



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**  
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES (PBX IV) MASTER CONTRACT**

**Solicitation No. 001B0600162**  
**February 1, 2020**

**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES #1**

Question 1: Will the State of Maryland also consider Hosted Telecommunications (Hosted VoIP) solutions as a response for this RFP?

**Response: The RFP requirements is for On-premise Solution.**

Question 2: Relating to Section 3.2.6 Subcontractor Insurance  
This master PORFP is requesting 3,000,000 Error and Omissions/Professional Liability and 5,000,000 for cyber risk/data breach coverage. From our experience, this is above the average insurance coverage that a MBE or VSBE will carry. Additionally, most insurance underwriters consider both coverages at the same amount, i.e. 5,000,000 in this case, which will further raise the premium. Being a MBE company ourselves, we appreciate the State's effort to promote MBE and VSBE over the years. We also sympathize with how difficult and costly it is to get E&O and Cyber coverage for the duration of the term without any guarantee of contract.

Will the State consider reducing the insurance coverage for MBE and VSBE under this contract? The subcontractor may simply be asked to provide electronic work or general consultation that does not involve any sensitive personal data. Reducing the coverage level will allow us to partner with companies based on their strength and experience as it may not be viable for some minority enterprises to undertake this opportunity due to cost constraint.

**Response: According to Section 3.2.6, the Contractor shall require any subcontractors to obtain and maintain comparable levels of coverage and shall provide the Contract Monitor with the same documentation as is required of the Contractor. This is between the prime and the subcontractor. Additionally, the state considers reducing the Cybersecurity Insurance Requirements. An amendment to the RFP will be issued.**

Question 3: Relating to Functional Area I

A. Is there any specific requirements for the FAI warranty? For example, the length of the warranty and response time? Or is it up to the Master Contractor to propose?



**Response:** Master Contractor are to propose based on the manufacturer's warranty. Specific length of the warranty and response time shall be defined in the PORFP by the requesting Agency if needed beyond the manufacturer's warranty.

B. Is there any requirement for Software Assurance?

**Response:** Yes. Minimum of one (1) year. Requesting agency may request a longer term if needed.

Question 4: Relating to Functional Area II  
Would "Proactive Maintenance" and "Reactive Maintenance" above the standard warranty be classified under FA II Manufacturer's Extended Warranty?

**Response:** Yes. Specific requirement shall be defined in the PORFP by the requesting Agency.

Question 5: Relating to 5.3.2 K Subcontractors  
"The Offeror shall provide a complete list of all subcontractors that will work on the Contract if the Offeror receives an award". Will the State allow bidder to list the main subcontractors currently used and add additional subcontractors based on the requirements of the individual PORFP?

**Response:** Yes. But only if the proposed subcontractor is unable to meet the requirements, not available, and or no longer in business.

Question 6: Relating to Attachment B Price sheet for FAIII  
Currently, the pricing sheet is requesting the fully loaded rate for all labor category, but it does not allow for a premium rate if work is performed after hours. Will the State consider adding this to the pricing sheet?

**Response:** The state considers including a premium rate and will issue an amendment to Attachment B.

**Question 7:** The technical proposal can be submitted electronically but the instructions mention tabs as if a binder is being submitted. Do we have to organize the proposal under tabs in the document?

**Response:** Yes. Each section of the Technical Proposal shall be separated by a TAB as indicated in Section 5.3.2. Offerors shall organize its proposal under tabs in the document. Please follow the instructions given.

Questions 8: Section 3 Contractor Requirements is not mentioned in the instructions for the technical proposal (Section 5.3.2). Should we respond to section 3? If so, where/what tab should the information reside in the proposal?

**Response:** Section 3 will be define in the PORFP by the requesting Agency.

Questions 9: Can manufacturers be on the contract?

**Response:** Manufacturer are not excluded from consideration if they have past performance. Additionally, if the manufacturer is or has an authorized sales representative, they can become a Master Contractor.

Question 10: Are cloud PBX solutions authorized on the contract?

**Response:** The RFP requirements is for On-premise solution.

Question 11: Section 2 Contractor Requirements: Scope of Work is not mentioned in the instructions for the technical proposal (Section 5.3.2). Should we respond to section 2? If so, where/what tab should the information reside in the proposal?

