

Allegheny County
Department of Human Services
Request for Proposals Q&A
RFP for Unstructured Data Analytics Solutions

March 28, 2018

1. Can companies from outside the USA can apply for this?

Yes.

2. Will we need to go to DHS for meetings?

While specific issues may require occasional on-site meetings, DHS expects that the majority of meetings could be held remotely.

3. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside the USA?

Yes.

4. Can we submit the proposals via email?

We accept Proposals only via email. Please see "Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal" in the RFP for more information.

April 6, 2018

5. Will the required place of performance be Allegheny County or is there a remote option for this work?

Work may be done remotely, see also question two.

6. There is research aspect to the RFP and what appears to be call for a systems implementation aspect of production quality. Am I interpreting this correctly? If so, do you plan for some aspects to be university projects and others with coordination to involve commercial entities?

Yes, we've split the work into two tracks: the analytics/research of mining and the tools to make use of the mined information. We encourage Proposers to propose creative solutions to these two tracks. We expect some Proposers will apply to both tracks, some will just apply for one track, and some may come in with partners already identified.

7. In using unstructured analytics for addressing the human services problems, my colleagues and I have been thinking about how one does this in way that ensures trust, transparency and fairness. This emphasis on trust is an important feature of our thrust on AI and analytics for good. What are your thoughts on this?

DHS values trust, transparency and fairness in all of our work.

April 16, 2018

8. How much access will the Successful Proposer have to the internal data and existing databases and code bases? Is it ok for foreign students to build code that is used within DHS, or does everything we do have to be re-implemented? As a university, we do not do 'work for hire,' but build research prototypes. Would we need a (commercial) partner to build production-level technology that is government-compliant?

We will work with the Successful Proposer(s) so they can have access to the internal data, existing databases and code bases needed for their Solutions. Foreign students may work on the project. You may partner or submit a Proposal on your own.

9. What is covered by the funding? Does the funding include indirect fees? If there is a commercial partner, will it be funded by an additional amount?

Please submit a line-item budget that includes all costs of your proposed Solution, including indirect fees, and a budget narrative that explains your line items. We will consider all requests for reasonableness and will negotiate costs with the Successful Proposer(s).

10. Would it be ok for us to approach other institutions for complementary funding?

You may approach other institutions for complementary funding. Please include complementary funding in your line item budget and budget narrative.

11. Will there be an on-site "industry day" when/where prospective vendors can gather?

No.

12. What is the "go live" goal after ACDHS issues the contract(s)?

The go live goal can vary upon Solution. We expect that Solutions may take one to three years to be fully implemented.

April 17, 2018

13. Are there legal impediments/requirements attached to the data? How much of the data is not public access at the moment? Who owns the non-public data, and what access agreements are in place? What are the Privacy and HIPAA concerns?

None of the data is public-access; it is all owned by Allegheny County. Allegheny County is a covered entity under HIPAA. The Successful Proposer(s) under this RFP will be considered a business associate, and the Agreement between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer(s) will give access to the data and will contain HIPAA-compliant business associate language. The Successful Proposer(s) will need to comply with all state and federal privacy and confidentiality laws.

14. What is the nature, content, and format of the desired (structured) output? Do you have an existing database or can we create new ones? We understand the output database has to interoperate/connect smoothly with existing resources; what are they? Can we have examples of the output corresponding to the inputs presented in the Appendices?

We added the appendices so that Proposers may get an idea of the kinds of inputs we have. Proposers should propose outputs in their Solutions. The desired outputs are flexible. It is important that outputs are user-friendly so that program and direct service staff can easily engage with them.

15. DHS caseworkers perform a wide range of services. We note one set of services relating to risk factors around children, and another to enable better services for the county, for example by connecting different programs. Are these the key relevant pieces or are we missing an important aspect?

DHS caseworkers work with a variety of people involved in child welfare, homelessness, aging and other services. Caseworkers are direct-service staff who work with individuals and families to assess strengths, plan and coordinate care, monitor progress, advocate for needs, and provide crisis intervention, among other responsibilities. Learn more about a career in child welfare casework at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Careers/Professional-Opportunities/CYF-Casework-Careers.aspx>.

16. Does the ACDHS have taxonomies and ontologies already in use? If yes, will prospective vendors be allowed to download? If not, can this proposal include such activities, or will that be a separate solicitation?

No, we do not have taxonomies and ontologies already in use. Proposals can include this.

17. What is the indirect rate?

If possible, please use your organization's federal indirect rate. We will consider all requests for reasonableness and will negotiate an indirect rate with the Successful Proposer(s).

