

Vendor Q & A
RFQ Number: JFSBESS0707
October 17, 2007

1 Q. Your Appendix A site map indicates that SCOTI system functionality described in black font either exists currently or is to be developed in response to this RFQ. Can you indicate which of the black font functions exist, and which are to be developed?

A. All the functionality described in the black font is in some fashion available in SCOTI currently. However, we realize that there will be coding changes required as part of your human factors engineering and rebranding effort.

2 Q. What documentation of the SCOTI application will be available to the website redesign contractor?

A. All standard system documentation that we currently have will be made available. This includes best practices (standards), data models, use cases, design docs etc.

3 Q. Are there expectations that the existing SCOTI documentation will be updated by the contractor?

A. YES.

4 Q. With the following phases in mind, the estimated project start date is November 26, 2007 and the expectation is to have the website operational by early January 2008. Can you provide a more accurate description of expected delivery for the phases and is it correct that the website should be operational by early Jan 2008 or is this date for Phase 1 only?

Phase 1 Analysis and Design
Phase 2 Development
Phase 3 Implementation and Transition

A. The state would prefer that the solution which includes Phase 1, 2, & 3 is at least implemented, if not fully transitioned by the Jan 2008 timeline. The proposal calls for leveraging all of the current middle-tier and backend infrastructure and does not call for any whole scale reengineering of the application.

However, the offeror can deem that expectation unreasonable and propose a revised timeline.

5 Q. Will this be a state hosted or external hosted solution?

A. This effort is to re-brand the current system / make changes to the current system and remain State hosted.

6. Q. The estimated project start date is November 26, 2007 and the expectation is to have the website operational by early January 2008. Is it correct that the website should be operational by early Jan 2008?

A. The state would prefer that the solution which includes Phase 1, 2, & 3 is at least implemented, if not fully transitioned by the Jan 2008 timeline. The proposal calls for leveraging all of the current middle-tier and backend infrastructure and does not call for any whole scale reengineering of the application. However, the offeror can deem that expectation unreasonable and propose a revised timeline.

7. Q. On page 5 of the RFQ, it states that one of the purposes of this RFQ is to provide the framework and ability to re-skin the Self-Service System as needed. Please provide clarification on what is meant by framework.

A. Want the design framework to be customizable. This is to give the ability to re-skin the application to give it different front faces/doors.

8. Q. Will you be handling helpdesk services or will it be outsourced.

A. The OWD/SCOTI program has a helpdesk and MIS has a helpdesk as well. Will continue to utilize these inside helpdesks. There is no plan to outsource at this time.

9. Q. On page 21, the KEY for the high level site map indicates that SCOTI system functionality described in black font either exists currently or is to be developed in response to this RFQ. Can you indicate which of the black font functions exist, and which are to be developed?

A. All the functionality described in the black font is in some fashion available in SCOTI currently. However, we realize that there will be coding changes required as part of your human factors engineering and rebranding effort.

10. Q. What is your expectation on focus group team being developed?

A. The Project Steering Committee recognizes the importance of focus group involvement in the planned iterative process. A committee based approach will be followed with broad/diverse representation from the following groups: Dept of Development, local one stops, Office of Workforce Development, ODJFS Office of Communications, ODJFS-MIS and the Governor's office.

11. Q. How much of the technical infrastructural work on this project will be related to providing the generalized ability to interact with a data source like that in the RFI. Who owns interface?

A. The RFI that is currently open is to procure a job opportunity data source for free. There needs to be an interface to this site/source from our current infrastructure. The building of that interface is part of this RFQ. It is expected that commonly used web protocols will be leveraged for this transitional piece. The navigation tree has been identified. The handshake points have been identified. The posted jobs will be fed to both repositories (the current SCOTI database as well as the job opportunity data source).

12. Q. Is ODJFS open to awarding contract to multiple bidders for the different phases identified in the RFQ or as a project as a whole?

A. It is intended to have one umbrella contract with one vendor.

13. Q. The estimated start is 26 November and the timeframe includes the holiday season. What should the vendors expect as far as availability for approval/sign-off during the holidays?

A. This is a high priority project. It has been made clear to all parties involved that this takes priority and all understand the importance of the time line.

14. Q. Regarding qualifications for prime. Can they be satisfied by the subcontractor or does the prime have to meet all the requirements?