**Response: Yes, under TAB E**

Question 12: Are MBE subcontractors required to carry \$5M per claim?

**Response: According to section 3.2.6, the Contractor shall require any subcontractors to obtain and maintain comparable levels of coverage and shall provide the Contract Monitor with the same documentation as is required of the Contractor. Additionally, the state considers reducing the Cybersecurity Insurance Requirements. An amendment to the RFP will be issued.**

Questions 13: Will prime contractors be able to select additional MBE partners at the time of the PORFP proposal that were not included in the technical proposal?

**Response: Yes. But only if the proposed subcontractor is unable to meet the requirements, not available, and or no longer in business.**

Question 14: Is the term “technical proposal” the same as the term “proposal” in the table of attachments on pages 55-56?

**Response: Your technical proposal is the same as your proposal.**

Questions 15: Are we to submit a separate Attachment D-1 for each functional area that we bid?

**Response: You may submit a single D-1 form for FA II and or FA III.**

Question 16: The Offeror Information sheet must accompany the technical proposal, but there is no Appendix 2 where it should be located. Please provide the Offeror Information Sheet.

**Response: Revert to page 102 of the RFP labeled Appendix 2 - Offeror Information Sheet, and click on the link.**

Question 17: Does the state anticipate requiring sub goals for future PORFPs? Should we include subcontractors to meet all possible sub goals in our technical proposal?

**Response: No sub-goal is required for this RFP, and therefore should not be required at the PORFP level.**

Question 18: Is there a possibility that this might change and/or the requirement be reduced to something more in line with the 2% of an award that a VSBE might receive?

**Response: The state considers reducing the Cybersecurity Insurance Requirements. An amendment to the RFP will be issued.**

Question 19. Is the pre-proposal conference required?

**Response: The pre-proposal conference is recommended, but not required.**

Question 20. Optus would like to attend this pre-proposal conference remotely. How can we gain access to do so?

**Response: Remote option is not available for the Pre-proposal conference.**

Question 21: I see that this proposal is to be sent to

Attention: Dominic Edet  
45 Calvert Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Annapolis, Maryland  
21401

My questions is, how do you want to receive this (FedEx or UPS) and when you receive it what do you want it to look like? (Binded in a folder, tabs marking certain pages)

**Response: Please submit your proposal to the address below if you choose to submit a hardcopy:**

**Attention: Dominic Edet  
45 Calvert Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Annapolis, Maryland  
21401**

- **Please ship to the above address whichever way you feel will be convenient for you and that your proposal will arrive to the above address before the due date and time.**
- **If you choose to submit a hardcopy, please ensure that your proposal is bounded and indicate the tab marking. Additionally, revert to the response to question 7.**

Questions 22: In reviewing the RFP it seems very clear to me that a Premised Based Solution is the option you are looking for. Jive/LMI is a leader in Collaboration, working with quite a few states, providing our UcaaS services. I'm interested to see if a Hosted solution is something that you will entertain as part of this procurement. I was planning to attend the Bidders Conference but wanted some direction prior to Friday.

**Response: The RFP requirements is for On-premise solution.**

Question 23: I do not see an equipment list that indicates what brands and models are needing to be priced out...found TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES (PBX IV) Excel sheet however blank and no part numbers listed... does the state want entire company catalog listed here?

**Response: Offeror are to propose what they are authorize to sell, install and or maintain.**

Question 24: May I get the list of who submitted proposals and amounts if available? If not available yet, do you have an anticipated date that this will be available?

**Response: The pre-proposal list of attendees has been published on eMMA.**

Questions 25: During the pre-bidders conference there was a mention that the State currently has a private cloud that is utilized for telecommunications services. Is it possible to get some additional information on the private cloud? If this cloud is configured utilizing the State's WAN and connecting back to a central location where call control, dial tone and Internet is being provided, would the State consider a solution where we integrated with the States network and provide dial tone and call control from the pre-existing central location? The agencies would be able to get new phone services, while still utilizing the private cloud.

