

**High School Equivalency Testing Services
 BAE-RFP-2023-034**

Vendor Inquiries

	Vendor Identified RFP Section	INQUIRY	State Responses
1	General	Can you please provide a Word or editable PDF version of the RFP to allow for copying of required tables and content (e.g. required Pricing Tables in Appendix E)?	Yes. A Word version will be sent out to Vendor conference attendees and posted on the NHED website. See Addendum 1
	1.1.2. Scope of Work Overview, Background, RFP pg. 6	<p>Could the State please provide vendors with the exact locations and addresses of the 31 paper-and-pencil test sites mentioned in this section and a breakdown of the volume of paper-and-pencil testing by subtest at each test site by month?</p> <p>Could the State please provide vendors with the exact locations and addresses of the 14 computer-based test sites mentioned in this section and a breakdown of the volume of CBT testing by subtest at each test site by month?</p>	<p>This is a huge amount of data. The State does not have access to a data report that lists subtests by site, by month and by delivery mode at this time.</p> <p>The test center locations and volume reports for 2022 YTD are in Addendum 2.</p> <p>Annual statistical reports prepared by the Bureau of Adult Education have been attached as Addendum 3.</p>
	1.1.2 SOW Overview – Test Center Proctors, RFP pg. 9,	Does the State currently approve computer-based test center proctors employed either by your current computer-based testing services vendor or by a third-party test center such as a high school, technical school or training center, or adult education center?	<p>The State approves all testing centers and test administrators who provide testing at physical test center, paper and computer.</p> <p>The State does not approve the current vendor’s remote proctors, but there is language in the contract that outlines hiring and training practices.</p>

		<p>Does the State approve your current vendor's proctors who proctor NH high school equivalency (HSE) tests administered via the remote proctored delivery method?</p>	
2	<p>Section 2.1 Proposal Submission, page 12</p>	<p>Can you please confirm that the Department is expecting <i>separately submitted</i> proposal files as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ File 1: Technical Proposal (Cover page, Transmittal Form Letter, Table of Contents, Response to RFP Sections I.-VI.) ○ File 2: Price Proposal (Response to RFP Section VII: Price Proposal) ○ File 3: Vendor Attachments (Response to RFP Section VIII: Vendor Attachments) ○ File 4: Completed Attachment A (Business & Technical Requirements Workbook) ○ File 5: Completed Attachment B (Cloud & Hosted Systems Survey) ○ Redacted Copies of the above files as applicable 	<p>The State only requires that the Price proposal be submitted separately. However, depending on the size of the proposal, to assist with organization of materials, this division of topics would be sensible.</p> <p>Section 5.5.1 states If a Vendor believes any information submitted in response to this request for proposal should be kept confidential, the Vendor must specifically identify that information where it appears in the submission in a manner that draws attention to the designation and must mark/stamp each page of the materials that the Vendor claims must be exempt from disclosure as "CONFIDENTIAL." Vendors must also provide a letter to the person listed as the point of contact for this RFP, identifying the specific page number and section of the information you consider to be confidential, commercial or financial and providing your rationale for each designation. Marking or designating an entire proposal, attachment or section as confidential shall neither be accepted nor honored by the State. Vendors must also provide a separate copy of the full and complete document, fully redacting those portions and shall note on the applicable page or pages that the redacted portion or portions are "confidential."</p>

3	Section 2.1 Proposal Submission	The RFP (p.12) states that the “Price Proposal must be ...submitted separately from the Technical Proposal”. In <i>Attachment A: Business & Technical Requirements Workbook</i> , the “Activity Deliverable Milestone” tab includes Milestone Payment and Total Cost fields. Please confirm that the vendor <i>should</i> complete the fields in that tab, resulting in price information being submitted in both the Price Proposal (RFP Section VII) and Attachment A.	The Activity Deliverable Milestone chart provided in Attachment A should be completed and may be submitted as a part of Attachment A.
4	Section 3 Proposal Organization and Appendix D	Please confirm that you want vendor responses to Appendix D (Standards for Describing Vendor Qualifications) in the following format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sections D-1. & D-2. answered within Section V: Corporate Qualifications ○ Section D-3. Answered within Section VI: Qualification of Key Vendor Staff 	Yes.
5	Attachment A – A2.4:	Would you please provide the password policy?	The policy will be provided upon receipt of an acknowledgment that it cannot be shared with others without the express permission of the State of New Hampshire and must be destroyed after it is no longer required for responding to this RFP.

