

SBE 05: Illinois State-Based Marketplace Website Services Request for Proposals

Responses to Questions

This document supplies responses to the questions provided by interested Offerors. These questions have been entered into this document as received.

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
1	4	2	Given the upcoming holidays, would the State consider a 2-week extension?	The deadline to submit offers has been extended until January 13 th . See the updated RFP for an updated procurement timeline.
2			Please confirm that the scope of all services in this RFP is only limited to the public facing website, and does not include any of the webpages associated with the E&E platform.	The scope of this work is limited to the public facing website. The State Based Exchange public facing and internal platform and associated webpages are not in scope for this RFP.
3		General	Will the State be providing all context text, or will you look for the vendor to provide these writing services?	The State, working with other partners, will provide all context text. The selected Offeror is required to work in close partnership with the State and its partners to ensure that the context text optimally delivers clear messaging.
4			What types of integrations are necessary between the public-facing website and the separate enrollment platform? What kind of data, if any, is shared between these systems?	Currently, there will be no website integrations with the State Based Exchange platform.
5			Does the government want the existing content in the Government's CMS to be migrated to a new CMS or utilize the Government's existing CMS to build the website?	When referencing "the Government" it is assumed the Illinois government is being referenced. Presently, the State's plan is to utilize the existing CMS and related content where appropriate.
6			Will the website be hosted in the Vendor's environment or hosted in the Government's environment?	The website will be hosted in the State's environment.

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
7			Will the government provide contractor personnel with Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) / Laptops or will the Vendor provide contractor personnel with the laptops?	The Selected Offeror will be required to provide their staff with the hardware and software necessary to fulfill their obligations under the contract that results from this procurement.
8			Will the State provide the hosting infrastructure for the public facing website?	The website will be hosted in the State's environment.
9			Does the State own the requisite licenses for Adobe Experience Manager, or is the offeror expected to procure the licenses?	The state owns the licenses to AEM.
10			Assuming the State has procured the Adobe Experience Manager Licenses for the future website, can you please confirm if it is a fully managed license (SaaS)?	Please include any AEM support you would need as part of your proposal.
11			During the open enrollment period and post open enrollment/ SEP period, what are the expected response times for making content changes, if any, as requested by the State?	It is the State's preference that all content changes are made within 24 hours during our Open Enrollment Period and within two weeks at other times of the year. We also expect to define an emergency plan, in the event there are immediate needs that cannot wait for standard response times.
12		1.2.4 & 8.1.1	In sections 1.2.4 and 8.1.1 of the RFP, you mention using Adobe products as part of the current tech stack. Are you open to exploring a website CMS (content management system) and hosting provider outside of the Adobe Experience Manager?	Presently, the State's plan is to utilize the existing CMS.
13		8.1.1	Section 8.1.1 indicates that Get Covered Illinois (GCI) would like to leverage the existing Adobe Experience Manager as the content management system. Is the State open to other alternative solutions?	Presently, the State's plan is to utilize the existing CMS

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
14		8.2.1 & 9.2.4.	In sections 8.2.1 and 9.2.4, You mention awarding “a UI/UX design services contract for three years” – does this term assume that the selected partner will assist with all website updates (ie. content) over that timeframe? Which aspects of content management does your team manage, and which do you rely on a partner to provide? How frequently do you anticipate needing support beyond the website launch?	The Selected Offeror will be required to perform ongoing updates to the website throughout the 3 year timeframe. This will include refreshed content on existing pages, or the creation of new pages throughout the year. The volume of this work will increase before and after Open Enrollment Period, when website’s content will need to reflect the “open” or “closed” status, and information that is relevant based on that status.
15		8.2	Does the State have a dedicated role with subject matter expertise for content writing/creation in order to provide information and guidance about healthcare options to consumers, in plain language?	The State, working with other partners, will provide all context text. The Selected Offeror is required to work in close partnership with the State and its partners to ensure that the context text optimally delivers clear messaging.
16		8.2	Is there an established site governance structure – Editorial workflow, Roles & permissions, Etc.”	The Selected Offeror will be required to work with the State and the State’s partners involved with the website to establish the website’s governance structure.
17		8.2.2	You mention services including “Providing website support by acquiring and maintaining licenses or subscriptions to necessary software and plug-ins.” Does this include your Adobe suite of products, or is there an existing contract in place?	The State will be providing the necessary licenses to the existing CMS to the Selected Offeror. Any other software, license, plug-ins, or subscriptions deemed necessary by the Offeror shall be listed in the Offeror’s proposal and the costs for those necessary 3 rd party tools shall be incorporated in the Offeror’s price.
18		8.2.3	Will the content be migrated programmatically or by hand by a site administrator?	Offerors are to present in their proposals what they believe to be the most effective strategy to migrate content from the State’s current website to the new website.
19		8.2.3	Will branded content (images, video, etc) be provided by the State?	The State, working with other partners, will provide all branded content. The selected Offeror is required to work in close partnership with the State and its partners to ensure that the content optimally delivers clear messaging.

