

QUESTION AND ANSWER #7  
MHBE IT Consulting and Technology IDIQ  
**BPM031490**  
11/15/2022

**Question:** What is yearly spend of this contract? please share spend of year 2020 and 2021

**Response:** The average annual spend under the current contract is approximately \$25 million and \$29 million in FY 2020 and FY 2021, respectively.

**Question:** Do we need to submit ATTACHMENT D-1 – CERTIFICATION AGAINST LOBBYING and ATTACHMENT D-2 DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES with proposal response?

**Response:** If D-2 is applicable, then yes it must be filled out.

**Question:** Do we need to submit separate attachments for Technical Proposal and Cost proposal?

**Response:** Yes, please review section 5.1 (b) of the RFP for instructions.

**Question:** Do we need to Submit both PDF file of cost proposal and excel sheet (ATTACHMENT\_B-2-\_Financial\_Proposal) as well?

**Response:** Section 5.1 and 5.5 have been amended; Attachment B must be signed and submitted in PDF format.

**Question:** Per the RFP on page 41 under Section 5 Proposal Format, “the Financial Proposal contents, signed and in a spreadsheet (Excel) format.” However, on page 44 under section 5.5 Financial proposal, “shall submit one electronic version in **MS Excel and a signed PDF** of the Financial Proposal in the format requirements identified in Section 5.1.” Additionally, in the State’s response to Questions and Answers #5 on page 10, the State says, “The Financial Proposal should be saved as a PDF document in the format that was provided.”

**Response:** Section 5.1. and 5.5 have been amended; Attachment B must be signed and submitted in PDF format.

**Question:** In section 5.5, The Master Contractor shall submit one electronic version in MS Excel and a signed PDF of the Financial Proposal in the format requirements identified in Section 5.1 In section 5.1 Financial proposal only says excel format where 5.5 says excel and PDF format, please clarify?

**Response:** Section 5.1. and 5.5 have been amended; Attachment B must be signed and submitted in PDF format.

**Question:** Do we need to submit ATTACHMENT\_B-2- \_Financial\_Proposal form only as cost proposal or need signed pdf copy as well?

**Response:** Section 5.1. and 5.5 have been amended; Attachment B must be signed and submitted in PDF format.

**Question:** Can you please confirm what to be covered in page limit of 25 pages?

**Response:** Section 5.4 Technical Proposal, and 5.4.1 was amended, page restrictions has been removed, please see Q & A # 6

**Question:** would you count Proof of Insurance, Required Forms, Balance sheets, Title and Table of Contents in page limit of 25 pages?

**Response:** Section 5.4 Technical Proposal, and 5.4.1 was amended, page restrictions have been removed, please see Q & A # 6

**Question:** Is it mandatory to submit additional documents apart from last two years balance sheets? In addition, the Offeror may supplement its response to this Solicitation by included one or more of the following with its response:

- i. Dunn and Bradstreet rating
- ii. Standard and Poor's Rating,
- iii. Line of credit,
- iv. Evidence of a successful financial track record, and/or
- v. Evidence of adequate working capital.

**Response:** No.

**Question:** I see that Amendment # 5 have been posted on eMMA for MHBE IT Consulting and Technical Support Services IDIQ (Solicitation Number #BPM031490).

**Response:** There will be an Amendment # 4, thank you.

**Question:** In section 5.1 A, the title line shall state “IT Consulting and Support Services IDIQ RFP #BPM031490 Proposal” including the Offeror’s name.

Title should include Offeror’s name, should we just prefix/suffix the offeror name in the title? On the eMMA website we see an option called Label under Response information, we are assuming this is where we should put the title, please clarify?

**Response:** No, the title page is a part of your Technical Proposal. Section 5.0 tells you how to label each file. Please reach out to eMMA if you have further questions about uploading your files.

