost of Developing and Submitting Response

DRA shall not, under any circumstances, be liable or responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by any Organization in preparing and/or submitting a response associated with proposals including, but not limited to, research, investigation, development, preparation, transmittal, or presentation of proposals or any related information, data documentation, and material. All costs and expenses incurred by the proposers in connection with these proposals submitted shall be the sole responsibility of the proposers.

13. Acceptance of RFQ Content

Some of the contents of this RFQ and the response submitted may be incorporated by reference in any final contract resulting from this RFQ.

14. Facilities

DRA reserves the right to inspect each Organization's facilities at any time without prior notice.

15. Assignment and Delegation

Any contract issued pursuant to this RFQ is not assignable, nor may be delegated, except with the prior written approval of the Authority.

16. Property

All responses become the property of DRA upon receipt. DRA has the right to use any and all ideas or adaptations of the ideas contained in any response received in this RFQ. Selection or rejection of the response will not affect this right.

17. Proprietary Information

If an Organization does not desire certain proprietary information in its response disclosed, the Organization is required to identify all proprietary information in the response, which identification shall be submitted concurrently with the response. If the Organization fails to identify proprietary information, it agrees by submission of its response that all parts of all responses shall be deemed non-proprietary and will become public documents upon completion of the RFQ process.

18. Governing Law

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal agency and therefore the contract created as a result of this RFQ, and the accepted response shall be governed by and construed in accordance with federal laws and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in federal courts.

19. Addendum and Updates

Participants are encouraged to check www.dra.gov for any updates or addenda to this RFQ. All significant changes will be communicated through this channel to ensure fairness and transparency throughout the procurement process.

APPENDIX A

Frequently Asked Questions for RFQ # 002-2024

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Request for Qualifications (RFQ) # 002-2024 provides essential information for potential vendors interested in submitting proposals to the Delta Regional Authority. This section addresses common queries regarding the scope of services, eligibility criteria, submission guidelines, evaluation process, and other key aspects of the RFQ, aiming to clarify the expectations and requirements for applicants. It is designed to assist vendors in preparing their responses effectively and ensure they understand the strategic priorities of the DRA. For more detailed information or specific queries not covered in these FAQs, vendors are encouraged to refer to the full RFQ document or contact the designated Authority representative directly.

1. What services are sought in the RFQ?

Managed IT Services including 24/7 help desk support, cybersecurity, and cloud services management.

2. Who can apply?

Qualified IT service providers adhering to federal IT security and data protection regulations.

3. What are the submission requirements?

Proposals must include a compliance checklist, detailed service descriptions, pricing models, and meet all specified criteria.

4. How will proposals be evaluated?

Proposals will be evaluated based on compliance, service offerings, security measures, cost-effectiveness, and adherence to federal regulations.

5. When is the proposal submission deadline?

Proposals are due no later than April 30, 2024, by 5:00 p.m. CST.

6. Where should proposals be submitted?

All proposals should be submitted in PDF form via email to: procurement@dra.gov. Please reference the RFQ number in the subject line.

7. Are there specific formats or templates for submission?

Proposals must follow the structure outlined in the RFQ, including all requested sections and attachments.

8. What happens after submission?

All proposals will undergo a review and evaluation process, with selected providers being contacted for further steps.