A. We are evaluating the project team based on qualifications as defined in the RFQ.

15. Q. Are administrative screens part of the scope of this project?

A. Yes. All screens are included. They can be found in Appendix D.

16. Q. What is the balance between static versus dynamic content?

A. They are dynamic.

17. Q. Regarding Appendix 1 – the to be process model (which is very well done), is it correct to assume that all high level requirements are provided?

A. This reflects known requirements. Knowing that this is not a totally re-engineering effort, would expect proposals reflecting how it should work based on experience with usability and human factors knowledge.

18. Q. Regarding transition training, user training is mentioned as well as transition technical training. Please clarify training that is expected.

A. Part will be technical, part help desk and part will be making sure customers, developers anyone involved is trained.

19. Q. On page 17 of the RFQ, it states that the offeror must provide 3 sets of re-branded design mockups of 4 screens. How much weight is given to the sample provided?

A. The intent for the 3 sets of re-branded design mockups is clearly to measure your creativity. We want to see what you bring to the table. This sample work is part of one of the evaluation factors. The evaluation is not based solely on the 3 sets of sample screens that you provide.

20. Q. Are we modeling against other sites or what other states are currently doing?

A. No. The state wants brand recognition. Creativity is strongly encouraged for the conceptual design, look and feel.

21. Q. What expectations exist regarding the relationship between SCOTI branding and the One Stop partnerships?

A. Branding is being done on a phased approach to obtain a new look and feel. One Stops are the front line. Each has their own branding. Goal is to link them together and have one look and feel. That link is not expected as part of this RFQ.

However, a one-stop can elect to use the re-skinning feature for a different look and feel.

22. Q. How will development management be approached? Will there be opportunity to utilize imbedding developers for purposes of support and knowledge transfer.

A. Key people are being earmarked to support this effort. Commitment is there for achieving the outcome of the project and its timelines. Importance of working jointly with vendor to understand full process and full cycle is understood. Roles have not been specified yet.

23. Q. Can you provide some indication of budget?

A. This is a high priority initiative. The needed funding will be made available. The need is for a quality product at a fair price.

24. Q. Can you identify the people who are on the review panel?

A. We will not be releasing the names of the people on the review panel. All panel members have been notified and instructed not to have contact with potential vendors and to reveal any potential conflict of interests.

25. Q. When can we expect to know the results of the RFI?

A. Results will be provided no later than November 26th.

26. Q. What tool sets are to be used?

A. Tool sets currently being used can be found in Appendix B (page 26) of the RFQ.

27. Q. How much of the presentation layer is decoupled with the middle-tier and back-end components?

A. The intent is to leverage much of the current backend and middle-tier components. Much of the business logic already exists. However, we do realize that the changes in the presentation layer may require coding changes to the middle tier business logic and the data access objects.

28. Q. Will a .NET based solution be acceptable?

A. No. The platform is J2EE based.

29. Q. Will a web services based interface be supported with the external job opportunity data source?

A. Yes

30. Q. Page 5 - "The administration's expectation is to have this website operational by early January 2008" versus cover sheet stating "Estimated Project End Date of June 30, 2008" Can you define the extent of 'operational'?

A. The state would prefer that the solution which includes Phase 1, 2, & 3 is at least implemented, if not fully transitioned by the Jan 2008 timeline. The proposal calls for leveraging all of the current middle-tier and backend infrastructure and

does not call for any whole scale reengineering of the application. However, the offeror can deem that expectation unreasonable and propose a revised timeline.

31. Q. Page 8, #2. Please provide more detail. Develop interfaces to integrate with external job opportunity data sources. Can you give some examples of the integration?

A. Development of interfaces to integrate with external job opportunity data sources would be based on Page 7, design task #5 and interface design document deliverable #3 Interface Design Document. The deliverable document “should at a minimum cover integration points and interfaces / API’s with external job opportunity data sources.” It is expected that commonly used web protocol will be leveraged for this transitional piece. The navigation tree has been identified. The handshake points have been identified.

32. Q. Page 9, Item 4 - Data Migration - Can you provide the data scheme as well as the count for all the records to be migrated?

A. Page 9, Item 4 is “Migration Plan” and not Data Migration. It states that “The Migration Plan will document the plan and step-by-step procedures for the migration of the current website to the new website. This document should be formatted as an easy to use quick reference.” Leveraging of the current middle-tier and backend infrastructure does not expect a need for data record migration. The database is expected to remain the database.

33. Q. Page 18 - Paper Versions must be submitted in an opaque envelope. Our copies may be larger than will fit into an envelope, given the binding. Will you accept (8) binders contained inside of a box with appropriate markings?