18. Is there a budget template? If yes, how can I access it?

There is no budget template for this RFP. You may provide your budget as an attachment (e.g., Excel file).

19. What documents are needed from the sub-contractor?

If you are partnering to propose a Solution, no specific documents are needed from your sub-contractor for the Proposal. One of the partners must be identified as the lead agency who will enter into the Agreement with the County. Please describe the nature of your partnership in your Proposal. Provide only the attachments that are listed in the RFP.

20. Would a non-Pennsylvania or non-Allegheny County certified MBE/WBE firm (i.e., out-of-state certified MBE/WBE) qualify 100% towards the MWDBE goal (15%) (or does the County require a PA or Allegheny County MBE/WBE certified firm to meet this requirement)?

The Allegheny County's MWDBE department accepts certifications from the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program and other entities on a case-by-case basis. Allegheny County does not accept self-certifications.

Allegheny County has MWDBE goals of 13% participation for Minority Business Enterprises and 2% participation for Women Enterprises, and expects that Successful Proposer(s) will make a "good faith effort" in assisting the County in meeting these goals. If you are already certified, you may count yourself towards one of the goals. For example, if you are already certified as a Woman Business Enterprise, you must make a good faith effort to meet the Minority Business Enterprise goal. Conversely, if you are already certified as a Minority Business Enterprise, you must make a good faith effort to meet the Woman Enterprise goal. If you are registered as both, you must choose one to count towards the contract goals – you can't cover both.

The good faith effort also means to pass on those percentages to the organizations you subcontract with for inventory and services such as office supplies and janitorial services. You are not required to be a certified MWDBE organization in order to submit a proposal for one of our solicitations. If you do not meet the MWDBE goals, you should complete the waiver documentation.

For more resources about the MWDBE requirements, please see our website at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations under the gray bar called "Required Documents." You also can contact Allegheny County's MWDBE department directly at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/mwdbbe/index.aspx> or <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/mwdbbe/contact/index.aspx>.

April 20, 2018

21. Section 1, page 7 – What is the electronic format for a majority of the documents that will need to be processed? How long has the ACDHS been collecting this digital content? What is the average daily volume of new documents created? Has all legacy content been converted from PDF/OCR into machine readable formats?

Our unstructured content encompasses both TIFF and PDF images, Microsoft Office document types (Word, Excel, etc.), and freeform text entered into Notes or Comments fields throughout our systems. Documents stored in our content management system are typically associated with metadata, but the metadata may be insufficient for analysis. Our average daily volume of images stored in our content management system is 1,960. We currently do not have OCR capabilities in our content management system.

The majority of unstructured data we plan to address first is in machine readable, electronic database format. The case notes are contained in large, character-based database fields within our Oracle environment. While we initially do not anticipate focusing on scanned documents that require any type of OCR, please note the capabilities or limitations of your system to handle this type of data in the future, if applicable.

22. Section 2.3 – Is there a list of approved, or engaged IT consultants currently working at ACDHS?

You may partner with whomever you want to respond to this RFP. While you are not required to partner with a current provider, the following contracts are categorized in our system as IT administrative support for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. This is a broad category that includes various services.

- Applied Computer Services Inc.: Software Support/Licenses
- Computer Aid Inc: Development/Consulting
- Cornerstone Ondemand Inc.: Software Support/Licenses
- Data Warehouse Consultants, LLC: Development/Consulting
- Deloitte Consulting: Development/Consulting
- Easyvista, Inc.: Development/Consulting
- IMR Digital, LLC: Development/Consulting
- Information Age Technologies, Inc.: Maintenance/Information and Software Support/Licenses
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency: Development/Consulting
- Qualtrics, LLC: Software Support/Licenses
- Rolta Advizex Technologies, LLC: Maintenance/Information
- Tintri, Inc.: Maintenance/Information

23. On page 5, paragraph one, of the solicitation, the following reference is made: "...allow for the use of the information in such a way that it can be integrated into DHS's existing IT infrastructure." Could you provide a URL or digital file pertaining to the DHS IT infrastructure?

DHS uses a variety of technologies. Our primary database technologies are Oracle and SQL Server. For development we primarily use the Microsoft .NET stack, but we also use analytic tools such as R and Python. We are looking for Solutions that have the flexibility to use information gathered in various applications. The content should be accessible and have the ability to be integrated. Your response to this RFP is not required to be specific to the architecture of DHS infrastructure. We will work with the Successful Proposer(s) on the specifics of integrating Solutions into DHS's existing infrastructure.

