

| Program Questions | |
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| Q: Is the intent of this RFP to maintain the ASSIST system or are you interested or would NYSED entertain a new vendor system completely? | A: This Request-for-Proposal (RFP) is to rollover and maintain the current system, and create new functionality as needed. The vendor will maintain, upgrade, modify and provide training and technical assistance for the Adult Student Information and Technical Support (ASISTS) Management Information System. |
| Q: Is there an opportunity to demo for the bidders that are ranked high? | A: No, there is not an opportunity for a demo of the current system. |
| Q: Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada) | A: Companies outside of the USA must comply with Appendix A of the RFP and current New York State Executive Orders. However, we need this system to be hosted in New York State. |
| Q: Whether we need to come over there for meetings? | A: Yes. There will be meetings on-site at NY State Education Department. |
| Q: Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada) | A: No. |
| Q: Can we submit the proposals via email? | A: Yes, there are instructions within the RFP on how to submit your proposals. |
| Q: The RFP asks for a “training script” that “demonstrates expertise to deliver the required training.” The required trainings include a 6-hour Data Basics training and a 6-hour ASISTS Reports training. For this proposal, are you asking for a script for <i>one</i> of the two full 6-hour trainings, <i>both</i> of the two full 6-hour trainings, or is a script for a <i>piece/section</i> of one of these two trainings more of what you are looking for? | A: The training script to demonstrate expertise to deliver the required training can be one ‘example’ and should include approaches to all required trainings. |
| Q: Can you elaborate more on the architecture of the ASSITS management information system (i.e., diagrams, technical documents, reporting in place)? | A: Current system architecture specifications are in the RFP – see addendum 2, pg. 90. Technical diagrams or technical documentation outside of the information provided in the deliverables section of the RFP are not available. Most of the reporting is currently in place for: program information, instructional activity, management reports, funding for current and preceding FY, etc. |
| Q: What are your current software release time windows? Are the two-month timeframes already in place? | A: Major updates to the current system and timeline are outlined in the Deliverables section of the RFP. For new release of ASISTS (new functionality), yes, the two-month timeframes are already in place. |
| Q: How does current exiting work ? Is there an automation system already created? Or is this a new tool the vendor is expected to modify/design? | A: The criteria for and automation to execute Automatic Exiting exists. Updates will be required quarterly and as U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) mandates change. |
| Q: What is the level of automation in ASSISTS when it comes to student enrollments (e.g., are POP guidelines already in place or do they need to be architected)? | A: This functionality is currently in production and working. The Period of Participation (POP) guidelines (logic and programming) are in place. |