A. If the technical proposal copies are too large to fit into an envelope, given the binding, the State will accept the technical proposals in (8) binders contained inside of a box with appropriate markings. Please note that the “cost information” must be in a separately sealed opaque envelope and clearly marked on the exterior of the envelope “Financial Cost Information for the Website Redesign RFQ” along with Contractor name.

34. Q. Page 25, the bullet point that states “Other components are not included, since it’s not relevant to the Self-Service System”. Is there any communication between the self-service system and any other component of the system? If so, please explain how this is accomplished, and if this communication can be modified.

A. The Self Service data is stored in the database and the data is the main source to the other Systems.

35. Q. Page 27 - Please describe the difference in registration and capabilities for a “full seeker” and “simple seeker”

A. The difference in registration and capabilities for a “full seeker” and “simple seeker” are provided below:

Simple Seeker :-

- No need to provide SSN
- No need to provide other information like Address, Ethnicity, Veteran Information, Desired Employment

- These seekers won't get assistance from the Staff assisted users, when the users do the Job Match.
- Email is a required field.
- Attach a Resume

Full Registration:-

- Need to Provider SSN
- Need to provider address, Ethnicity, Veteran Information and Desired Employment
- The registered seekers will get assistance from the Staff assisted users, when the users do a job match.
- The registered seekers will get Phone notification, if there is a match fits his desired skills and employment.
- The registered seekers will get a letter (if no phone), if there is a match fits his desired employment
- The user can attach a Resume.

36. Q. Please provide details on the system's current web service capabilities, data elements available, protocols and formats supported (HTTP, FTP, SMTP, SOAP, HR-XML, schemas, etc).

A. The web service is used internally to do conversion of a Job Search string to a valid ONET-code. We have all the protocol that includes HTTP, FTP, SMTP, SOAP, HTTPS,XML

37. Q. How many page views does the site get on an average day?

A. On an average 12000 to 15000 users. The counter is incremented one per session. That means, even though the user is navigating so many pages, its counted as one.

38. Q. How many total seeker and recruiter accounts are there?

A. Total active seekers listed on the site http://scoti.ohio.gov/scoti_lexs
Total employers 10000 registered through SCOTI_LEXS

39. Q. What are the total number of jobs and resumes in the system?

A. Total jobs and resumes are listed in the site http://scoti.ohio.gov/scoti_lexs

40. Q. Is it the desire of ODJFS to emulate employment/job search sites developed in the private sector? If so, are there specific examples that can be sited?

A No, however, ODJFS is looking for the new branded site to represent a greater ease of use, be user friendly, be efficient and represent the Administrations goal to be a site used by Ohio Employers and Job Seekers.

41. Q. Will the state be providing new website servers in which to load the vendor-updated website? Or will it use the current website servers?

A. At this time it is projected that current infrastructure will be used to support this application. If you feel this would not be adequate, you will need to state in your proposal the reason and possible enhancements needed.

42. Q. With the understanding that ODJFS desires that the new site be customizable for different groups within the agency (as stated in the bidder's conference)
a. Is it the responsibility of the vendor to provide initial designs for each of these?

A. Yes, as they are identified by the Project team.

b. If so, approximately how many groups are to be accommodated within the scope of this project?

A. It is the expectation that it could be unlimited number of "re-skinning" of the front page while utilizing the rest of the application and infrastructure.

43. Q. What is the expectation for design templates for web applications that are related to the Self-Service website (as mentioned in the bidder's conference) but not included within the scope of this project?

A. Unclear of the question.

44. Q. What is the expectation for design templates for web applications that are related to the Self-Service website (as mentioned in the bidder's conference) but not included within the scope of this project?

A. Unclear of the question (appears to be the same as question 43).

45. Q. RFP Page 4, Background: Referring to point 4 on page 6 of the RFQ, with the understanding that the existing underlying infrastructure is to be leveraged as much as possible, please confirm that ODJFS's expectation is for the new site to perform at least as well as the current site.

A. Yes, this is correct.

46. Q. RFP Page 5, Vision: The RFQ outlines a vision to "incorporate human factors engineering for an intuitive page flow structure leading to ease of navigation" implying that a change to the underlying web application(s), data structure, etc. may be necessary. With the understanding that the approach for a full redesign effort focusing on usability, intuitiveness and flexibility is much different (and much more involved) than a basic aesthetic enhancement, what is the level of expectation for the degree of change to the current site (on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being most significant)?