24. Ideally, this is an integrated solution that incorporates multiple sources of unstructured data. To what extent are there existing unique identifiers that can be used to link data sources?

The unstructured data within each of our transactional systems is linked by a source system ID. These source system IDs are similarly linked to IDs within our data warehouse so that information within our transactional systems can be linked to records of the same individuals within our data warehouse. This would, for example, allow you to link unstructured data in our child welfare KIDS system with data in our data warehouse using the "MCI ID," so that you could also link the unstructured data by client with other internal transactional systems and external sources in the warehouse such as public benefits, jail involvement, public housing, etc.

25. What information/data security requirements will be needed to comply with local and state regulations?

Please review the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), the [Incorporated Standard County Terms and Conditions](#), and the [Incorporated Federal, State Terms and Conditions](#) documents on our website under the "Required Documents" gray bar at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations. See also question 13.

26. Is the County able to provide information about the existing data source architecture? Is it disparate? Warehoused already? Existing ETL processes or integration technologies?

Data will be sourced from several disparate systems within the DHS environment. These sources include any of our DHS applications or our data warehouse. Most data sources are currently stored in Oracle databases. We have access to ETL methodologies and IBM DataStage as an ETL tool, but it is not currently used to extract the unstructured data. Proposers can assume they will need to integrate with Oracle CLOB fields to pull in unstructured case notes for the initial phases. If emails are integrated they would be stored in a Microsoft Outlook hosted environment.

27. Do you prefer a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) solution (a system with demonstrated prior application), or is it acceptable to propose a custom solution?

Proposers may propose COTS, SaaS, hosted (not on-premise), or custom Solutions. See also questions 32 and 33.

28. How much of the work will need to be done onsite, i.e., for data security and access reasons?

We anticipate that work may be performed remotely but that some work may require onsite meetings. Currently, we don't have specific onsite requirements. We will plan the scope of onsite work with the Successful Proposer(s).

29. Is there a prior preference for a local contractor?

No, see also questions 1-3, 5 and 28. Proposers who are not local may wish to describe in their Proposals how they envision effectively working with DHS while in different geographic locations.

30. What authentication is used to access the existing reporting systems?

The most common and preferred authentication method is to use LDAP against our Microsoft ActiveDirectory to obtain Windows credentials. Those credentials then are mapped to internal application roles via a common custom application we use or within the reporting system itself.

31. Does the County intend to issue a fixed price or time and materials contract for this work?

Please include your anticipated time requirements, hourly rates and material costs in your line item budget. We will negotiate all costs with the Successful Proposer(s). Successful Proposer(s) will invoice for work performed.

32. Our interpretation of the RFP is that you are seeking proposals from vendors to build a custom solution for Allegheny County DHS. Would you be interested in a proposal for a commercially available Software as a Service (SaaS) solution that currently is in use in child welfare agencies and meets the majority of the unstructured data analytics functionality contemplated within this RFP?

Proposers may propose commercially available SaaS Solutions or custom Solutions. See also questions 27 and 33.

33. Will a solution based on cloud infrastructure be permitted? In other words, may the solution's infrastructure be independent from the existing data management systems (i.e. KIDS, HMIS, DAL, etc.) and may it remotely connect with these systems?

Yes. See also questions 27 and 32.

34. What technical documentation regarding DHS's systems will be provided to the contractor?

We do not have a list of technical documentation for the Successful Proposer(s). We will provide all technical documentation needed to develop and implement the selected Solutions.

35. Will the contractor have access to personally identifiable information (PII) from DHS systems?

Yes. DHS transactional systems are by design identifying and unstructured data elements may contain information directly specifying medical, mental health, service related, or personal information about the client. We expect that Successful Proposer(s) would limit access to this information to only what is necessary to accomplish the tasks but expect some exposure to the data. All applicable privacy and confidentiality laws must be followed when working with this data.

36. Will the contractor have access to structured data from DHS's administrative systems, in addition to unstructured data, to facilitate Information Mining and Developing Tools and Visualizations?

Yes, as approved by the County.

37. Does DHS have any preferred technologies (database, visualization, business intelligence) they would like the contractor to use?

No.

38. Are there accessibility requirements for the front-end visualization end products (something equivalent to 508 compliance)?

The front-end visualization products we envision will be for internal (i.e., not public-facing) use. There are no specific accessibility requirements that must be followed for internal products.

39. Is any of the existing data stored in the Cloud?

All of our data and documents currently reside on-premise within locally-hosted DHS systems. However, a roadmap is in development to potentially migrate our data center to a cloud environment over the next one to three years. A proposed Solution should rely on industry-standard means of data access/integration and security protocols, regardless of the data's location.