**Response: The RFP requirements is for On-Premise Solution.**

Question 26: It was stated at the pre-bidders conference that this Master Contract would be for 10 years. If a contractor offers a hosted service and is not awarded this RFP due to the State only looking for premise based solutions at this time, how would the contractor have the opportunity to be included on solicitations presented by agencies that would want to look at a hosted solutions within the 10 years of this contract? Given that it was stated at the bidders conference that the only way agencies can procure telecommunications services is via this Master Contract.

**Response: If such needs arises, the State is able to amend the existing contract to request a hosted solution from the awarded Master Contractors, and or to add new master contractors to the poll.**

Question 27: Can multiple MBE's be utilized to meet the 25% requirement

**Response: Multiple MBE's can be utilized to meet the 25% requirement.**

Question 28: On page 49, in paragraph 5.3.2.J, the RFP notes that "The current insurance types and limits do not have to be the same as described in Section 3.6. See Section 3.6 for..." Is "3.6" a typo in both instances? It seems insurance requirements are discussed in Section 3.2.

**Response: That is correct. Insurance requirements are discussed in Section 3.2. An amendment will be issued.**

Question 29: On page 48, in paragraph 5.3.2.E.1, the RFP states "Offerors must state each manufacturer product line that they propose selling through the Hardware and Associated Equipment and Services Master Contract." Can you confirm that "Hardware and Associated Equipment and Services Master Contract" has been mentioned in error and this should read "Telecommunications Equipment and Services Master Contract"?

**Response: That is correct, it should read "Telecommunications Equipment and Services Master Contract" and not "Hardware and Associated Equipment and Services Master Contract". An amendment to the RFP will be issued.**

Question 30: Under the Functional Area description of item 2.1.2 – Should this also include Maintenance Services?

**Response: Yes. Maintenance Services for FA II. An amendment to the RFP will be issued to define maintenance.**

Question 31: Reference: General  
Please provide the bidder's conference attendee list.

**Response: The pre-proposal conference attendee list has been published on eMMA.**

Question 32: Reference: RFP 5.3.1 In addition to the instructions below, responses in the Offeror's Technical Proposal shall reference the organization and numbering of Sections in the RFP (e.g., "Section 2.2.1 Response . . ."; "Section 2.2.2 Response . . ."). All pages of both Proposal volumes shall be consecutively numbered from beginning (Page 1) to end (Page "x").  
*Does DGS require a point by point response to each paragraph of the RFP?*

**Response: Your proposal shall reference the organization and numbering of section in the RFP that you are required to respond to. Additionally, all pages of both Proposal volumes shall be consecutively numbered from beginning to end as outlined.**

If so, besides the Technical Proposal organization and requirements listed in RFP Section 5.3.2, please confirm what sections of the RFP are required for responses to the Technical Proposal and which tab do these sections fall under?

**Response: Respond to Volume 1 of the Technical Proposal in Section 5.3.2.**

Question 33 Reference: RFP 4.27.B. B. Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprises must be verified by the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The listing of verified VSBEs may be found at <http://www.va.gov/osdbu>. Utilizing the website link, <http://www.va.gov/osdbu>, do all VSBE's need to be Maryland based or nationwide as presented in the link?

**Response: Nationwide as presented in the link.**

Question 34: Reference: RFP 5.2.4 The State has established the following procedure to restrict access to Proposals received electronically: all Proposal documents must be password protected, and the password for the Technical Proposal must be different from the password for the Financial Proposal. Offerors will provide these two passwords to DGS upon request or their Proposal will be deemed not susceptible for award. Subsequent submissions of Proposal content will not be allowed.

34a. How and when will the Offeror be contacted for the request of the two different passwords by the DGS?

**Response: Upon receipt of both technical and financial response to the RFP, the procurement officer will contact all Offeror that responded to the RFP to provide a password in a week or two once a schedule is set.**

34b. Does DGS have any specific password rules to be applied, i.e. X digits in length, etc.?

**Response: There are no specific password rules. But ensure that the password provided will open the documents submitted.**

Question 35: Reference: RFP 5.3.2.K (Tab J)The Offeror shall provide a complete list of all subcontractors that will work on the Contract if the Offeror receives an award, including those utilized in meeting the MBE and VSBE subcontracting goal(s), if applicable. This list shall include a full description of the duties each subcontractor will perform and why/how each subcontractor was deemed the most qualified for this project. If applicable, subcontractors utilized in meeting the established MBE or VSBE participation goal(s) for this solicitation shall be identified as provided in the appropriate attachment(s) of this RFP.