	Attachment A – A2.13: “All logs must be kept for the lifetime of the application.”	Could this requirement be altered to “...kept for the life of the contract”? As an example, if an application is used for 20 years, is it the expectation of the State that the vendor would maintain logs for that entire time?	The successful Vendor must follow FERPA compliance with regard to how long logs must be kept.
	Attachment A – H3.8:	This stipulates that we notify the project manager of a security breach within two hours of its occurrence, but H 1.10 requires reporting of security breaches in compliance with State of NH RSA 359-C:20, or “as soon as possible.” Both address security breaches, and we would like to know which standard the State prefers us to uphold.	Two hours is the maximum for notification to the State of New Hampshire.
6	Attachment B Cloud & Hosted Systems Survey	In Attachment B (Cloud & Hosted Systems Survey – A.2. & B.1-1), the link provided for the “Data Classification Policy” is not working. Can you please provide the policy or a new URL?	The policy will be provided upon receipt of an acknowledgment that it cannot be shared with others without the express permission of the State of New Hampshire and must be destroyed after it is no longer required for responding to this RFP.
	B-4 Business Requirements/Technical Requirements, RFP. pg. 31	While the State has stated during the vendors conference that vendors would be provided with the missing URLs and policy documents referenced in Attachment B, upon our further review of Attachment B, we believe it is not possible for a vendor to accurately respond to this document. The questions in Attachment B are written to gain the perspective of NH agency personnel, not that of a vendor. For instance, how	Attachment B is removed from the RFP and is no longer required.

		<p>can a vendor respond to question A4, which asks, “Will the Cloud or Hosted Service be the authoritative source for any business-critical information that would be difficult, expensive, or infeasible to recreate?” Only NH Agency personnel are in a position to judge whether a potential vendor service would be a source of business-critical information to the State, and whether it would be difficult, expensive or infeasible for the State to recreate.</p> <p>In addition, as noted at the vendor conference, there are references to what appear to be sensitive State internal documents and information in Attachment B that vendors cannot access that we would need to read and understand before we responded to the question. For instance, vendors can’t fully answer question A2, since we cannot access the DOIT Data Classification Policy document.</p> <p>Could the State please remove Attachment B from the required proposal submission materials or replace it with a questionnaire written to gain a vendor’s knowledge and perspectives?</p>	
	<p>Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, b. Test Format, RFP pg. 34</p>	<p>Could the State please provide the number of accommodations that were granted to candidates annually by accommodation type for the last three years?</p>	<p>The State does not have access to this information for all possible accommodation types. The most frequent accommodation is extended time.</p> <p>For 2018 – 2020, no test takers were provided Braille, Reader Scripts, Large Print or Audio</p>

			Cassettes.
	Appendix C.3	RFP document —We are asked to describe how we will provide compliance with all federal and New Hampshire state laws, regulations, statutes, policies, standards and best practices that are relevant to internet-based hosting. As this is quite broad, we were wondering if the State could let us know which federal and State laws, regulations, statutes, policies, standards, and best practices the State is most concerned about.	The successful Vendor will be required to comply with NIST 800-171 R2 and/or NIST 800-53 R5 as required by the data classification level the application/system/environment will process or store. Hosting services must be FEDRAMP or SOCC2 certification.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, f. Test Center Proctors, RFP pg. 36	Could the State please identify the peak testing times for the NH high school equivalency testing program referenced in bullet 3?	Peak testing times tend to be in May/June.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, f. Test Center Proctors, RFP pg. 36	Are there specific times scheduled for high school equivalency testing at NH test sites each month? What months see the heaviest demand?	NH Test Centers are responsible for setting their own test schedules each month depending on availability of staff and volume of potential test takers. May/June have the most demand.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, f. Test Center Proctors, RFP pg. 36	Can test-takers schedule computer-based tests on demand when test appointments are available at computer-based test centers, or are they required to test at scheduled times similar to test takers at paper-and-pencil test centers? How long is the typical computer-based test session?	Each test center sets their own schedules for computer based testing and paper based testing. There is currently a 36 hour window between scheduling and the actual test session to ensure staff has time to set up and prepare for the test sessions as well as the time to determine if the test session needs to be cancelled due to lack of registrations. Computer based testing