**Question:** In section 5.1 B-3, A third attachment labeled “IT IDIQ RFP #BPM031490 PIA”, including the Technical Proposal and the Financial Proposal in searchable PDF format needs to be uploaded. While looking at eMMA website we only see options to upload Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal. There is no option to upload a PIA document, please clarify?

**Response:** Under Technical Proposal is where you would upload all files necessary to your Technical Proposal including PIA. Under Financial Proposal is where you would upload your Financial Proposal. Please reach out to eMMA for further assistance.

**Question:** If both excel and PDF formats need to be uploaded, on eMMA website can we upload both files under Financial Env. - Vendor Financial Documents?

**Response:** Section 5.1. and 5.5 have been amended; Attachment B must be signed and submitted in PDF format.

**Question:** As a small minority business in MD with an MBE certification we are looking to obtain our first contract opportunity. I have provided IT services to the federal government as a contractor for many years. Are we allowed to use our federal government contracting experience as our past performance and provide references?

**Response:** The Offeror can provide details of past performances related to providing services required by this RFP that are relevant, verifiable, and demonstrable, without limitation to specific contracting experiences.

**Question** As we are seeking our first contract as a business do we need to obtain business insurance now and wait to see if we are one of the awardees? If so, we will be paying for insurance without any revenue and would create a financial burden on a small business.

**Response:** Section 5.4.1 states that proof of Insurance must be submitted with your proposal.

**Question: 5.4.1.1 Transmittal Letter – Technical Proposal.**

A Transmittal Letter shall accompany the Technical Proposal. The Transmittal Letter shall be prepared on the Contractor’s business stationery. The purpose of this letter is to transmit the Technical Proposal and acknowledge receipt of any amendments to the RFP; therefore, it should be brief. The letter shall be signed by an individual who is authorized to bind the firm to all statements, including services and prices, contained in the proposal. **Our Question:** Should the Transmittal Letter be submitted as a separate document? The instructions “shall accompany the Technical Proposal” imply that the Transmittal Letter should not be placed within the Technical Proposal.

**Response:** The transmittal letter is a part of your Technical Proposal.

**Question:** When the State refers to the “Financial Proposal” are you referring to “Attachment B-2” only? Or, for the Financial Proposal does the State also require an additional document, with a Transmittal Letter, Title Page, Statement of Confidentiality, etc.

**Response:** We are only referring to Attachment B-2.

**Question:** Can you please assist me with a few questions about the RFP: Appendix II Labor Categories - the Word document downloads fine but doesn't open saying there is a problem with the file. I have tried two different PCs with the same result. Can you please check the download file or send a copy that opens for you?

**Response:** Appendix II Labor Categories was updated in round 3 on eMMA. Please review the latest “open” round in eMMA to access the most up to date files, current amendment, and Q&A.

**Question:** The links in Sections 4.5 and 4.6 page 31 receive a 404-error message. Could you please correct or send links back to this email that I could use to access the information?

**Response:** Sections 4.5 and 4.6 links have been amended; please use the link below. You can also find the links on the latest version (updated) RFP.

<https://www.marylandhbe.com/solicitations/>

**Question:** Section 2.2 towards the bottom of the opening paragraph on page 10, it says, "Salesforce CRM implemented for customer engagement and call center operations." Will call center operations support be in-scope of this RFP?

**Response:** No.

**Question:** How many key personnel and resumes are required to submit along with the RFP Response?

**Response:** None.

**Question:** Has this contract been previously procured?

**Response:** Yes

**Question:** Is this a new procurement for an existing contract that is ending?

**Response:** Yes

**Question:** Page 42 of 119 Section 5.4.1.5.C Financial Requirements; Would the State consider unaudited IRS Financial Statements?

**Response:** The Offeror should provide sufficient proof under the commonly accepted method to prove fiscal integrity. Please refer to Section 5.4.1.5(C) of the RFP for more details.

**Question:** Prior to the amendment 5, there was a page restriction of 25 for Technical Proposal. So, after the amendment 5, can we assume that there's no page restriction nor any file size limit for the proposal?