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
20		8.2.3	Is there an expectation that we will be doing things like adding captions for video content (“website assets must be ADA compliant”)?	The website, at all times, shall be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the latest WCAG version (currently 2.2) Level AA.
21		8.2.4	Does the client have any preferred tools or systems that they would like to use for communication, documentation, project management, etc.?	The State currently uses the Microsoft Office 360 suite, including SharePoint. If Offerors have recommendations for additional or different tools, they should identify them in their proposal and provide optional pricing for those tools in the cost response.
22		9.1	What flexibility in timeline definition is available?	The timeline for initial launch of the website is driven by the first Open Enrollment date and the website needs to be available to the public well in advance of the Open Enrollment. Offerors are to provide in their proposals what they believe is a feasible but low risk timeline to be live with a high-quality, highly informative website in advance of the start of Open Enrollment. For ongoing operations and maintenance of the website after the initial launch, the timelines will be mutually determined between the State and the Selected Offeror based on the extent of change and the need to keep the public informed.
23		9.1	Does the State have any organizational policies that may require a specific cadence of developmental milestones and/or expected level of stakeholder availability & engagement?	At this time, there are no organizational policies that require a specific cadence of developmental milestones and/or expected level of stakeholder availability and engagement beyond what is required by federal regulations.
24		9.1	Are you familiar with agile development and open to using that methodology for planning and development?	Offerors are free to propose any methodology that meets the requirements and timelines as described in the RFP
25		9.2.1	Does the State have an existing bench of users to test UX and usability with or will the vendor be tasked to find such users?	The Selected Offeror is required to recruit, train, provide equipment and facilities for user testing.
26		9.2.1	Are there limitations on the types or number of users we can test UX with?	We ask that offerors consider the level of complexity within this environment and plan their UX resources to align with the need.

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
27		9.2.1	We can utilize services which hire test users to run UX research and automate usability research for efficiency – are there known issues with a vendor using such services, or the State paying for such services?	Offerors can explain how they intend to complete this work in their proposal and cost out the work in the cost template. The state will cover the agreed costs of the winning offer.
28		9.2.1	Does the State have existing UX/CX evaluation tooling systems (eg Qualtrix, Medallia, et al) that Vendor would leverage for UX testing?	See answer to #25
29		9.2.2	Does the STATE have any automated testing or site monitoring currently in place?	See answer to #25
30		9.2.2	Will the website interact with the enrollment and eligibility (E&E) system? For example, will there be authentication or single sign on, will there be data shared between the two systems, and if so, how quickly do they need to exchange information?	Currently, there will be no website integrations with the State Based Exchange platform, or any other State systems such as Single Sign On..
31		9.2.2	Will there be any other integrations? Single sign on?	Currently, there will be no website integrations with the State Based Exchange platform, or any other State systems such as Single Sign On..
32		9.2.2	For the “Component Library”, does the client have an anticipated number of components that they would like available?	Offerors are to use their experience and expertise to estimate the number of components necessary to efficiently and cost-effectively build and support the website.
33		9.2.2	Are there existing components and/or functionalities that the client would like to keep/migrate to the new site?	There are some branding components that the State will want to keep, or will update and provide to the Selected Offeror.
34		9.2.2	What types of challenges exist in the transition from an FFE to an SBM-PP? Will this change the types of systems the site is expected to interact or integrate with?	There are many challenges relating to a state transitioning from the FFE to an SBM-PP, few of those challenges relate directly to the public website in the scope of this RFP. Currently, there will be no website integrations with the State Based Exchange platform, or any other State systems such as Single