ASISTS-RFP #23-003 Questions and Answers

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| <p>Q: What is the level of POP reporting existing in your ASSISTS IT environment (i.e., you maturity level)? Do you expect a full phase to solution the program enablement ?</p> | <p>A: These reports are in production and are currently generated on the 15th of every month.</p> |
| <p>Q: What is the current size of this environment (i.e., for amount of storage, # of databases, current types of databases (MySQL, Oracle, PostgreSQL, MongoDB, Redis, DB2)? Is the ASSISTS data entry screens accessible remotely or only onsite? What is your current level of tracking for the employment barriers? Is the expectation for the SQL programmers/ data engineers to setup reporting for the employment barriers or just maintain?</p> | <p>A: Current system architecture specifications are in the RFP – see addendum 2, pg. 90. The ASISTS data entry screens are accessible remotely. The current system is maintained to collect barriers to employment, and it is expected that the Structured Query Language (SQL) programmers/data engineers maintain and update these barriers as they may change due to OCTAE. It is also expected that reports will be maintained at program level to track the number of students in each category of barrier. Also, it is expected that these reports will be disaggregated by funding source.</p> |
| <p>Q: For your SSN field & reporting do you need to encapsulate this data with encryption and data masking? Is the data engineer/analyst expected to be familiar with PI or HIPPA standards?</p> | <p>A: The Social Security Numbers (SSN) field must be masked for anyone without the proper security credentials. It is expected that data privacy protocols and procedures adhere to Appendix R of the RFP.</p> |
| <p>Q: What type of data matching process do you expect the data engineers/analyst to be comprehensive in? What type of database hosts this data?</p> | <p>A: It is expected that an encrypted file of student information and SSN be constructed monthly and sent securely to New York State Department of Labor (NYDOL). Once matched with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) database, the data will be returned to ASISTS and must be matched/connected to the student’s existing account. Current system architecture specifications are in the RFP – see addendum 2, pg. 90.</p> |
| <p>Q: Do API calls need be created for the ETL matching?</p> | <p>A: The data elements needed for a comprehensive data upload with the NYSDOL and required steps can be found at the link provided in the RFP on pg. 12</p> |
| <p>Q: Will identity access management protocols need to be architected for your IEL/CE programming reports? What is the current architecture for your credentialing system? Does it need to be modified and upgraded?</p> | <p>A: Currently functionality allows for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/CE) reports. Adult Education Programs and Policy (AEPP) provides two times annually an updated list of approved credentials as needed for modifications.</p> |
| <p>Q: Will this WIOA report or system tracking occur on ASSISTS? Does ASSISTS have the capability to host a library for future knowledge engagement?</p> | <p>A: The current ASISTS will continue to be able to report on the data elements outlined in the National Reporting System (NRS) Reporting Tables (link in RFP, pg. 13). ASISTS will need to be modified to meet changes in NRS as needed.</p> |
| <p>Q: Can you elaborate on the current IT infrastructure environment (e.g., server, storage, and compute used to host ASSISTS)? Can you also elaborate on your current cloud footprint and preference for cloud solutions?</p> | <p>A: Current system architecture specifications are in the RFP – see addendum 2, pg. 90.</p> |
| <p>Fiscal Questions</p> | |
| <p>Q: What is budgeted for this initiative?</p> | <p>A: There is no specific budget for this RFP. However, all proposed costs will be reviewed for</p> |

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| | <p>reasonableness. Please also keep in mind that this RFP employs a “best value” method of procurement, with 30 percent of the overall points awarded based on cost. (See “Criteria for Evaluating Bids” section of the RFP for additional information.) Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost-effective.</p> |
| <p>Q: Are we correct that this cost proposal is not asking for the submission of a line-item budget?</p> | <p>A: The bid form cost proposal worksheet is provided to assist bidders in the submission of their proposal. This format provides a deliverable-based budget.</p> |
| <p>Q: If the RFP is not asking for a line-item budget, how will the vendor be asked to categorize the expenditures on the quarterly invoices? Can you please explain how quarterly invoicing will be conducted and share the forms for invoicing that NYSED will have the vendor use?</p> | <p>A: All invoices submitted for payment must include costs consistent with the deliverables in the budget of the executed contract. The bid form cost proposal worksheet is provided to assist bidders in the submission of their proposal. An itemized general ledger will be expected before processing any Standard Voucher and Expenditure Report and Budget Narrative for each quarter.</p> |
| <p>Q: If the cost proposal and quarterly invoices do not ask for a detailing of line-item costs, will the General Ledger still be acceptable as back up documentation? If not, what back-up documentation will be needed to confirm the expenses allocated under various activities?</p> | <p>A: Yes, an itemized general ledger will be expected before processing any Standard Voucher and Expenditure Report and Budget Narrative for each quarter.</p> |
| <p>Q: Will there be any flexibility between budgeted categories, whether it is a line-item budget or activity-based budget before a budget modification is needed?</p> | <p>A: No. Any budget modification of the executed contract would require a formal contract amendment.</p> |
| <p>Q: What is the budget for this project? What is the preference of local vs global resources to staff the project? Is the expectation for the resources to be on-site or can they work remote?</p> | <p>A: There is no specific budget for this RFP. However, all proposed costs will be reviewed for reasonableness. Please also keep in mind that this RFP employs a “best value” method of procurement, with 30 percent of the overall points awarded based on cost. (See “Criteria for Evaluating Bids” section of the RFP for additional information.) Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost-effective. It is required that the system be hosted in New York State and due to the type of data, global access should not be a rule, but if a company has global staffing resources it is not prohibited that any one of their resources would be excluded from working on the system at this time. There will be regularly scheduled meetings on-site at NY State Education Department as needed.</p> |