**Response:** That is correct.

**Question:** In order to submit the proposals, do we need to have an eMMA account?

**Response:** Yes, you will have to register on eMMA as a user, it is free.

**Question:** Appendix III-Sample Request for Resume Template, Appendix IV-Sample Task Order Agreement, upon successful award of the MHBE IT CTSSIDIQ, does MHBE plan to utilize Task Order and Request for Resumes to procure candidates in Staff Augmentation roles only for this RFP?

**Response:** Yes.

**Question:** RFP section 2.5 Functional Area Descriptions, Will Task Orders ever be utilized to procure comprehensive services with defined scopes of work for a team of resources as described through 2.5 as “Examples of Potential Services?”

**Response:** MHBE does not intend to issue specific Task Orders to procure comprehensive services across labor categories.

**Question:** Appendix III- Sample Request for Resume Template, Appendix IV- Sample Task Order Agreement; If a Task Order were to identify number of individuals in multiple labor categories to deliver a comprehensive, defined scope of work (e.g. Upgrade the Consumer Portal to provide information for a new type of interactive report), would the individuals be under direction of the winning vendors Project Manager or is each individual receiving day -to-day direction from a MHBE project manager?

**Response:** The individuals will function under the direction of MHBE staff.

**Question:** Can you please confirm that the transmittal letter is to be part of the Technical Proposal and attached before the cover page? I want to make sure because 5.4.1.2 says **Technical Proposal shall begin with a title page** bearing the name, address, eMMA# ....”

**Response:** Yes, the transmittal letter is a part of the Technical Proposal. Q&A # 5 explains the sequence.

**Question:** Can you please confirm that there are no longer any page limits for the Technical Proposal?

**Response:** That is correct.

**Question:** In one of the Q&A it was indicated that DocuSign could be used for our signature. On the same thought, could we have our signature inserted onto the signature block of the PDF documents using NITRO?

**Response:** There are no restrictions to the usage of a specific product to effect electronic signature. MHBE accepts electronic signatures as legally binding and equivalent to handwritten signatures to signify an agreement where MHBE policies, state or federal regulations, or laws require a handwritten signature unless otherwise prohibited by such policies, regulations, or laws.

**Question:** In emma there are boxes specifically for attaching and submitting the technical and financial proposals. Where are we to attach the total proposal which includes both technical and financial redacted?

**Response:** Your Technical Proposal should **not** include any financial information relating to your Financial Proposal.

**Question:** Can a company submit a proposal as a prime and, also be identified as a subcontractor in another company's proposal?

**Response:** There are no restrictions on the Offeror being identified as a prime or a subcontractor in their response to this RFP. However, Offerors should provide a verifiable relevant experience(s) of demonstrable past performance(s) of the organization bidding under this RFP.

**Question:** Please share the application name and version used by MHBE for following functions: Finance, Human resources, E-commerce, Procurement, Materials management, Production, Order management and other legacy systems, Data warehousing; and/or Information services (e.g., financial information, and legal research). Collaboration and automation tools, Webhosting, Knowledge management, Back-office solutions, e-business and e-commerce applications.

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Can we know how MHBE or HBX system is managing documents?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Is MHBE ready to adopt/interest in any of ECM products like OpenText, NewGen, Nuexo, IBMFileNetP8 etc.

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Are they expecting support for their existing stack or the new solutions to be implemented?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** As per the RFP, they have MongoDB as repository for ECM. Do they have any custom built to store the documents in MongoDB? If yes, can you pls provide the details of technology stack used.

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Is there any migration requirements present?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Please confirm if the signed statement from offeror's parent organization is needed during submission stage or after the contract is signed? Can the State share the template for this form?

**Response:** The organization that is submitting the proposals should satisfy all signatory requirements as detailed in the RFP.