40. "Proposers may either include technical implementation in their scope of work or propose leveraging our contracted IT partners for the required development (and advising on its implementation). In each case, the Proposal budget should reflect the cost of technical implementation." We'd appreciate clarification on two aspects of this: 1) What an in-house implementation might look like in terms of access, network architecture, database, application stack, security, etc.; and 2) Costs of engaging the department's contracted IT partners. With little

information available to us, implementation costs are difficult to estimate and could vary widely, depending on the tech environment. How should we proceed in the context of limited network/personnel information?

Any proposed Solution should rely on industry-standard means of data access/integration and security protocols that are known to be compatible with typical application architectures, such as web services, APIs, and file transfer protocols. As for cost estimation, please describe your vision of what your implementation might look like in your Proposal. Include implementation costs that you would incur, and note where additional costs may be incurred by a 3rd party. We will provide the access, information and personnel that your solution requires after a contract has been awarded.

41. What is/are the interaction paradigm(s) with users? Do you envisage decision support? Will users help the system with difficult cases, or must it work fully automatically and present its best guesses? The answer centrally determines the nature of the interfaces (Task 2 of the RFP).

We envision products to support social workers (both inside and outside of the DHS), supervisors, and quality improvement staff. This could include decision support.

42. Would you consider revising the requirement in Section 6 that reads "In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Proposers must be willing to comply with all contract requirements listed below and all standard terms and conditions contained in a County contract for provision of services to DHS and its offices?" We seek to submit our proposal on the basis of our standard agreements which properly describe our unique license and services models for the benefit of both parties (we cannot accept the solicitation contracts without legal review and discussion). Our standard contract documentation may be modified as negotiated between our companies.

This Solicitation is not an offer of a contract, and submitting a Proposal under this RFP does not constitute acceptance of any terms. Once a Successful Proposer is identified through the Solicitation process, we will extend an offer of a contract, and at that point we can negotiate and modify terms. However, while there is precedent for incorporating vendors' specific terms of service and license agreements into the standard Allegheny County Agreement as exhibits, we are not generally able to sign another entity's standard agreement.

43. How will the "up to \$1 million will be available" amount be allocated? (Per track, per year, or both?)

The allocation of funds depends upon the Solutions selected and the funding that we can raise and make available.

44. Will additional funds become available for option years 2 and 3?

Depending on the Solutions, their budgets and the completion of key milestones, we may provide more funding to expand the scope in later years.

45. How should annual licensing fees be handled: Should they be included with the line-item budget, or will these ongoing costs be negotiated annually?

Please include annual licensing fees in your line-item budget. All costs will be negotiated with the Successful Proposer(s).

April 25, 2018

46. Is DHS open to solutions securely hosted in the cloud? Or would DHS prefer on-premises installation? Would DHS consider remote vendor management and administration of an on-premises installation?

See questions 27, 32, 33 and 39.

47. What existing operating system does DHS currently use (e.g., Windows, Linux)?

Windows.

48. What tools does DHS currently use for: a) Predictive modeling, b) Business intelligence/reporting/visualization, and c) Text analytics.

We currently use Cognos, Tableau, R, ArcGIS, Python, Excel, Oracle and several custom applications.

49. What case management system does DHS currently use? Is it an enterprise system? Or varied by program area?

Our case management system is not an enterprise system and varies by program areas. Multiple programs use a custom solution we call Synergy. Child welfare uses another custom solution called KIDS while homeless services use a custom solution built to HMIS standards. The Area Agency on Aging uses the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS), a mandated, state-wide case management database.

50. Please provide an overview and diagram of your “existing IT infrastructure” referenced on page 5.

See answer 23.

51. If DHS prefers to staff the solution with in-house resources, what is the rough breakdown of the expected user personas (e.g., 50% business analysts, 25% coders/data scientists/statisticians, 25% case workers)?

We don't prefer to staff the Solution with in-house resources. Proposers should propose how they will staff their Solutions.

52. Does DHS envision the solution to be more of a services engagement with the selected vendor providing ongoing support to DHS staff? Or does DHS envision learning the solution in order to become self-sufficient with using an operationalized solution?

We are open to both scenarios.

53. On page 10, the RFP references “propose leveraging our contracted IT partners for the required development (and advising on its implementation).” Can you please provide the names of those

contractors and the work they provide? In addition, please provide information on the contractor(s) directly involved with this project, if any.

