

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
Response to RFP-Related Questions
Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

1. Page 3 III. Required Services

While some work may be able to be done remotely, resources must be available to work on-site at the Springfield, IL office with a 24-hour notice.

Question: Is the above requirement applicable to all engagements? In other words, would the expectation be that any remote resource could be called on site at any time, or would remote vs. on site be defined and adhered to throughout the engagement?

The Service Need Request will identify remote, hybrid, or on-site for each engagement. Any significant change will warrant a new SNR.

2. Page 9 C. Rate Proposal

The proposed rate shall include all expenses, including travel, for providing the services to SERS as described in this RFP.

All out-of-pocket expenses attributable to performance of services under this Agreement, including without limitation, transportation, lodging, and meals during the period of travel, shall be at Vendor's own expense, and the System shall have no obligation to reimburse Vendor for any such out-of-pocket expenses.

Question: Per the above, is the expectation that vendors build in some overhead into the rate card pricing for these unknowns, rather than potentially bill them at cost, if needed?

It is expected that Vendors will build in some overhead into the "not to exceed" rate requested in Appendix C – Rate Proposal. The Service Need Request will identify remote, hybrid, or on-site for each engagement. The proposed hourly rate submitted on the SNR may not exceed the rate listed in Appendix C and will be specific to that engagement.

3. As we are a small business, can we produce a compiled financial statement/letter?

A compiled financial statement/letter may not be substituted for the applicable Vendor Disclosure or IPG Active Registered Vendor Disclosure Forms.

4. Would SERS consider extending the submission deadline of proposal responses?

SERS does not anticipate extending the submission deadline of proposal responses.

5. If our organization is MBE, then do we self-fulfill the criteria of MWBE participation?

Yes, an MBE organization self-fulfills the criteria of MWBE participation.

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
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Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

6. How many Respondents will this contract be awarded to?

All Respondents meeting the evaluation criteria will be awarded a contract that allows the opportunity to propose resources in the Service Classification(s) they are deemed qualified when such services are sought by the System and identified in a Service Need Request.

7. The link provided in the RFP for Appendix B: Service Classification Vendor Response form is broken, can another link please be provided?

(Broken link for reference: <https://ilsrs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/srs/documents/it-services-ref-23100-appendix-b-vendor-response-form.xlsx>)

Appendix B: Service Classification Vendor Response Form is located immediately under the Information Technology Professional Services RFP at:

[Current Invitation for Bids/Request for Proposals \(illinois.gov\)](#)

8. The link provided in the RFP for Appendix C: Rate Proposal form is broken, can another link please be provided?

(Broken link for reference: <https://ilsrs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/srs/documents/it-services-ref-23100-appendix-c-rate-proposal.xlsx>)

Appendix C: Rate Proposal Form is located immediately under Appendix B: Service Classification Vendor Response Form at:

[Current Invitation for Bids/Request for Proposals \(illinois.gov\)](#)

9. The links provided in the RFP for VI. Proposal Contents Part H/Appendix E: Sample Agreement form is broken, can another link please be provided?

(Broken links for reference:

[https://cpo-general.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/cpo-general/documents/vendor-disclosure-\(formerly-forms-a\)-v.23.3.docx](https://cpo-general.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/cpo-general/documents/vendor-disclosure-(formerly-forms-a)-v.23.3.docx)

[https://cpo-general.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/cpo-general/documents/ipg-active-registered-vendor-disclosure-\(formerly-forms-b\)-v.23.1.docx](https://cpo-general.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/cpo-general/documents/ipg-active-registered-vendor-disclosure-(formerly-forms-b)-v.23.1.docx))

Vendor Disclosure v.23.3 (Formerly Forms A) and IPG Active Registered Vendor Disclosure v.23.1 (Formerly Forms B) are located under Vendor Forms at:

[Solicitation and Contract Templates and Forms \(illinois.gov\)](#)

10. Can the vendor bid on one of the services areas or is it mandatory to bid on all?

Vendors are not required to fulfill requests in all Service Classifications. Vendors will only be considered for qualification for those Service Classifications which are selected on the Service Classification Vendor Response Form.