**Question:** 2.5.2 Functional Area Two – Web and Internet Systems - What are the existing security tools Supplier will leverage for providing services under "2.5.2 Functional Area Two – Web and Internet Systems"?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** 2.2 Background and Purpose it is mentioned, Web Identity and Access Management solution, built using Sailpoint IIQ and ForgeRock Open AM. Does supplier need to manage SailPoint and ForgeRock? Or Supplier will leverage SailPoint and ForgeRock for integration support?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.



**Question:** We got to this RFP a little late as we had not received the mail earlier, considering that can you please accept our request for a 2-week extension on the submission date from November 28th to 12th December 2022

**Response:** No

**Question:** Do you accept Global Delivery Model (Onsite & Offshore) for this opportunity?

**Response:** No.

**Question:** Is the State of Maryland Experience mandatory, if yes, then what is the weightage?

**Response:** No.

**Question:** Can we respond to separate functional areas in separate files?

**Response:** No.

**Question:** If responding to multiple functional areas separately, will the page limit still be 25 pages for the whole Technical Proposal or 25 pages for each functional area?

**Response:** The page limit has been removed, please see Q&A #5

**Question:** Do we have to provide just the Dunn and Bradstreet rating or proof of the same? If proof, then will that count to page numbers?

**Response:** If providing Dunn and Bradstreet Rating and Standard and Poor's Rating is not viable, the Offeror can choose to provide alternative responses to prove its fiscal integrity as stated in Section 5.4.1.5 (A). The page number count restriction has been removed, please refer to Q&A #5.

**Question:** Which part of ATTACHMENT D - FEDERAL FUNDS ATTACHMENT do we have to fill?

**Response:** You must read Attachment D; on the second page D-1 you have to sign. Regarding Attachment D-2, you must fill out any sections that is applicable.

**Question:** Regarding the pricing spreadsheet:

- Could the Exchange please specify the applicable required labor categories for the following functional areas:
  - Information System Security
  - IT Auditing, Testing and Quality Assurance Services
  - IT Management Consulting Services

**Response:** As the skill set requirement may change over time, and the labor categories may overlap across functional areas, Exchange cannot confirm specific labor categories under various functional areas.

**Question:** Is it mandatory that vendors provide pricing for all listed labor categories, or can pricing just be provided for the labor categories related to the functional areas for which we are proposing our services?

**Response:** Yes, section 5.5 **Financial Proposal** states “**Offerors must propose pricing for all labor categories to be considered for Award**”. As labor categories may overlap across functional areas, it is important that Offerors propose pricing for all labor categories.

**Question:** Is this contract, or a subsequent RFR, for staff augmentation services?

**Response:** Yes.

**Question:** A previous question and-answer addendum noted the possibility of the 25-page limit being expanded. Was a final decision made regarding this, and if so, what is the current page restriction, if any?

**Response:** Yes, the page limit has been removed.

**Question:** The naming of the functional areas provided in RFP section 2.3.1 is different from the functional areas noted in sections 2.5.1 – 2.5.10. Would the Exchange please clarify the naming convention to be used for the functional areas.

**Response:** Please review the updated RFP, this section has been updated.

**Question:** RFP section 5.1 requests submission via EMMA, however, RFP section 5.3 requests submission via email. Could the Exchange please clarify which is preferred.

**Response:** Please see the updated RFP, all amendments and Q&A #5; this section has been clarified; submissions are only via eMMA.

**Question:** Is there any possibility that the Exchange might extend the submission date by a few days, as the Thanksgiving holiday falls right before submission date.

**Response:** No.

**Question:** Is it required to add the ATTACHMENT A – PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE RESPONSE FORM filled with the response?

**Response:** No. However, if you decide not to submit a proposal, please fill out the no-response form.

**Question:** Is the **STATE OF MARYLAND NOTICE TO OFFERORS/CONTRACTORS** required to be included with the response? If yes, can we fill it as N/A?