See question 22. No current provider is directly involved with this project.

54. Did a vendor assist with the development of this RFP? If so, who?

No.

April 26, 2018

55. Are the current systems the County is using off-the-shelf, custom-built, or a combination of the two?

We are using a combination of off-the-self and custom-built systems.

a. What file formats are data kept in?

The first sets of data we will mine are in electronic data systems and thus can be exported into a number of different formats. In the future, we are interested in mining scanned documents that are stored as TIFF and PDF images and Microsoft Office document types. While your response to this RFP should focus on the data in machine readable, electronic database format, you also may want to note your Solution's capabilities or limitations for handling scanned documents. See also question 21.

b. How do people access it now (proprietary tools)?

Case notes and other case information are accessible to staff in a variety of ways: through various custom-built solutions or through a document management product. Both DHS caseworkers as well as our network of service providers document case notes throughout different systems. Reviewing these distributed case notes is critical in building a holistic understanding of our clients and is a time-consuming process. We currently do not have any tools that help us distill all of this unstructured data into meaningful information.

c. Is direct access to the databases available via APIs or other means? Or do systems allow export of data only in specific formats?

Successful Proposer(s) can be given direct access to a copy of the database. DHS may provide a staged data layer instead of direct access, and the content and format on the staged layer is negotiable.

d. Are there linkages available between structured data and unstructured data?

Yes, see question 24.

e. Can the County provide information about the existing technology stack and platforms used?

We use a variety of technology solutions, varying from custom built solutions to open source tools to products. When we build custom solutions, we strive to build in a service-oriented fashion. We attempt to select products that provide APIs and applications that allow us to completely own and access our data. Our objective has always been to maintain a high degree of interoperability, and because a majority of our current IT landscape is custom solutions, we have considerable control over how and when to integrate with other solutions or products. Currently, our custom solutions are mostly developed with the .NET framework and reside on Oracle databases. We would expect proposed Solutions to be relatively agnostic of our existing technology solutions in place while helping us to maintain a mature level of interoperability. See also question 23 and 26.

56. Does DHS use any open source code to build predictive models? For clarification, how is DHS using R and Python? Is DHS using those languages to create predictive models? For example, does DHS build predictive models to determine risk factors such as a child at-risk of imminent maltreatment or death, or a family at-risk of becoming homeless, etc.?

DHS does use R and Python, but this question does not seem relevant to this RFP.

57. If a firm only wants to pursue one track, would Allegheny County accept a proposal that also had elements of the other included (though not as prominently featured)? For example, if elements of data visualization were incorporated into a Track One response, would that be acceptable?

Yes, but tracks still will be evaluated based upon the evaluation criteria outlined in RFP section three.

58. The RFP makes it clear that you are familiar with the state of the art and open challenges. We do not want to overpromise. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) has made progress on entity and event coreference (i.e., mapping mentions of “him” and “George” and “the client” to the same person, and mapping “the fight” and “George’s outburst” to the same event). But neither is done perfectly by current algorithms. Nor are event ontologies, causal inference algorithms, and other technologies perfect. Is there room in this RFP for research or is the funding entirely to build applications?

We are open to all Solutions. Proposers can bring also propose to bring in other funding to expand the scope of a Solution. See also question 10.

59. Our team is very enthusiastic about working with your data. Is there a way to work with the data other than getting funding through this RFP? In any case, will it be possible to publish work done with the data, perhaps with appropriate redactions etc.?

Anyone interested in conducting research and publishing work involving DHS data/clients can submit a request for data. Please see <https://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us/index.php/requesting-data/>.

60. Is the total funding \$1M, or \$1M for each track?

It is \$1 million total, but Proposers can propose a different budget total and justify the costs in the budget narrative. See also question 43 and 44.

61. If we partner with another company to provide these services related to this RFP, do all the partners need to be HIPPA compliant?

Whichever entity is the lead agency for your Proposal will be the entity that enters into an Agreement with Allegheny County if your Proposal is selected. Allegheny County does not require a specific HIPAA certification but contractors must follow the applicable regulations. Certainly, you may use your partner's processes to help your organization become compliant. The entity who contracts with Allegheny County will be responsible for ensuring that itself and any subcontractors or partners meet HIPAA and/or Business Associate standards as applicable.

May 4, 2018

62. This request for proposals represents a significant undertaking, can we offer a phased approach?

Successful Proposals are often able to describe the vision for how the Solution can be used to solve our business problems while also offering smaller, more realistically attainable objectives to be completed in the short term.

63. We have ideas about what tools will be helpful to your workers but can we have access to users to understand their experiences?