A. Two (2).

47. Q. RFP Page 5, Vision: a. Would it be acceptable to have a preliminary "teaser" site (consisting mainly of a new, redesigned home page and potentially interior page enhancements) launched by early January, 2008 followed by a much more visually developed site thereafter (to be launched in the first quarter of 2008)?

A. The state would prefer that the solution which includes Phase 1, 2 & 3 is at least implemented, if not fully transitioned by the Jan 2008 timeline. The proposal calls for leveraging all of the current middle-tier and backend infrastructure and does

not call for any whole scale reengineering of the application. However, the offeror can deem that expectation unreasonable and propose a revised timeline.

b. Can you define what is meant by “operational”?

Phases 1, 2 & 3 are completed, the site is up and running, marketing of the site can begin and a press release of the new site can be released identifying all of its functionality and benefits to Ohio employers and Job Seekers.

48. Q. RFP Page 6, Analysis and Design: Focus Group/Sessions a. Approximately how many individuals would comprise the design focus group?

A. 10-15 staff

b. Who will ultimately be responsible for design sign-off?

A. ODJFS Project Manager

c. Please confirm that it is ODJFS's expectation that the contractor will facilitate and/or moderate the design focus group sessions.

A. Yes

49. Q. RFP Page 6, Analysis and Design: a. Are there restrictions regarding dynamic and rich content web technologies, such as Flash (primarily for aesthetic purposes - not for navigation or content delivery)?

A. No, as long as it is compatible with our current infrastructure.

b. Is it acceptable to ODJFS for client-side software, such as browser plug-ins (Flash, QuickTime, etc.) to be required for non-navigation or non-critical content items?

A. Yes, as long as it is compatible with our current infrastructure.

50. Q. RFP Page 6, Analysis and Design: Referring to point 2 on page 6 of the RFQ a. Does the existing site have a website map?

A. Not as described in the Appendix to this RFQ. It is expected that the site can be viewed online by going to www.scoti.ohio.gov. We also have "Use Cases" for the self-service application.

b. If so, how is this achieved and maintained?

A. n/a

51. Q. RFP Page 7, Standard: a. Which w3c standards apply and which will we have to meet?

A. All.

b. Aside from compliance with accessibility guidelines (508, Bobby, W3C, etc.), are there any other design-related requirements and/or limitations in place?

A. Not at this time.

c. With the understanding that most of the site content will be migrated as-is, has ODJFS certified that the current site is compliant with appropriate accessibility guidelines?

A. Will need to research.

52. Q. RFP Page 8, Develop the Self Service Website (Phase 2): Implementation and Transition: Is the vendor selected for this project responsible for improving application performance of existing functionality, i.e. queries to the Oracle database?

A. Yes.

53. Q. RFP Page 8, Develop the Self Service Website (Phase 2), Development Deliverables, The Contractor will Deliver, Test Plan and Scripts and User Acceptance test: The following sentence is not clear: "The State's system test team will be composed of Information Technology (IT) Division, Program area staff and other applicable staff users, and must be supported by the Contractor. The State's User Acceptance Test team will function as system users during system testing and will evaluate all test outcomes.

a. When using the term system test in the sentence does the state mean User Acceptance Test? If not please describe what is envisioned as part of the state system test?

A. No, system test will be the coordination of both state and contractor staff testing the newly developed site, interfaces and operating on the current infrastructure.

b. Is system testing the responsibility of the State's team or the suppliers?

A. Coordination between all partners.

c. Is the supplier expected to execute the test plan and scripts or will the state's team of testers be responsible for executing the tests?

A. Contractor staff will execute the test plan.

d. Will the state provide all the development environments?

A. Yes.

e. Will the state provide all test environments necessary for vendor and user testing?

A. Yes.

f. Will the state provide the user workstations and environments for their System Test/UAT?

A. Yes.

54. RFP Page 8, Develop the Self Service Website (Phase 2): Will ODJFS provide workstations with required development software, and necessary network environments and related technical support for the software development, testing, and implementation phases?

A/. Yes, based upon the existing infrastructure. If anything else is needed, the contractor must clearly identify that need in their proposal. Please keep in mind that the state feels that it can house up to 20 staff for this project on-site where these resources can be provided, anything above this will require off-site and be the responsibility of the contractor.

55. Q. RFP Page 8, Develop the Self Service Website (Phase 2):

a. What is the estimated date for the new interfaces to other systems to be defined?

A. They will be defined prior to this RFQ starting.

b. How many total external interfaces are planned and how much data is to be integrated?

