

RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

To: Vendors Responding to RFP Number 3792 for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

From: Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D.

Date: June 7, 2016

Subject: Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

Contact Name: Patti Irgens

Contact Phone Number: 601-432-8223

Contact E-mail Address: patti.irgens@its.ms.gov

1. Title page, INVITATION is modified as follows:

INVITATION: Sealed proposals, subject to the attached conditions, will be received at this office until **June 21, 2016 @ 3:00 p.m.** Central Time for the acquisition of the products/services described below for Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

2. Title page, third box is modified as follows:

PROPOSAL, SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO
RFP NO. 3792
due **June 21, 2016 @ 3:00 p.m.**,
ATTENTION: Patti Irgens

3. Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 4 Project Schedule is amended as follows:

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date for RFP	04/19/2016
Second Advertisement Date for RFP	04/26/2016
Deadline for Vendor's Written Questions	3:00 p.m. Central Time on 05/03/16
Deadline for Questions Answered and Posted to ITS Web Site	05/13/16 06/07/16
Open Proposals	05/24/16 06/21/16
Evaluation of Proposals	05/24/16 – 06/10/16 06/21/16 – 07/15/16
Contract Negotiation	06/10/16 – 06/30/16 07/15/16 – 08/15/16
Proposed Project Implementation Start-up	09/01/16

Vendor must include in their proposal a response to each amended requirement as listed above. Vendor must respond using the same terminology as provided in the original requirements.

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

Question 1: Section VII, Item 3.0

What are the prime drivers for MEMA to migrate to a new system rather than enhancing the existing system?

Response: **The purpose of this RFP is to procure these services through the competitive bidding method.**

Question 2: Section VII, Item 3.0

What are the shortcomings of the existing system?

Response: **Not applicable. See response to Question 1 above.**

Question 3: Section VII, Item 3.3

Please provide details on the number and types of users.

- Number of applicant/reviewer users per year?
- Number of Grantor (MEMA internal) users per year?
- Will either of the above users types increase after year one, if so to what?

Response: **There are approximately 2,000 applicant/reviewer users in the contact list. MitigationMS has approximately seventeen internal users per year. The State does not anticipate an increase to these numbers.**

Question 4: Section VII, Item 3.3

Does DHS FEMA directly access MEMA GMS? If yes, then in what capacity/role?

Response: **Yes, DHS FEMA does have access to MEMA MitigationMS.org System, as FEMA reviewer/approval.**

Question 5: Section VII, Item 3.3.1

Describe the technology stack and Grant processes supported by the MitigationMS.org? Is this a proprietary solution or a COTS product?

Response: **The sub-applicants have the capability to do the following:**

- **Access Request**
- **Account**
- **Advance Request**
- **Appeal**
- **Applicant**
- **Application**
- **Contact**
- **Expense**
- **Grant**
- **Issue**
- **Meeting**
- **Payables**

- **Plan Progress Report**
- **Plan Project**
- **Pre-Application**
- **Project**
- **Project Amendment**
- **Project Closeout**
- **Quarterly Report**
- **Receivable**
- **Reimbursement**
- **Time Extension**
- **Support Ticket**
- **Safe room**
- **Scope Change**
- **Worksheet**

Question 6: Section VII, Item 3.3.1

Does MEMA expects vendors to migrate existing data from MitigationMS.org to their proposed solution? If yes, can you elaborate on the type of data sets to be migrated and the data volume?

Response: Yes, MEMA expects Vendors to migrate existing data from MitigationMS.org to their proposed solution. MitigationMS has a span of 13 disasters and counting, dating back to Hurricane Katrina, DR 1604. The current system encompasses thousands of applications and pre-applications and even more documents within each application.

Question 7: Section VII, Item 3.3.2

Describe the technology stack and Grant processes supported by the MississippiPA.org? Is this a proprietary solution or a COTS product?

Response: This is a proprietary solution tailored specifically for MEMA to maintain, track and process requests regarding grants management.

Question 8: Section VII, Item 3.3.2

Does MEMA expect vendors to migrate existing data from MississippiPA.org to their proposed solution? If yes, can you elaborate on the type of data sets to be migrated and the data volume?

Response: Yes, The legacy Mississippi PA data will need to be migrated. The resulting data must be searchable. Regarding the data sets: It is the State's understanding that all data housed by the current vendor is in a SQL database.

Question 9: Section VII, Item 3.3.3

How does My.MSEMA.org relate to Grants Management?

Response: MEMA currently owns the MSEMA.org domain name. MEMA uses a CNAME to point to the current Vendor's web application.

Question 10: Section VII, Item 3.3.3

What linkage is expected from a GMS?

Response: To maintain continuity of operations with grants management.