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
Response to RFP-Related Questions
Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

11. Do you need complete resume or summary only for representative resources?

A complete resume is needed for the representative resource to evaluate the capability of the vendor to be qualified in that Service Classification.

12. What is the average term of staffing placement for each position/Title?

Engagement duration will vary based on System needs but will be specified on each Service Need Request. Developer positions generally have a longer term while a network engineer may be requested to resolve a specific network issue.

13. What is the tentative start date for each position?

The desired start date will be specified on each Service Need Request. The available start date of the candidate will be part of the SNR response evaluation criteria.

14. What is the notice period that the County will offer to fill a position?

There will typically be a one-week period to submit a response to a Service Need Request which will specify the desired start date. The available start date of the candidate will be part of the SNR response evaluation criteria.

15. Any major projects planned in coming years which vendors should be aware of?

SERS is modernizing its computer operations and anticipates it to continue for the next 5 years.

16. What are the primary business drivers for issuing this RFP?

SERS is modernizing its computer operations and anticipates it to continue for the next 5 years.

17. Can we please have details regarding the IT/System landscape at the agency?

SERS has a mixed environment of IMS and .net technologies and wishes to convert from the mainframe to client/server.

18. Can you please share the current support team structure for IT support at the agency?

SERS has an expiring single award contract with Capitol Strategies Consulting, Inc. that provides .NET Developers and Pension Systems Business Analysts.

Additional information can be requested under the freedom of information act (FOIA) by utilizing the following link:

[Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) Information \(illinois.gov\)](#)

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
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Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

19. Is this a Small Business Set Aside RFP or not?

[This is not a Small Business Set Aside RFP.](#)

20. Section VI B (2) asks for 'total number of resources available to vendor and subcontractor in the classification'. May we include the total number of resources available in our internal database for each service classification?

[Yes, vendors may include the total number of resources available in their internal database for each service classification.](#)

21. Section VI B says that on the "Service Classification Vendor Response Form", we are required to provide "Indication that at least one resource working for the Vendor or subcontractor has at least 5 years' experience in the Classification.". Are we permitted to answer this affirmatively in the event we have had resources matching the Service Classification bill with us in the past, but just not currently?

[No, this question specifically relates to the representative resource identified in Appendix B – Service Classification Vendor Response Form who must be working for or available to work for the Vendor or subcontractor.](#)

22. Section VI B says that on the "Service Classification Vendor Response Form", we are required to provide "Indication that at least one resource working for the Vendor or subcontractor has at least 5 years' experience in the Classification.". Are we permitted to answer this affirmatively in the event we do not have a resource matching the Service Classification currently billing with us, but have suitable resources in our internal database that would be available to us for deployment as and when needed?

[Yes, this question specifically relates to the representative resource identified in Appendix B – Service Classification Vendor Response Form who must be working for or available to work for the Vendor or subcontractor.](#)

23. Section VI B says that on the "Service Classification Vendor Response Form", we are required to provide "Name and resume of a representative resource available to the vendor or subcontractor who could provide the services in the Classification". Are we permitted to provide the name and resume of a resource that has billed with us in the past, but just not currently?

[No, the representative resource must be working for or available to work for the Vendor or subcontractor.](#)

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
Response to RFP-Related Questions
Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

24. Section VI B says that on the "Service Classification Vendor Response Form", we are required to provide "Name and resume of a representative resource available to the vendor or subcontractor who could provide the services in the Classification". Are we permitted to provide the name and resume of a resource from our internal database that is not currently billing with us, but would be available to us for deployment as and when needed?

Yes, so long as the representative resource is available to work for the Vendor or subcontractor.

25. Can we give two rates for each Service Classification: one for remote work and the other for onsite work (which includes travel cost etc.)? This will save money for the State since the State will be paying the lower rate when the resource is working remote.