Yes, your Solution can propose user research and, if selected, we'll make staff available to participate. However, Proposers should still propose possible tools for our consideration.

64. Approximately how many total users will need access to the data visualizations from Track 2? What percentage of those users already have access and familiarity with Tableau? We are considering various options for delivering data visualizations as part of the Track 2 solution. Tableau is one of those options. In order to better understand the implications of alternatives, particularly with respect to licensing costs, we are desirous of knowing if you currently have an extensive installed base of Tableau users and if we would need to account for Tableau costs in our budget.

We have about 40 desktop and unlimited read Tableau licenses which we share with DHS staff, County partners and providers. We also publish visualizations to Tableau Server to share them with wider audiences. We anticipate that we have enough licenses to support Solutions proposed through this RFP.

65. Are there any physical documents which needed to be scanned and needed OCR capabilities?

No physical documents need to be scanned as part of a Solution. See questions 21 and 55a.

66. List of existing business intelligence (BI) and reporting tools?

See question 48.

67. Is there any existing big data environment (Ex: Hadoop)? If yes, what is the distribution used? If no, is there any plan to set-up big data repository for data consolidation, access and reporting.

We do not have a big data environment like Hadoop. We currently do not have plans to set one up, but Solutions could propose the need for it.

68. The RFP describes several different social services for which textual data are available. Are there specific functional decision supports that Allegheny County would like to emphasize for using (textual) data intelligence (i.e. support for case level decisions, etc.)?

Please review the case examples in section one of the RFP.

May 7, 2018

69. List of unstructured applications along with respective DB sizes (in TB)?

See question 49. The sizes of the applications are not relevant to this RFP.

70. Are there any plans to manage structured data? Is there any solution in place already? If so is there a need to create reporting/analytics on both on structured and unstructured data? If yes, then please share the list of structured application and their respective database sizes in TB?

We already have solutions for managing (i.e., read and analyze) structured data. Structured data is not in scope for this RFP. Proposed solutions should focus on unstructured analysis/visualizations that we can use to supplement our existing analytics.

71. Would you be able to upload some screen shots of the existing user interface of the custom applications that you have for your various departments (Synergy, KIDS, etc.). We are interested to know how the data is getting generated and is entered in to the system.

You can find user guides of our applications with screen shots at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Data-processing-Systems.aspx>. The majority of unstructured data we plan to address first is in large, character-based database fields within our Oracle environment. See also question 21.

May 8, 2018

72. We have a short video that describes our solution. Can we submit it in addition to screen shots and visuals in the response form?

Yes, you may provide a link to the video. Please keep video to under 5 minutes in length total. We will evaluate it as part of your Proposal.

May 11, 2018

73. Is it acceptable for a bidder to include the response form and all other required attachments in one document?

Yes.

74. Is it acceptable to separate the budgets and budget narratives into an attachment (outside the 25 page limit)?

Yes, question five in the Response Form says, “You may provide the budget and budget narrative as an attachment.”

75. Is it acceptable to describe key staff experience and qualifications by supplying résumés in an attachment?

No, please summarize this information in question four in the Response Form. Provide only the attachments that are listed in the RFP and Response Form.

76. Can we propose in collaboration with another technology company as an “Analytics Solution Partner?”

Yes, see question 19.

77. If a section in the RFP Response Form is not applicable to the Proposer, should the section be left blank or be notated with N/A?

You may leave the section blank.

78. Question 20 states “The Allegheny County’s MWDBE department accepts certifications from the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program and other entities on a case-by-case basis. Allegheny County does not accept self-certifications.” Can the government please confirm that the PA Unified Certification Program is able to certify Women Enterprises? We only see a DBE Initial Application Form available on the website.

The PA Unified Certification Program certifies women enterprises and considers them a DBE. For more information, please visit www.paucp.com.

79. Will Allegheny County accept federal government Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) certified status as evidenced in our SAM.gov registration to satisfy the Allegheny County MWDBE certification and goal of 2% Women Business Enterprises?

As stated in question 20, “The Allegheny County’s MWDBE department accepts certifications from the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program and other entities on a case-by-case basis.” For specific questions about meeting the County’s MWDBE goals, please contact the MWDBE Department directly at 412-350-4309 or <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/mwdb/contact/index.aspx>.

May 15, 2018

80. Could you please specify which content management system you use and how it is licensed? Is it an enterprise wide system or specific to a department? Will this licensing scheme support the anticipated needs for DHS?