Question 11: Section VII, Item 3.3.3

Is MEMA expecting the vendor to move My.MSEMA.org functionality to within the GMS?

Response: Yes.

Question 12: Section VII, Item 3.3.3

Is there a need for legacy data migration, if so what form and how much?

Response: Yes, from an SQL database, with 15 years of data.

Question 13: Section VII, Item 4

Answers to the submitted questions may require changes in solution approach or additional configuration concerns, therefore we request the proposal submission/open date be extended by two weeks to June 7.

Response: Please see the revised Procurement Project Schedule, Item 1.

Question 14: Section VII, Item 6.1.2

Can you please provide examples/use cases of “custom categorization codes” to better understand your needs?

Response: FEMA number and current system number.

Question 15: Section VII, Item 6.1.5

Please clarify requirement 6.1.5. Can you provide an example?

Response: The State would like to complete changes in batches, rather than record by record.

Question 16: Section VII, Item 7

Does MEMA have a standardized online Application form? If no, how many application variations currently exist?

Response: MitigationMS has a standardized Application form. However, there are variations of worksheets/supplemental forms for each type of project.

Question 17: Section VII, Item 7.1.3

For requirement 7.1.3, please define the terms “Individual Applicants” and “Organizations”. Is our understanding correct that an “individual applicant” refers to an individual person (for example, John Smith), while “organizations” refer to an organizational applicant (for example, the Department of Transportation). If this is correct, can you provide an example of a Grant Program where both an individual person as well as an organization would qualify as applicants?

Response: MitigationMS has Individual Applicants only, but the Individual Applicant represents an organization be it a State agency, local government, private non-profit or recognized Indian tribe.

Question 18: Section VII, Item 7.1.3

Individuals and organizations both applying to the same grant program. Can you clarify the process around this? Would an organization be allowed to submit multiple applications? OR Individuals from an organization be allowed to submit applications in addition to that submitted by the organization?

Response: An individual applicant representing himself cannot apply for a mitigation grant, the Individual Applicant must represent an eligible applicant (organization) be it a State agency, local government, private non-profit or recognized Indian tribe.

Yes, an organization may submit as many applications during the open application period as they want or can afford. Yes, an organization would be allowed to submit multiple applications. As stated, Individuals from an organization are not allowable under FEMA guidelines, only eligible applicants are allowed to submit applications. Even for projects like acquisitions and elevations, the individual must go through the local government and the individual representing the local government must submit on the individuals behalf.

Question 19: Section VII, Item 7.1.4

What kind of files do you anticipate will be uploaded (i.e. pdf, video, etc)?

Response: Standard office documents, adobe formats as well as .jpg files.

Question 20: Section VII, Item 7.1.5

Can you explain what you mean by grantees using multiple logins on a single application?

Response: MitigationMS users may have a primary and an alternate person who can enter information to the application. A third person can have "read only" rights for the same application.

Question 21: Section VII, Item 7.1.5

What are the maximum numbers of users permitted per Grantee Organization?

Response: MitigationMS users do not have a maximum number of users per organization, mainly because our eligible applicants can become quite numerous. The State accepts applications from eligible applicants such as county and city governments and the departments thereof (i.e. police, fire public works, etc.), with each department having its own primary and alternate. All that is required is that the local official (mayor, Board of Supervisors, etc.) sign off on the application/authorization and certification form.

Question 22: Section VII, Item 7.1.5

Do Grantee users have similar roles and privileges? If not, please explain.

Response: In MitigationMS roles and privileges and assignments are given to the sub-applicant based on their requests and what they will need to do throughout the course of the application and subsequent project once approved.

Question 23: Section VII, Item 7.1.6.1

Are you looking for an Admin in which they can edit the quiz and scoring for each question? For example, can the Eligibility Quiz be different from one Grant to the other, or one Grant Program to the other?

Response: No.

Question 24: Section VII, Item 8.1.4

Please clarify how you envision the system to track information such as interests, conflict of interests, etc? For example, should each reviewer complete a questionnaire on a regular bases to report any interests and possible areas of conflict of interest?

Response: An example would be if the reviewer works for the same entity as the grant applicant.

Question 25: Section VII, Item 9.1

For requirement 9.1, is the expectation that each individual user should be able to set their own fonts, colors and fields when printing an Application, or is the expectation for the software to allow setting default fonts, colors, etc.?

Response: The software itself should manage a default font, color, etc.

Question 26: Section VII, Item 9.2

Do you want the ability to make these customizations yourself or would it be OK for the vendor to create these documents for you?

Response: The Vendor will be required to create these documents.

Question 27: Section VII, Item 9.5

What are the specifications for the electronic signature requirement?

Response: No electronic signature is necessary.

