

**IT Hardware Enterprise eRFP # DGS 5008
 Bidders' Conference Questions and Answers**

Number	Question	Answer
1	Is a bond required to be submitted with this eRFP?	No, this eRFP does not require a bond submission.
2	Please clarify where the sections that represent the terms and conditions of the eRFP are located	There are multiple sections that respond to this question directly. Sections 4 and 9 present the terms and conditions of this eRFP. Links to the General Provisions Information Technology (GSPD-401 IT) Contract Modules are presented in Section 4.
3	Is a separate bid package required for each category? (i.e., if we wish to bid on five categories, must five bid packages be submitted, including three references for each?)	No. Separate bid packages are not required for categories or sub-categories. However, you must bid on all items within a sub-category. Awards will be made at the sub-category level. Three Customer References must be submitted with each eRFP response (bid package).
4	Will there be an award based upon individual sections such as open storage or by total (all 8 categories)?	Awards will be made at the sub-category level. Separate bid packages are not required for categories or sub-categories. However, you must bid on all items within a sub-category.
5	Is it necessary to respond to all eight (8) sub-categories to be considered responsive? If not, is it possible the State will award contract to up to eight bidders?	No, it is not necessary to respond to all eight (8) sub-categories to be considered responsive. It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders, based on the final score per sub-category.
6	Is there only one winner for each sub category?	No. It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders, based on the final score per sub-category. Please refer to Section 8, Evaluation and Award.

Number	Question	Answer
7	Will this be a multiple awards contract (i.e. award going multiple vendors or suppliers) OR is the State looking to award to a single supplier?	It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders, based on the final score per sub-category. Please refer to Section 8, Evaluation and Award.
8	If a bidder submits a response on multiple subcategories and provides best value in 1 of them, but not the others, can the bidder be awarded on that single subcategory?	Yes. It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders, based on the final score per sub-category. Please refer to Section 8, Evaluation and Award.
9	Will each sub-category be scored separately and awarded separately and, if so, will there be advantage given to vendors satisfying multiple sub-category requirements?	Yes. The State will evaluate and award each sub-category individually. Please refer to Section 8, Evaluation and Award.
10	Is this bid all or none, or could a supplier win one of the subcategories?	The State will evaluate and award each sub-category individually. It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders.
11	Must prime responses to solicitation request be affirmative in the final proposal in order to qualify for further consideration or will a negative response be brought up for clarification and/or resolution during negotiations?	Bidders must check the appropriate box “Yes” or “No” on each mandatory requirement indicating if they comply with the requirement as stated. Therefore, a “No” response will be cause to deem a bidder non-responsive or non-responsible, and ineligible for award. Please refer to Section 2.3.1.B, Evaluation of Draft Proposal(s)
12	In eRFP 5007, the State rejected most, if not all, configuration change requests. The lack of flexibility locks out some tier 1 vendors and locks in others. This has been done without regard to best value. Is the State not concerned about what will happen when this becomes apparent to the Administration, Legislature, and the general public? Will this same approach be used in eRFP #5008?	The State will evaluate requests from bidders that consider the eRFP to be onerous, unfair, or imposes unnecessary constraints to the bidder in proposing less costly or alternate solutions. The State will determine whether to accept or deny these requests based on the business needs of the State. Please refer to Section 2.2.7, Questions, Clarifications or Request to Change the eRFP Requirements.

Number	Question	Answer
13	Is a bidders' "yes" response to meet these requirements all that is necessary to meet the mandatory requirement? As I understand it, the Cal-Buy Program is currently on hold.	Yes. However, for a bidder to receive additional points, they must provide a detailed narrative description on the mandatory-scored requirements. The CAL-Buy Program is not on hold.
14	Can you please clarify the objective and the meaning behind this question? (5.5.9.)	The objective of Section 5.5.9 is to continually identify opportunities to generate lower cost and to enhance business efficiencies between the awarded bidders and the State.
15	Category – Storage Area Network fabric switches. How important is mean time between failure (MTBF)?	MTBF is an attribute of the common configuration. It is a mandatory requirement.
16	How will technical upgrades be handled?	The State may update the established common configurations for enterprise servers and storage devices periodically, as technology changes, which can be estimated to take place approximately every six (6) to twelve (12) months. Please refer to Section 5.4.13, Common Configuration Refresh. Each common configuration specifies a set of upgrade/downgrade options for technical upgrades. It will be at the discretion of the ordering department to determine their technical upgrades based on their business needs.
17	Category – Storage Area Network fabric switches. What are the power and cooling requirements? Is this important as it will relate to annual costs?	Ordering departments are responsible for the operational environment of the equipment including power and cooling requirements. Yes. Minimizing the annual operational cost is important to the State.