**Response:** Yes, to help us improve the quality of State Proposals solicitations, and to make our procurement process more responsive and business friendly, we ask that you take a few minutes and provide comments and suggestions regarding the enclosed solicitation. Please return your comments with your Proposals. If you have chosen not to submit a Proposal on this Contract, please email this completed form to [hix.procurement@maryland.gov](mailto:hix.procurement@maryland.gov)

**Question:** Can all forms be filled with Adobe Pro or is it better to print them, fill them out and scan them?

**Response:** The responses can be entered with any software as long as the forms and the agency's contents on the forms are not altered in any way.

**Question:** Is there any SBE/WBE/MBE goal for this solicitation?

**Response:** No.

**Question:** Is it required to acknowledge all addendums in the response? or do they need to be attached with the response?

**Response:** You should acknowledge receipt of all amendments and addendums.

**Question:** Could the agency clarify if the cover page and title page have to kept different?

**Response:** The cover page and title page are a part of the Technical Proposal.

**Question:** Could the agency clarify if we have to insert Table of content before Transmittal letter or after Transmittal Letter

**Response:** This was answered in Q&A 5, however here is the order.

Title Page  
Transmittal Letter  
Claims of Confidentiality (if applicable)  
Table of Content

**Question:** Under Section Offeror General Information- Could the agency clarify if we have to provide the length of time the organization has been providing the services as per different Task Areas or in general?

**Response:** Section 5.4.1.5 requires the Offeror to provide general information related to its business, its ability to provide the services, and its fiscal integrity. The Offeror should use their best judgment to elaborate on such relevant demonstrable experiences applicable to specific functional areas in response to Section 5.4.1.6.

**Question:** Under Section Past performance, it says "The Offeror shall provide evidence of its capabilities to provide the services outlined in Section 2.3 of this RFP for each functional area proposed. Could the agency clarify more about what kind of evidence is needed, do we have to attach any documents from past references to it or general description of the past performance and mention other details as asked in the relevant section?"

**Response:** There are no specific attachments required beyond elaborating on such relevant, verifiable, demonstrable experiences applicable to specific functional areas detailed as a response to Section 5.4.1.6.

**Question:** Under Proposal Format - Section Past Performance- Can we address the points A, B, C together in one single table for each Task area?

**Response:** Offerors are not restricted to any specific format when responding to Section 5.4.1.6 Past Performance.

**Question:** Under Section Offeror General Information - "The Offeror's corporation/organization size, experience, services provided, the length of time the organization has been providing the services listed, and key business relationships." Could the agency clarify what they mean by key business relationships.

**Response:** The intent of Section 5.4.1.5 is to require the Offeror to provide general information related to its business, its ability to provide the services, and its fiscal integrity to meet the requirements of this RFP. The Offeror shall use its best judgment in providing such information to demonstrate its ability to provide the services under this RFP.

**Question:** As per our understanding this is a staffing proposal, Could the agency clarify if under the Past Performance we have to provide an overview for each task and showcase how our proposed personnel delivered on the respective tasks.

**Response:** The intent of Section 5.4.1.6 is to require the Offeror to provide specific examples of providing services to demonstrate the Offeror's ability to successfully fulfill personnel requirements for services similar to the services required by this RFP.

**Question:** Are there any pain points that the agency has from the current ongoing contract?

**Response:** The current IDIQ contract is a successful procurement vehicle for the agency to staff IT resources. We work closely with our master vendors to ensure the agency's requirements under the current contract are satisfied timely.

**Question:** Could the agency clarify, if we have to provide resumes of our internal key personnel who will be managing the contract?

**Response:** The Offerors do not have to provide resumes of key personnel in their responses to this RFP.

**Question:** Under Section- 5.4.1.5 Offeror General Information- Do we have to provide technical approach for each Task Area, or do we have to talk about our capability only?