Question 28: Section VII, Item 9.5

Does MEMA currently use electronic signatures and/or with external verifications, if so can you provide the vendor name? If not do you have a preference for the external verification service?

Response: MitigationMS does not use electronic signatures.

Question 29: Section VII, Item 9.8

Does MEMA currently use any email tracking tools/service, if so can you provide the vendor name? Does MEMA anticipate running email campaigns in conjunctions with specific grant programs or just in general?

Response: No, this is handled by the current grant management system. No email campaigns are anticipated.

Question 30: Section VII, Item 11.1.4

How many separate grant programs does MEMA manage?

Do the business processes (application, pre-award, award, etc.) and associated forms vary with each type of program or are all processes and forms standardized?

Response: MitigationMS only manages the Hazard Mitigation Grants Program (HMGP) process and forms are standardized.

Question 31: Section VII, Item 12.1.1

Does the State of Mississippi have a preference of accounting systems? If the State of Mississippi would like to provide us with more information, we can provide full details regarding the integration approach and provide references.

Response: No.

Question 32: Section VII, Item 12.1.1

Does the State currently use a specific accounting software package? If so, which one?

Response: Yes, the current State accounting system Mississippi's Accountability System for Government Information and Collaboration "MAGIC". More information can be found at magic.ms.gov.

Question 33: Section VII, Item 12.1.1

What is the one external accounting system/software required to integrate to the grants solution? Please provide full name, version, sub version or any release information.

Response: Yes, the current State accounting system Mississippi's Accountability System for Government Information and Collaboration "MAGIC". More information can be found at magic.ms.gov.

Question 34: Section VII, Item 12.1.1

Will the solution require to be integrated into your general ledger systems as well, and or any other systems? If so, please provide full name, version, sub version or any release information.

Response: The proposed solution must integrate with the Mississippi's Accountability System for Government Information and Collaboration "MAGIC", which is the State accounting system. More information can be found at magic.ms.gov.

Question 35: Section VII, Item 12.1.1

Will the system(s) integrate via one-way or two-way communication and what is the expected number and types of data sets that will require integration?

Response: Two-way communication is required.

Question 36: Section VII, Item 12.1.1

What does the ITS or MEMA currently use as the financial management system?

Can you provide the current names of the systems/modules that are implemented? Also can you provide the expectation for the type of integration required, e.g., web services, file based, one way or bi-directional data flow?

Response: Yes, the current State accounting system Mississippi's Accountability System for Government Information and Collaboration "MAGIC". More information can be found at magic.ms.gov.

Question 37: Section VII, Item 13.1.3

Please provide an example of a "What If" feature that will assist in viewing the impact of a particular grant. What does "PRI" stand for?

Response: PRI is a Program Related Investment. "What if" scenario would be the ability to see how certain courses of action would affect the budget.

Question 38: Section VII, Item 13.1.3

Can MEMA provide more details on this requirement, can you list your "what if" types, the data that is needed to support, and how/will that data be made available to the new grants system?

Response: See response to Question 37.

Question 39: Section VII, Item 14.1.3

Can you provide a couple examples of what a user might add to their unique dashboard? For example, would a user add a listing of a specific request type, with certain filter criteria applied?

Response: **The system dashboard needs to look the same system wide but have the ability to filter things in/out if needed.**

Question 40: Section VII, Item 14.1.6

What file types would you want to search? (For example; scanned PDF's vs. Searchable PDF's)

Response: **Both. MEMA will need to be able to perform text search on scanned pdf documents.**

Question 41: Section VII, Item 16.1.2

For requirement 16.1.2 would a nightly export of the data in the system suffice?

Response: **Nightly backup/export.**

Question 42: Section VII, Item 17.1.1

Is that's being referred to here a "State Use Only" section on a request, which can contain fields for staff use only? If not, please clarify what is meant with "internal tracking fields".

Response: **This would be fields used by staff, rather than the online data fields used to gather grantee information.**

Question 43: Section VII, Item 17.1.3

Do you want the ability to make these customizations yourself or would it be OK for the vendor to create these documents for you?

Response: **The Vendor will have the ability to create these documents on our behalf.**

Question 44: Section VII, Item 18

What is MEMA's expected implementation timeline to complete this project? Which program needs to be implemented first HMGP or PA?

Response: **Implementation should be completed in 90 – 120 days following contract execution. PA should be implemented first.**

Question 45: Section VII, Item 18.7

Can you provide an estimate of the volume of data to be converted and migrated into the new Grants Management System?

Response: **15 years of data.**

Question 46: Section VII, Item 18.7

What is the current format of this grant data?

Response: **Some data is paper-based and other is stored in a SQL database system.**

Question 47: Section VII, Item 18.7

Is it available to be migrated through an API/web services integration?