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
				Sign On.
35		9.2.2	Are there any requirements for user login/management beyond the content editors?	We will need login credentials for some Get Covered Illinois staff, but we do not anticipate a need for external customer/stakeholder logins within this environment.
36		9.2.2	Will the site need to support multiple languages? If so, what level of translation support would be needed?	The website will need to provide a short explanation of how to access our customers assistance center in the state's top 13 languages. The footer of HealthCare.gov provides an example. We also expect to have a fully bilingual environment to support English and Spanish speakers.
37	28	9.2.2	The RFP lists a development phase and a functional website as being a core deliverable. Additionally, the timeline on page 26 includes a Development phase. However the cost proposal template does not include the development phase. Are you looking for the vendor to deliver these services? If so, where should we provide the pricing for these?	Please include design and development costs in the "Website Design" category. You can explain in more detail using the "Website Services" sheet.
38		9.2.4	Section 9.2.4 mentions the continuous enhancement of the website based on user feedback and analytics data to improve usability and engagement. Will the state be responsible for providing user focus groups for the feedback, or will it be the offeror's responsibility to recruit and manage these focus groups to gather feedback?	See answer to #25
39		9.10	You include a sample timeline - is this negotiable, and is there a targeted or mandatory timeline for the ultimate launch of the new website?	The timeline for initial launch of the website is driven by the first Open Enrollment date and the website needs to be available to the public well in advance of the Open Enrollment. Offerors are to provide in their proposals what they believe is a feasible but low risk timeline to be live with a high-quality, highly informative website in advance of the start of Open Enrollment. For ongoing operations and maintenance of the website after the initial launch, the timelines will be mutually determined between the

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
				State and the Selected Offeror based on the extent of change and the need to keep the public informed.
40		9.10	Is the proposed development / deployment timeline consecutive or is there overlap?	Since this new iteration of the website is not yet live, we have time to focus on development before deployment. But once the new website is live, there will likely be some overlap between development and deployment schedules.
41	33-34	10.17	Will the State consider reasonable notice and cure periods for delays in deliverables?	The notice and cure periods for delays in deliverables will be addressed as the State and the Selected Offeror establish a detailed project plan and timeline. Notice and cure periods documented in the contract can be negotiated during contract negotiations.
42	35	10.22	Will the State considering limiting indemnification to third-party claims?	Generally, no and any request for a limitation must be submitted as an exception.
43	38	10.38.1	Offeror interprets the provision of redesign of the State's website as a Service and not the provision of supplies. Does the State agree with this interpretation?	Yes
44	38-39	10.38.3	Will the State agree to a reasonable acceptance process, where the State reviews the website for readiness and approval of launch before the warranties begin?	The state is willing to negotiate a reasonable review and acceptance process, provided they receive all necessary items from the vendor within a timeline that will not jeopardize our ability to publish changes by fixed dates and times.
45	46, 47	Appendix C, Appendix D	The BAA in Attachment A provides the requirements for reporting incidents involving PHI. Will the State please clarify its requirements for security incidents not involving PHI?	In alignment with Appendix D, the state expects vendors to utilize robust protections to mitigate the risk of common security breach scenarios. We request that vendors also develop a disaster response plan that prioritizes minimal downtime and provides timely and accurate information to the state.
46	50	Appendix E	In the RFP, Appendix E, Exhibit 1, the State provides a list of Information Technology Policies that the offeror is required to follow. Each policy references an assigned PDF page in Attachment B, which does not appear to be available on the solicitation	The procurement website has been updated to include this additional document.

#	Page	Section	Question	State Response
			website. Could the State please provide this attachment or clarify how offerors may access it?	
47		Budget	Do you have an estimated budget range for the initial launch, as well as an allotted amount for post-launch support?	The budget is not available to be shared with the Offerors.
48			There is an error in the calculations in the provided cost proposal. On sheet 2 "Web Services", the formulas only calculate Year 1 across all 7 years.	A revised cost proposal template has been uploaded on the procurement website.