Number	Question	Answer
18	<p>The way the specifications are currently written, there are no products manufactured by the “server” vendor that meet the State’s requirements.</p> <p>Will you be modifying those requirements to meet the specifications and configurations that are in the vendor’s current price book?</p>	<p>Section 2.2.7 states that... If the bidder believes that an eRFP requirement(s) is onerous, unfair, or imposes unnecessary constraints to the bidder in proposing less costly or alternate solutions, the bidder may request a change to the eRFP requirement(s) by submitting, in writing, the recommended change(s) and the fact(s) substantiating the bidder’s reasons for making the recommended change. Such request must be submitted to the Procurement Official by the date specified in Section 1, Key Action Dates, for submitting a request for change.</p> <p>In response to this request, the Procurement Official will make a final determination regarding the request by issuing an addendum to this eRFP or by notifying the bidders, via e-mail, that the request is denied.</p>
19	<p>Non-pricing response – XLS 2.2.12 – “when provision is made for a testing period preceding acceptance..” this document does not describe acceptance testing.</p> <p>What will this testing be and where/when will it be required and described?</p>	<p>Acceptance testing criteria will be establish by the ordering departments’ statement of work. Please refer to the General Provision—Information Technology GSPD-401IT, Item 16 - Inspection, Acceptance, and Rejection, for further clarification.</p>
20	<p>Is a partial bid response allowed or will that vendor render us as non responsive?</p>	<p>Bidders must respond to all mandatory requirements. In addition, bidders must respond to all items included in a sub-category.</p>
21	<p>What is the expected volume for the common mainframe disk configurations in pricing worksheet #5?</p>	<p>Estimated annual spend breakdown is available to bidders in Worksheet 0.</p>

Number	Question	Answer
22	Can you please describe the Cal-Buy Program?	CAL-Buy is an Internet-based system connected to a central search engine where buyers can search for and select strategically sourced products and place orders.
23	Is ESCON connectivity to the mainframe an acceptant alternative to the FICON requirement?	This will be determined by the specific technical needs of the ordering departments.
24	SDLT 320 drives are likely to go EOL (End-of-life) in less than 5 years. Does the State expect to upgrade to SDLT600 or later generation SDLT technology during the contract's 5-year life?	The State expects to update the established common configurations for enterprise servers and storage devices periodically which can be estimated to take place approximately every six to twelve months.
25	Which of the following servers on IBM Unix platforms will be included in FibreChannel, SAN? ___ AIX5.2 ___ AIX 5.3 ___ SUSE LINUX ENTERPRISE SERVER 9 ___ RED HAT LINUX AS 3	This will be determined by the specific technical needs of the ordering departments.
26	Will any of the following servers be included in the FIBRE CHANNEL SAN? ___ HP UX ___ SUN SOLAdministrative RequirementsIS ___ NETWAdministrative RequirementsE ___ WINDOWS 2003 ___ WINDOWS 2000	This will be determined by the specific technical needs of the ordering departments.

Number	Question	Answer
27	What if the “standard” configurations will not work in a specific technical environment?	As stated in the eRFP, the State may require a product that is substantially different than any of the common configurations that were defined. For this reason, bidders are requested to submit a “blanket” discount for these scenarios in this pricing sheet. In addition, each common configuration specifies a set of upgrade/downgrade options for technical upgrades. It will be at the discretion of the ordering department to determine their technical upgrades based on their business needs.
28	With the current strategy, the State will buy off of this contract, but it has also been stated that local governments (cities, counties) will use this as well. How will cities and counties use this contract? What will the process be for “signing them up?”	Local government agencies may use their own purchase order forms (in lieu of the State’s STD. 65 Purchasing Authority Purchase Order form), and issue it directly to the contractor.
29	This procurement schedule is defined as mandatory. Will local governments and State Constitutional offices be allowed to buy off of this schedule? Will they be able to negotiate the services and products since the schedule will be non-mandatory to these entities?	This contract is not mandatory. However, the State will take all practical measures to insure that State Agencies and Departments use the new strategically sourced contracts. Yes, local governments and Sate Constitutional offices are allowed to use this contract. If this contract is used, no further negotiations will be allowed.