A. At this time it appears to be job opportunity data as well as resume data. Please look at the existing application to see the possible number of data elements.

c. Can you provide more technical information around these interfaces?

A. Not at this time.

56. Q. RFP Page 9, Implementation and Transition: a. Is a specific graphic platform required for design-related source files?

A. Unclear of your question, please clarify and give an example.

b. For the future maintenance of the system, will ODJFS purchase any additional software tools that were used to develop the new site's design outside the scope of this project (these could include fonts, graphic software plug-ins, animation tools, etc.)?

A. It is not anticipated at this time, however, if needed this could happen based upon the newly developed site.

57. Q. RFP Page 10, Documentation: How many levels of documentation will be required (user, support, technical support, etc.) to meet the training requirements?

A. Will need to maintain a user set as well as a set for the IT shop.

58. Q. RFP Page 10, Implementation and Transition, Acceptance: The state indicates an acceptance period of 20-60 days where the system shall function with no major issues. a. Can you provide a more definitive definition of "major issues"?

A. For example but not limited to: long periods of down time (other than periodic maintenance); system not performing; response time.

b. Does the 60-day warranty period commence concurrently with the acceptance period? Or does it commence upon acceptance?

A. Upon acceptance.

c. Will the 20 - 60 day period be in the test environment or production environment and who is responsible for ensuring that the system has adequate usage to provide a thorough test during that time?

A. ODJFS will ensure adequate usage.

d. What environments will be used for training? Are we restricted on times, other projects or locations that have potential business impact to the staff?

A. Environment is already setup and not aware of any time restrictions at this time. If you feel that your proposal will have some unique times identified, please specify this in your proposal to ensure we can accommodate.

59. Q. RFP Page 10, Implementation and Transition, Implementation and Acceptance: For the User Training to be completed by the Contractor

a. Will ODJFS provide on-site training facilities?

A. Yes.

b. Is it fair to expect that User Training will be accomplished in 4 - 5 training sessions over a one-week period?

A. Yes.

c. What are the ODJFS expectations for training material for these 75 users; softcopy and/or hardcopy?

A. Hardcopy with the ability for us to place the softcopy on our internal website for individuals to access and print.

60. Q. RFP Page 12, Section 3, Project Management, Timeliness: "Contractor must allow adequate time for the State to review, comment on, and approve all deliverables.

a. How many hours/days shall ODJFS require to review the contents of deliverables (i.e. analysis documentation, test plans, system guide, implementation plan, etc.)?

A. It depends, however, an estimate would be three to four business days.

b. Given that there are comments made by ODJFS after the first review of these deliverables and the vendor provides the updates, how many hours/days shall ODJFS require for deliverable acceptance?

A. It depends, however, an estimate would be one to two business days.

c. Can it be assumed that a single review/update cycle will be sufficient?

A. It depends on the confidence between the parties and complexity of the changes, but that could be sufficient.

d. Can you better describe what is considered "adequate time" for ODJFS approval of the deliverables, and related control and/or escalation processes that will be employed to avoid schedule impacts?

A. Proper notification to ODJFS if any approval or issue that may arise that will put in jeopardy achieving the mid January date to be operational.

61. Q. RFP Page 12, Section 3.0 Project Management Work hours and conditions:
- a. Will the state provide office space including phone, network, internet connectivity, and parking for vendor staff when at the state site?
- A. Yes, however, please keep in mind that the state feels that it can house up to 20 staff for this project on-site where these resources can be provided, anything above this will require off-site and be the responsibility of the contractor.
- b. RFP Page 25-26, Infrastructure. What type of infrastructure is this being developed on and how will the new code be deployed into production? (For example, is it being developed on a test environment that will go live with the code migration as a production box? Or is it a future production box that is just being used as a temporary development box that will be “switched on” to production?)
- A. It is anticipated that the current will be utilized (separate environments for develop - system test - acceptance test - training - production). If you feel this will not be adequate, please specify why and why else will be needed as part of your proposal.
62. Q. RFP Page 24, Appendix B: What is the extent of use of cascading style sheets and page templates within the current site?
- A. Cascading style sheets are used in most of the pages.
63. Q. RFP Page 24, Appendix B: Will new development by the ODJFS technical team on the functionality yet to be included (identified in red on the draft site map) in the application, be underway in parallel (concurrent development) with the vendor efforts?
- A. Yes.
64. Q. How will conflicts be addressed?
- A. Will be mitigated by ODJFS working with both vendors.