Our content management system is OnBase, which we leverage across DHS. We have unlimited licenses for retrieval and workflow. Certain modules are enterprise licensed and others are license-based. These are easy to expand, if needed.

81. Approximately how many total users will need access to the unstructured content? Of this pool of users, how many create and store content and how many (if any) need read-only privileges? Are any of the full access users part-time and require 52 or less logons per year? How external users are expected?

We have not established estimates for user counts yet; these will be based on the chosen Solution and approach. In general, we expect a small group of internal users to create and store content on a full-time basis, along with a much larger group of internal and external users who will consume the content in read-only fashion, either directly or indirectly through published applications that utilize the unstructured data. Frequency of such read-only access will vary from occasional to daily.

82. How many concurrent users does Allegheny County require? How many users will need to be on the system, actively utilizing it at one given time?

The number of concurrent users will depend upon the Solution. See also question 81.

83. Please describe the hardware that is available to support the solution. Operating System, Cores, Memory, Storage, physical or virtual servers.

Solutions do not need to be specific to DHS hardware. See also question 23.

84. Can DHS clarify if we can propose exceptions to any of the clauses or if we would have an opportunity to negotiate any clauses at award?

See question 42.

85. The RFP indicates that proposers must submit three years of audited financial statements. Would the county accept compiled financial statements instead of audited?

Yes, if you do not have audited financial reports for the last three years, you may submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of your organization. Please note that providing financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.

May 17, 2018

86. The RFP says that Proposals must include the Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form. However, section 6.5 suggests a new provider application is not required as part of the proposal submission and may be completed upon successful award of the contract. Could you please verify whether the Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form is a requirement or an option as an attachment to the proposal.

The [Allegheny County vendor creation form](#) is different from the [DHS New Provider Application](#). Please submit the vendor creation form as part of the RFP Proposal. You do not have to submit the new provider application with your Proposal. You will complete that application if and when you are selected as a Successful Proposer.

87. Does the response to the Proposal Abstract limitation of 750 characters include spaces or not?

Yes, the proposal abstract limitation of 750 characters includes spaces.

88. There is a reference to integration with existing algorithms. Do these exist currently or is this a reference to the ability for future development to integrate with algorithms that are developed for the solution?

This is referring to our desire for the information created by the Solutions to be accessible and have the ability to be integrated to existing tools and processes.

89. Given the complexity of the RFP requirements and our dedication to proposing a highly valuable solution, would the County consider extending the response due date to June 8th?

No, we will not give a deadline extension. We posted this RFP on Tuesday, March 27 and the Proposal deadline is Friday, May 25 at 3 p.m. Eastern. This timeline gave Proposers over eight weeks to develop their Proposals.

90. On average, what are the number of new case notes created per month, broken out by category as defined in Appendix A (e.g., monthly contact notes, monthly assessments, etc.)?

We estimate that there are 250-1,000 assessments and 2,500-5,000 case notes (including contact notes, service logs, social history, court summaries and other unstructured data fields) created per month across all program areas.

May 21, 2018

91. Do you need this reporting application to be compatible across devices like Mobile, Tablet, etc.?

Mobile compatibility is not a requirement, but you should consider whether you expect your solution to be used on a phone/tablet. If so, you may include this functionality in your Proposal.

92. Do you expect the reporting portal to be multi-lingual or just English?

Just English.

93. Are there any existing reports being generated that needs to be replicated in the new system?

No.

94. Do you have any specific or approximate number of reports or visualizations that needs to be created?

We do not have a specific number of reports in mind and would like to generate reports as needed.

95. History Data - How many years of data you would want to see in the reporting portal?

For most of our applications, we have data as far back as 2006 that we would like to be able to see in the portal.

96. Do you need scheduling and distribution of reports?

This will ultimately depend on the solution selected, but this functionality may be necessary for some use cases.

97. Is the nature of the platform purely passive in that it displays the current state of the community, or should it also provide active capabilities such as alerting if there are substantive changes within specific thresholds?

As stated on page eight of the RFP, Solutions may be passive or proactive.

98. Does this system need to share similar user experience requirements of the existing software suite, or will the vendor be able to provide user experience recommendations for the target system?

The Successful Proposer can have access to the end users of this system to understand their specific user experience needs.

99. We'd like to request an extension of the response due date by a week to June 1, 2018.

We cannot grant an extension. See Question 89, above.

100. How many end users are expected to use the Analytics Solution?

Please see Questions 81 and 82, above.

101. There is a training aspect to the requirements for DHS staff, classifiers and customers, using public data. Is there any high quality training data currently available or collected by the agency? Who would be responsible for manual tagging of the data?