Number	Question	Answer
30	I understand CSSI intends to utilize Cal-buy. Will this be based on the Ariba program and if so, will this tool be integrated with the financial systems form ordering State Agencies/Departments?	<p>Yes. The CAL-Buy purchasing system for the State is based on the Ariba Buyer platform.</p> <p>No, CAL-Buy will not be fully integrated with State Agency/Department financial systems.</p>
31	IS CSSI designed to replace CMAS?	Based on the outcome of this eRFP, the State will review current contracts (such as CMAS and WSCA) that offer conflicting/competing products and, based on the terms and conditions in these contracts, may choose to modify or terminate some of current contracts.
32	<p>Under CSSI initiative, what is the future of CMAS contracts? Will DGS support the creation of new CMAS contracts and the updating of existing contracts?</p> <p>CMAS will create options for the Agencies.</p>	Based on the outcome of this eRFP, the State will review current contracts (such as CMAS and WSCA) that offer conflicting/competing products and, based on the terms and conditions in these contracts, may choose to modify or terminate some of current contracts.
33	<p>Under the current strategy, the State will buy Windows servers under # DGS eRFP 5007 from one vendor, buy HBAs from vendor #2 on eRFP 5008, San switches from vendor #3, San storage from vendor # 4.</p> <p>Who will make it all work, then support it? If the State, then isn't the State dramatically increasing support costs (staff, contractors, etc.) under CSSI?</p>	<p>The State Contract Manager(s) will work closely with the contractor(s) to fully implement and manage the contract(s) for IT Hardware.</p> <p>In addition, the Contract Manager(s) will work closely with State personnel to ensure that the State receives the best value from the IT Hardware contracts.</p> <p>The State anticipates that the use of this contract(s) will reduce the support cost.</p>
34	Does DGS plan to have more than one strategic partner per category to give the agencies options or choices?	It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders, based on the final score per sub-category.

Number	Question	Answer
35	What happens if there are no compliant bids in a particular subcategory?	Section 2 of the eRFP states that.... “The State may declare the Final Proposal to be a Draft Proposal in the event that the evaluation team determines that Final Proposals from all bidders either contained material deviations or were not responsive to the State’s needs, and that it is in the best interest of the State to continue the proposal process. If this occurs, the State will issue an addendum to the eRFP. Each bidder will be instructed of the due date for the submission of a new, completed Final Proposal to the State.”
36	Since RFP 5007 and RFP 5008 is of such high importance to both DGS and potential bidders, why has dgs selected key action that overlap in a manner that may not impede a bidder’s ability to respond to both eRFPs with out best possible proposals?	The objective of the State is to have both contracts in place as soon as possible.
37	When will questions submitted via e-mail be answered?	By March 24, 2005.
38	Where on the website or websites are the answers to questions be found? Which is the correct URL or tool to find the answer to the questions?	http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/stratsourcing

Number	Question	Answer
39	<p>It was mentioned today that the ERFP eliminates human error and eRFP tool may not allow a bidder to proceed with out answering certain questions In responding to certain question in the draft may not agree to certain terms and may not indicate a NO to select questions. Since the last day to request changes in the eRFP is after the draft bid date, a bidder should be able to proceed with submitting a draft bid even if the object to any terms and or requirements will the eRFP tool allow the above stated scenario during the eRFP tool or if changed to allow a bidder to proceed with responding to draft even if they select no to any requirement since a bidder draft response is not subject to negotiation due to non compliance and or requirements</p>	<p>Bidders may submit a Draft Response that includes either a “No” or “Yes” response to all mandatory requirements. However, a “No” response to any mandatory requirement in the Final Proposal will cause to deem a bidder non-responsive or non-responsible and ineligible for award.</p> <p>Bidders have until April 11, 2005 to request a change to the eRFP requirements. Please refer to Section 2.2.7, Questions, Clarifications or Request to Change the eRFP requirements for further information.</p>
40	<p>Can the SAN product include scsi?</p>	<p>CLARIFICATION NEEDED. To whomever wrote this question, please clarify it and submit it in writing.</p>
41	<p>If a bidder submits a response and has selected multiple subcategories, is each subcategory evaluated on its own?</p>	<p>Yes. Awards will be made at the sub-category level. It is possible that the State will award to multiple bidders, based on the final score per sub-category. Please refer to Section 8, Evaluation and Award.</p>
42	<p>The eRFP allows for DGS to accept bids from parties that may have not participated in the eRFP proposal process. Will bidders that participated in the entire eRFP process be able to make a BAFO after outside proposals are submitted to the State?</p>	<p>Bidders must participate in the eRFP process to be awarded a contract under this solicitation.</p>