			sessions are based on the publisher's maximum time allowable for each subtest.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, g. Remote Proctoring, RFP pg. 36	Can test-takers schedule remote-proctored tests on demand when test appointments are available with the vendor's proctors, or are they required to test at scheduled times similar to test takers at paper-and-pencil test centers? How long is the typical remote proctored test session?	Yes, test takers can currently schedule remote-proctored tests based on availability of vendor proctors. The length of test sessions depends on the maximum amount of time allowed for each specific subtest.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, g. Remote Proctoring, RFP pg. 36	Are there certain restrictions on taking the remote proctored test?	The eligibility requirements are the same for test candidates taking the remote proctored test. Additionally, test takers must be over the age of 18 and acknowledge that their testing session will be recorded and their government issued ID will be stored.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, g. Remote Proctoring, RFP pg. 36	Can candidates who have an approved accommodation for taking the high school equivalency test with extra time take the test via remote proctored delivery?	If the accommodation can be provided through remote proctored delivery, there is no restriction on doing so from the State.
	Appendix C: Topics for Mandatory Responses, C-1, Proposed Solution, Topic 1: Description of Solution, g. Remote Proctoring, RFP pg. 36	Could the State please share any test-taker survey feedback it has received on the remote proctored delivery method?	The State has not collected any feedback from remote proctored test takers. Nor have any test takers reached out to the State Office with feedback.
	Appendix I: P-37 State of New Hampshire General Provisions, reference to EXHIBIT A, RFP pg. 60	We note that there is reference to EXHIBIT A for 'Special Provisions' in Appendix I, but there is no sample EXHIBIT A included with the RFP. Will the State be providing EXHIBIT A with 'Special Provisions' as an attachment to Appendix I of the RFP?	The Exhibits are specific to the format of the contract negotiated with a successful vendor. Exhibit A: Special Provisions is a required Exhibit for all State contracts that identify any special provisions for the contract.

			The State will not be providing a Sample because the Exhibits cannot be created until after a contract is negotiated.
	Appendix I: P-37 State of New Hampshire General Provisions, reference to EXHIBIT B, RFP pg. 58	We note that there is reference to EXHIBIT B for 'Vendor Services' in Appendix I, but there is no sample EXHIBIT B included with Appendix I in the RFP. Will the State be providing a sample EXHIBIT B as an attachment to Appendix I of the RFP? If a vendor's proposed solution offers an alternative to satisfy the State's requirement/Statement of Work, will Exhibit B incorporate by reference the selected vendor's proposed solution into the Statement of Work?	<p>The Exhibits are specific to the format of the contract negotiated with a successful vendor.</p> <p>Exhibit B: Vendor Services will be based on the RFP requirements and the vendor's proposal.</p> <p>The State will not be providing a Sample because the Exhibits cannot be created until after a contract is negotiated.</p>
	Appendix I: P-37 State of New Hampshire General Provisions, reference to EXHIBIT C, RFP pg. 58	We note that there is reference to EXHIBIT C for a 'Pricing Exhibit' in Appendix I, but there is no sample EXHIBIT C included with Appendix I in the RFP. Will the State be providing a sample EXHIBIT C as an attachment to Appendix I of the RFP? Will EXHIBIT C consist of the pricing from the selected vendor's proposal?	<p>The Exhibits are specific to the format of the contract negotiated with a successful vendor.</p> <p>Exhibit C: Pricing will be based on the RFP requirements and the vendor's proposal.</p> <p>The State will not be providing a Sample because the Exhibits cannot be created until after a contract is negotiated.</p>