We do not currently collect this data or have it available. You may include recommended approaches to training and tagging the data in your Proposal; these may include DHS staff.

102. How will the indicators for sentiment analysis be used?

Please refer to the example use cases in Sections 1 and 2.2 of the RFP.

103. Are population census and relationships tracked today using an MDM system (for example, to determine family relationships)? If so, will we be able to access this tool?

We have several data sources that allow us to tie people together in households or families. To the extent this functionality is available, the Successful Proposer may leverage it.

104. Page 4 indicates a budget of up to \$1 million will be available for the two tracks: (1) Mining Information, and (2) Developing Tools and Visualizations. We have a few related questions to help clarify our understanding of the allocated budget:

a. Is the \$1 million budget meant to cover both tracks, or would each track have a \$1 million budget (so in effect, a total of \$2 million)?

See question 60.

b. Does Allegheny have a preference to how the costs associated with the solution are categorized between "capital" and "operational" costs?

There is no budget template and you may organize your budget as you feel works best. See question 18.

c. Is Allegheny's stated budget meant to cover both "capital" and "operational" costs, or is the stated budget only meant to apply to one of those cost categories?

Please provide a line item budget and budget narrative that includes all costs.

d. Is Allegheny's stated budget meant to cover the implementation up to the "go live" event, or extend into the support period beyond the go-live. So, for example, if the implementation period were to last 1 year and the defined support period were to cover the 2 years after (so a total of 3 years), would the entire 3-year period be included in Allegheny's stated budget, or would only the 1-year implementation period be included?

Please include all costs associated with your Solution, include those that extend beyond the go-live. See also questions 43, 44 and 60.

105. The RFP asks that respondents attach "Audited financial reports for the last three years." Are there other metrics that Allegheny would accept instead of these financial reports? For example, number of employees, number of clients, number of active projects, statement of debt-free operation, etc.?

If you do not have audited financial reports for the last three years, you may submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of your organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County. See question 85.

May 22, 2018

106. Do you have any specific list of browsers that are needed to be supported?

Our applications are supported across the following browsers: IE 11, Edge, Safari for Windows, and Chrome.

107. How many source databases need to be integrated? What are their volumes/sizes?

At this time we do not believe we need data integration.

108. Do you expect to have real time data integration?

Real time data integration may be required depending on the specific use case. Also see Question 117.

109. What user interfaces should the platform support? For the Web? For mobile (responsive web vs native)?

We expect that the most effective user interface could differ across use cases. We are interested in learning more about which user interfaces could be most valuable.

110. How much data (in terms of size) does the system need to support and what are the growth projections for the data annually?

Please refer to Question 90; we do not have more detailed information to offer at this time.

111. In addition to building the user experience for the system, is there an expectation of data export capabilities within the platform or APIs to allow 3rd party integration?

Many of our existing applications are tightly integrated and share data today. While not mandatory, it could be beneficial if proposed solutions can integrate with an existing IT ecosystem.

112. Will the selected vendor have access to test versions of the existing current suite for development purposes?

If it makes sense for development purposes, yes, vendors could have access to test environments/versions of our existing solutions.

113. Any specific technology constraints that a vendor should be aware of?

After reviewing proposed solutions, we look forward to learning more about how various solutions could assimilate into our existing IT ecosystem.

114. As per RFP, the Unstructured data is stored in DHS data systems. What is the format of data stored in these systems? Over what protocol, such as http, ftp would be used to access this data?

We are open to different protocols to access data, based upon proposed solutions. Please also see Questions 21, 40, and 55.

115. Will you provide some examples of use cases for scenarios where interactions are defined by individuals or identification/case numbers? Will you please provide specific examples of acceptable and defined intuitive categories?

We do not understand this question. We anticipate having clarifying conversations with some proposers as part of the RFP process and may be able to address this question at that time.

116. Approximately how many users (concurrent as well as overall) are expected to be using the system? How are these users managed today? Are separate permissions required for access into different parts of the application? Do all users have access to all case information? If not, how will access permissions be communicated?

See questions 81 and 82. Proposers may propose various user roles with different access levels.

117. Will case information be loaded and processed in batch, or will real-time capabilities be required? In the case of real-time, are the existing case management tools able to export cases automatically, or will an ETL process need to be created to look for, obtain and ingest new case documentation?

We have the ability to proceed either way: enabling real time data sharing or batching data over at a set frequency. After assessing proposed solutions and our requirements we can settle on the best approach to sharing data between solutions. Also see Question 108.