The last sentence states: If applicable, subcontractors utilized in meeting the established MBE or VSBE participation goal(s) for this solicitation shall be identified as provided in the appropriate attachment(s) of this RFP.

35a. Is Tab J applicable as forms Attachment D-1A thru D-5 and Attachment E-1 thru E4 are not required at time of submission?

**Response: E-1 – E4 will be defined at the PORFP by the using agency.**

35b. If Tab J is applicable, we are not responding to a specific PORFP request, does DGS require a general list of subcontractors that may perform on this contract based on the various PORFP requests anticipated?

**Response: See response to 35a.**

35c. Please confirm that the list of subcontractors is not final and may grow or decrease based on requirements or performance.

**Response: Yes. See response to Question 5**

Question 36: Reference: RFP 3.2.1 – Insurance and 5.3.2.J (Tab I) It is understood that vendors are required to submit their current COI with this submission, however, within five (5) business days of award, a new COI must be submitted with the required limits as specified in 3.2.1. In order to be prepared, companies must get price quotes and business decision determinations to add the required higher limits, if needed, and may affect small businesses.  
Are there any set limits in section 3.2.1 that are negotiable? For example, cyber risk/data breach is minimal for PBX/Telecommunication Systems and as such, \$5M in coverage may be considered excessive for said businesses?

**Response: The state considers reducing the Cybersecurity Insurance Requirements. An amendment to the RFP will be issued.**

Question 37: Reference: 5.3.2.M (Tab L) and 5.3.2.E (Tab D)  
2. If furnished by a third-party entity, the Offeror must identify the third-party provider and provide a letter of authorization or such other documentation demonstrating the authorization for such services. In the case of an open source license, authorization for the open source shall demonstrate compliance with the open source license.

37a. Please clarify the difference between Tabs D and L.

**Response: Please see Section 5.3.2 (E&M). Read E #2.**

37b. Does DGS require the Letters of Authorization in Tab D or Tab L?

**Response: Please see Section 5.3.2 (E).**

37c. If the Letters of Authorization are required in Tab L, what is required in Tab D?

**Response: Please see Section 5.3.2 M #2 relating to a third-party entity).**

37d. Please clarify RFP M – Tab L item 2. Is the third-party entity different than the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) who provides authorization to the vendor?

**Response: Please see section 5.3.2 (Tab M #2 & #3) of the RFP for third-party entity.**

Question 38: Section 2.2.2. Should this also include Maintenance Services and a basic overview of what the State's expectation will be regarding maintenance services after the Manufacturer's warranty expires? Typically this would include technical/help-desk support, hardware support and preventive maintenance for manufacturer and 3<sup>rd</sup> party hardware, software or licenses Master Contractors provided that are no longer covered under a manufacturer's warranty.

**Response: Yes. Maintenance Services for FA II. An amendment to the RFP will be issued to define maintenance.**

Question 39: Section 3.2.1. Please advise if Worker's Compensation insurance coverage under the Federal Employer's Liability Act will be required of the successful Contractor.

**Response: Please see Section 3.2.1 E of the RFP for Worker's Compensation**

Question 40: Please advise if edits will be considered or accepted following an award with the successful Contractor to Attachment I, Non-Disclosure Agreement.

**Response: Non –Disclosure Agreement is a standard language and therefore, remain as is.**

Question 41 Please advise if Attachment L, the Location of the Performance of Services Disclosure Form, is required with the Proposal submission.

**Response: This solicitation does not require a Location of the Performance of Services Disclosure.**

Question 42: Sections 5.2-5.4 If these sections, or any other sections similar to those under the Telecommunications PBX III Master Contract offering were removed or edited during previous negotiations, please advise if such edits and/or removals will be considered during negotiations with the successful Contractor during this procurement, without exceptions being required by the Contractor in their Proposal response.

**Response: This is PBX IV and not PBX III. No knowledge of what was edited and or removed in PBX III.**

Question 43: Section 7.2 please advise if the State will allow licensing rights for Software and Pre-Existing IP to be limited to the scope of the Contract and any applicable Contractor or manufacturer's EULAs.