No, it is expected that Vendors will build in some overhead into the "not to exceed" rate requested in Appendix C – Rate Proposal. The Service Need Request will identify remote, hybrid, or on-site for each engagement. The proposed hourly rate submitted on the SNR may not exceed the rate listed in Appendix C and will be specific to that engagement.

26. Are we required to submit a signed copy of the agreement included in Appendix E as part of our response?

No, the agreement in Appendix E is an example of the minimum terms and conditions that the System anticipates including in the contract that will be negotiated to procure the services described in this RFP.

27. How many 'Reference Authorization' Letters are we required to submit?

A reference authorization letter should be submitted for each entity named in the "Name of State of IL agency or other entity for which similar services have been provided." Column of Appendix B – Service Classification Vendor Response Form.

28. Is there a specific sequence in which you would like us to package and present the documentation/information required of us?

The proposal must include the information listed in A-H of Section VI. Proposal Contents to be considered for the engagement. For ease of review, each requirement should be addressed in a separate section preceded by an index tab to identify the subject of the section. The proposal should be formatted on consecutively numbered pages and include a table of contents.

Submit one (1) hard copy of your proposal and one (1) digital copy in a .pdf format on CD-ROM or thumb/jump drive. The hard copy must be submitted in a loose-leaf, three-ringed binder which displays the vendor's name on the outside front cover. **Do not submit the hard copy with spiral binding.**

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
Response to RFP-Related Questions
Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

The Rate Proposal spreadsheet must be included in the proposal package, but in a separately sealed envelope clearly labeled "Rate Proposal for IT Professional Services System Ref #23100". Only one (1) copy of the Rate Proposal is required.

The sealed proposal package must contain the hardcopy proposal, the CD-ROM or thumb drive containing the digital copy of the proposal, and the separately sealed rate proposal. Clearly identify the outside of the sealed proposal package with the vendor's name and return address in the upper left-hand corner and the statement **"SEALED PROPOSAL- DO NOT OPEN – Response to Request for Proposal for IT Professional Services System Ref #23100, Issued March 27, 2023."**

29. Please describe what content should be provided in Section D. of the proposal response.

Section D should identify any contractual concerns with the terms and conditions set forth in the sample agreement included as Appendix E.

30. Given that SERS is providing the technology environment and that none of the service classifications are for cybersecurity roles, what is the context of the Vendor's cybersecurity standards, practices policies, and any security incidents within our own organization? We would certainly follow SERS polices, process and procedures.

SERS has a fiduciary responsibility to protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that it is trusted with. Cybersecurity extends beyond the client's network, and to that end, SERS intends to collaborate with vendors that have adopted policies, procedures, and practices demonstrating a commitment to cybersecurity and data protection.

31. Please confirm that the resources on the contract will be working in the SERS technology environment. Can this clause be removed or refined prior to contracting?

No, this clause will not be removed. Resources will be working in the SERS technical environment.

32. Will SERS provide equipment and/or VPN for all future SNRs?

Equipment will be provided for on-site work. We anticipate remote work being completed using the resource's equipment.

33. What is the main manufacturer in your LAN network?

We run Nutanix servers.

STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
Response to RFP-Related Questions
Information Technology Professional Services
System Reference # 23100

34. I would like to submit RFP - to whom we should send the RFP to?

All proposals must be received at the address designated below by **no later than 1:00 P.M. CST on April 24, 2023**. Submit one (1) hard copy of your proposal and one (1) digital copy in a .pdf format on CD-ROM or thumb/jump drive to:

Mr. Robert Cooper
State Retirement Systems
Director of Administrative Services
2101 S. Veterans Parkway
Springfield, IL 62704

The sealed proposal package must contain the hardcopy proposal, the CD-ROM or thumb drive containing the digital copy of the proposal, and the separately sealed rate proposal. Clearly identify the outside of the sealed proposal package with the vendor's name and return address in the upper left-hand corner and the statement **"SEALED PROPOSAL- DO NOT OPEN – Response to Request for Proposal for IT Professional Services System Ref #23100, Issued March 27, 2023."**