Response: **No, this will need to be a manual import.**

Question 48: Section VII, Item 20

To get a better understanding of the scope and requirements, can MEMA share existing system documents including but not limited to:

- Business Requirement Documents
- Business Processes Documents
- Design Documents
- User / System Manuals
- Training Guides

Response: **MEMA does not have the requested information.**

Question 49: Section VII, Item 22.1

Can you provide the types/responsibilities and number of the proposal evaluators. Do any of the evaluators currently work with a grants management system/service, if so can you provide the vendor name of this grants management system/service?

Response: **The evaluation process is outlined in Section VII, Item 22.1, and in Part 2 Chapter 9 of the ITS Procurement Handbook. The incumbent vendor is MB3, Inc.**

Question 50: Section VIII, Cost Information Submission

As we understand, ITS has indicated 3 possible scenarios; a renewal of support and hosting, merging the 3 systems, and possible enhancements to be made to the system. Are we able to provide multiple pricing options in order to address all scenarios?

Response: **Yes.**

Question 51: Section VIII, Cost Information Submission

Please elaborate on the cost category "conversion"?

Response: **Cost for converting current data into Vendor format.**

Question 52: Section VIII, Cost Information Submission

What are MEMA training needs? How many users and type of users (MEMA / Grantee) that will require training?

Response: **Anyone using the application will need to be trained in and outside of the agency.**

Question 53: Section VIII, Cost Information Submission

My.MSEMA.org is to be hosted "as is" or is the expectation to convert this site into the vendor's GMS solution?

Response: **Convert this site into the vendor's GMS solution.**

Question 54: Section VIII, Cost Information Submission

Where can we specify SaaS subscription / Licenses cost?

Response: **In the renewal of support and hosting solution.**

Question 55: Appendix A: Requirements Matrix Item 16

Will the import/export of data into the Grants Management System be achieved via a data loading type capability for xls/csv files or through API/web services? If the later, can ITS provide details on the type and underlying technology of any external agency accounting systems in use today?

Response: Yes, xls/csv will be needed to upload to the State's accounting system.

Question 56: Appendix A: Requirements Matrix Item 16
What is volume of data that will be imported and exported?

Response: This information is not available.

Question 57: General

Does ITS or MEMA currently have an approved budget for this new Grants Management System?

If yes, can you provide that budget information?

Response: There is no specific budget for this project, however, State Agency budget information may be found at <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us>

Question 58: General

How does MEMA plan to fund its new Grants Management System?

Will MEMA use funds from its operating budget or capital budget?

Response: This project will be funded using Federal funds. MEMA will follow all applicable accounting guidelines and regulations when classifying the expenditures. Expenditure information can be found at <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us>

Question 59: General

What does the MEMA currently use as a contract management system?

Can you provide the vendor/system software name?

Response: MAGIC is used as the contract management system. More information can be found at magic.ms.gov.

Question 60: General

For any other 3rd party systems, can you provide the expectation for the type of integration required, e.g., web services, file based, one way or bi-directional data flow?

Response: This information is not available. Vendor should propose the types of interfaces Vendor's system is capable of supporting. Any associated costs must be included in *Section VIII: Cost Information Submission*.

Question 61: General

Does ITS require cloud-based, SaaS solutions to be provisioned on a FISMA moderate infrastructure?

Response: Yes.

Question 62: General

Does MEMA require its Grants Management System to be updated annually free of charge to keep pace with changing federal legislation?

Response: Vendor should detail how Vendor's proposed system will be kept up to date with federal regulations. Any associated costs must be included in *Section VIII: Cost Information Submission*.

Question 63: General

Can the ITS or MEMA provide the vendor/system names of any existing grants management systems in use at MEMA?

Response: MB3, Inc.

Question 64: General

Has ITS or MEMA previously entertained any system demonstrations and/or presentations from vendors?

If so, which systems were seen and when?

Response: ITS nor MEMA has not had any demonstrations or presentations.

Question 65: General

Did ITS utilize any vendor / SME consultants in defining the sought after functionality and/or scope of work enumerated in the RFP, if so who?

Response: No Vendor assistance was provided in the drafting of this RFP.

Question 66: General

Given the changing grants regulatory environment, does ITS prefer vendors who have experience deploying Grants Management Systems at the Federal level?

Response: The State does not have a preference.

Question 67: General

Can you provide the annual dollar amount of grant funding you receive for the current fiscal year, is this amount typical or can you provide the five year history as well?

What volume of these grants are pass-through grants to sub-grantees?

Response: \$250,000,000.00 is paid out each year and 95% are pass through Federal funds.

RFP responses are due Tuesday, June 21, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Patti Irgens at 601-432-8223 or via email at patti.irgens@its.ms.gov.

cc: ITS Project File Number 41941