**Response: Section 7.2 is standard language, and therefore remains as is.**

Question 44: Section 7.3 Please advise if the State can agree to allow the successful Contractor sole right to defend all claims.

**Response: Section 7.3 is standard language, and therefore remains as is.**

Question 45: Section 7.8. Please advise if this includes copyright notices or restrictive markings for all Software Deliverables, including open source Software.

**Response: Section 7.8 is standard language and therefore, remains as is.**

Question 46: Section 9. Please advise if this section may be limited to scenarios in which the State has entrusted data or records to the Contractor.

**Response: Section 9 is standard language, and therefore remains as is.**

Question 47: Section 25.2 please advise if State will allow for a longer notice prior to an audit. Please also advise if State can agree to not make copies of related records or to only make them subject to confidentiality obligations.

**Response: Section 25.2 is standard language, and therefore remains as is.**

Question 48: Section 39.2. For subsections of this requirement that are to be established at the PORFP level, please advise if liquidated damages may be negotiated at the PORFP level, and for all subsections, please advise if the State will allow caps to be negotiated for this Contract with the successful vendor.

**Response: Section 39.2 is standard language, and therefore remains as is.**

Questions 49: Please clarify: Are proposal documents supposed to be password protected so that they cannot be opened without a password?

**Response: That is correct.**

Question 50: If passwords are to be provided to DGS “upon request,” how and when will DGS request them?

**Response: See response to question 34a**

Question 51: The RFP requires all subcontractors to be identified in this section. If awarded the Master Contract, can we add additional subcontractors during the life of the contract?

**Response: Yes. But only if the proposed subcontractor is unable to meet the requirements, not available or no longer in business.**

Question 52: Need to specify what we are taking exception to – is it the requirement that invoices be e-mailed? Vendor takes exception to this requirement as written. Vendor offers an online portal where a user can specify that they wish to be notified via email when an invoice has been generated and is ready for review or download. Our invoices do offer the necessary details specified in the requirement.

**Response: No. Invoicing will be define in the PORFP by the requesting Agency.**

Question 53: Does the % of MBE and VSBE requirements vary per PORFP for FAII and FAIII?

**Please see section 4.26.1 and 4.26.2 of the RFP for more details and answers to your question.**

Question 54: Can we add LOA’s to the Master Contract after a PORFP is issued?

**Please see Section 2.1.5 of the RFP.**

Question 55: Verizon requests a two week extension to the due date for responses to this RPF.

**Response: Please see amendment in eMMA. Proposal due date was extended for another week.**

Question 56: We would like to become a master contractor and have the possibility of utilizing the expertise of multiple affiliates to meet the requirements of a PORFP. This approach would require more than one FEIN. How would the State recommend we submit our proposal to facilitate this approach?

**Response: Only one (1) primary FEIN is required.**

Question 57: Is it the State’s expectation that offerors include the cost of administrative personnel within the proposed rates in Attachment X for the master contract or within a PORFP response?

**Response: The RFP made no mention of Attachment X.**

Question 58: Some of the resources in Attachment B may be able to perform their responsibilities remotely. Does the State have any requirements on where the resources must be located?

**Response: Please response to question 41.**

Question 59: How would the State like offerors to propose rates for normal business hours vs. nights, weekends and holidays?

**Response: Please see response to question 6**

Question 60: What is the State's expected minimum interval for offerors to submit a PORFP proposal from the PORFP issue date and PORFP due date?

**Response: This will be define in the PORFP by the requesting Agency.**

Question 61: The MD DOT approved vendor list does not have a category for Veteran Small Business Enterprise (VSBE). How does the offeror determine if a VSBE is State of Maryland approved?

**Response: Please see response to question 33.**

Question 62: Since FA II is Manufacturer's Extended Warranty, how would the State expect a Master Contractor to meet the MBE and VSBE participation goals?

**Response: Please see response to question 38.**

Question 63: If awarded the Master Contract; what is the process to add additional sub-contractors, MBE's and VSBE's during the life of the contract?

**Response: A point of contact will be established on the PBX IV webpage, and or step by step directions will be provided on the webpage.**