**Response:** The Offerors do not have to provide a technical approach for each functional area bid under this RFP. The intent of Section 5.4.1.5 is to require the Offeror to provide general information related to its business, its ability to provide the services, and its fiscal integrity to meet the requirements of this RFP. The Offeror shall use its best

judgment in providing such information to demonstrate its ability to provide the services under this RFP.

**Question:** Could the agency clarify on the format of response as there is ambiguity. Does the technical volume start from the Title Page followed by Transmittal Letter or Vice versa?

**Response:** This question was address in Q&A 5, however here is the order.

Title Page,  
Transmittal Letter  
Claims of Confidentiality (if applicable)  
Table of Content

**Question:** Can we include some additional information under 5.4.1.5 Offeror General Information- e.g., our organizational chart, recruitment approach?

**Response:** Yes. The Offerors can provide relevant additional information as relevant.

**Question:** Could the agency clarify if there is any threshold on the hourly rates for different categories?

**Response:** There are no preset thresholds on the hourly rates under various categories.

**Question:** We see that the updated RFP as on 11/10/2022 has the page limits related text removed from the RFP.

**Response:** Yes, please see Q&A #5

**Question:** Can you please confirm what it means that there are no restrictions on the page limit for our Technical Proposal document?

**Response:** Initially, there was a 25-page limit, and now there is no limit.

**Question:** Section 5.1.B.1 – there is a reference to “see Section 4.4.3 below” which is not seen in the proposal. Instead, should it read “5.4.1.8 Required Forms”?

**Response:** One attachment labeled “**IT IDIQ RFP #BPM031490 Technical Proposal**” containing the Technical Proposal contents and all required signed Attachments. (See Section 5.4.1 for order of submission and section 5.4.1.8 for required attachments). This will be included in Amendment #4

**Question:** Are there any Federal/State level security clearance requirements to work on certain project activities?

**Response:** There are certain additional background check requirements exist for personnel handling Federal Tax Information (FTI) data. All other staff is required to be cleared through the employment background checks performed by the employers or master vendors under this contract. Refer to Section 3.2.3 of the RFP for more details.

**Question:** Based on the prior experience, how many RFRs may be expected in a yearly timeframe?

**Response:** MHBE intends to issue approximately 40-60 RFRs to hire 125-160 resources with various skill sets in FY24.

**Question:** What has been the average size of prior RFRs (in terms of dollars and number of resources)?

**Response:** On average, the RFRs are issued to hire 1-4 resources under specific labor categories. The dollar amounts per RFR may vary anywhere from \$150,000 to \$850,000 per year, depending on the number and type of positions hired under a specific RFR.

**Question:** If an RFR requires the services of multiple vendors, then how do you handle the coordination across multiple vendors?

**Response:** MHBE oversees the work functions of all staff hired under various RFRs regardless of the number of master vendors awarded with the Task Orders.

**Question:** Do you have the documentation for the current Health Exchange systems and operations?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Can you share a high-level application overview diagram for the Health Exchange? Inbound and Outbound data exchanges/interfaces?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Can you share the list of existing systems, their brief descriptions, and the software utilized to develop/support them?

**Response:** We cannot provide such details. Please refer to Section 2.2, Background and Purpose, for more details relevant to this RFP.

**Question:** Can you share your future roadmap in terms of upcoming initiatives?

**Response:** Please refer to the IT Roadmap presented by our CIO in various Board meetings archived at <https://www.marylandhbe.com/board/> for such details.

**Question:** There does not appear to be an Amendment #4 posted to the eMMA website, however Amendment #5 was posted on November 10, 2022. Due to requirements in the RFP to acknowledge all Amendments, please confirm if there is an additional amendment that is missing or if Amendment #5 is a typo and should be “Amendment #4”?

**Response:** There will be an Amendment Four, thank you.

**Question:** Will the State please confirm the correct format in the Q&A and issue an amended RFP to clearly identify the single approved format for the Financial Proposal?

**Response:** Section 5.1. and 5.5 have been amended; Attachment B must be signed and submitted in PDF format.