Number	Question	Answer
43	Do vendors also respond to points 1 through 15 of this attachment (statement of work) besides Section 4 and 5?	No. Bidders do need to respond to all mandatory requirements described on Section 4 and 5. However, awarded bidders shall inhere to the Statement of Work as an important part of the Standard Agreement.
44	Can we receive a 30 day extension on the due dates?	No. The State is not expecting any extensions on the key action dates at this point.
45	How do I get a user ID and PW?	Please contact the Procurement Official: Dana DeVault-Green Department of General Services - Procurement Division 707 3rd Street, 2nd Floor West Sacramento, CA 95605 Telephone: (916) 375-5980 Facsimile: (916) 375-4613 email: ddevault@dgs.ca.gov
46	Will the general pricing be made public prior to the period of the negotiations? If so, how many cycles/ rounds of negotiations will take place?	Negotiations will only take place if conditions exist as described in Section 6611(a). In the event that conditions do exist and negotiations take place, general pricing will not be made public until the intent to award is published. The number of rounds of negotiations cannot be determined at this time.
47	Pricing worksheet #0 lists the estimated spend breakdown for storage devices twice. Which should be servers and which should be storage?	This is a typo on the eRFP. The breakdown is as follows: Enterprise Unix-based servers – 14.3 million Storage devices – 24.5 million

Number	Question	Answer
48	Worksheet #0 lumps all server subcategories together; can information be provided for spend breakdown by server manufacturer subcategory?	No. This information is not available.
49	Are you expecting the pricing to be below GSA/CMAS pricing levels?	Yes, that is the State's expectation.
50	Please clarify which non-state entities can purchase from the CSSI agreement. County? City? K-12? Higher Education?	All government entities will have the ability to purchase off of this contract. It is dependent on the purchasing rules of that entity.
51	How do we determine the \$ value of a category so that DVBE and SMB can be accommodated?	For the purpose of the bid it will be determined by the percentage offered to the small business and DVBE.
52	Checklists for DVBE do not seem to be in print version of eRFP--- Can you provide section and sub-paragraph?	The URL for the DVBE checklist is located in Section 9.6. http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/pd/smallbus/9-15-03%20DVBE%20PR-1-2.pdf
53	State SB will receive a 5% preference applied to the total points scored? Is this preference on the points or the cost?	The preference is applied to the total points scored. Please refer to Section 8, Evaluation and Award.
54	With regard to the eRFP 'Intent to Bid' requirement, what is required by the small business wishing to participate with a prime vendor?	The prime is required to submit intent to bid. The small business will be listed under the primes eRFP bid as a sub-contractor.
55	Can a vendor submit a proposal 'individually' and a part of a team (or teams)?	Yes, a supplier can submit a proposal as a prime, and may submit a separate a joint proposal or participate on a proposal as a sub-contractor.

Number	Question	Answer
56	Is DVBE participation a requirement?	No, DVBE participation is a goal. However, completion of the DVBE participation program requirements is mandatory.
57	Does the state want the Prime to take the purchase orders and invoice the state?	Yes. The Prime is responsible to accept purchase orders and invoice the ordering departments.
58	How do we obtain names and addresses of DVBEs that we might be able to partner with?	There are several ways to acquire a list of DVBEs Small Businesses: (a) we will provide access to the list of today's attendees (b) you can contact the Office of Small Business and Disable Veterans Services, (c) you can advertise through the California State Contacts Register for subcontracting opportunities.
59	If the state wants the Prime to take the purchase order and invoice the state how can the SB and DVBE requirements be met?	Prime Contractor(s) are required to submit reports to the State verifying SB and DVBE participation.
60	Do you have to list the exact dollar amount or could we just list the percentage of good and service? It will be difficult to name exact dollar amount.	The State will be reviewing this requirement and notifying the bidders if it is determined a change is required.
61	If a prime contractor chooses not to include any small business and offers overall best value to the state will that prime contractor be awarded the contract? Is there any downside to the prime for not including small businesses?	Yes. Awards will be based on best value. Small Business participation is not mandatory, however if a non-small business has 25% small business participation they will receive a 5% preference.
62	Would the state accept a donation 3% of contract value to a Veterans group in lieu of the 3% set aside to a DVBE?	No.

Number	Question	Answer
63	What type of work constitutes a commercially useful function for sub-contracting SB and/or DVBE's?	Section 4.10 of the eRFP describes in detail commercially useful function.
64	Will the primes that team subcontracts with SB/DVBEs for more than the mandatory percentage of the prime contract receive additional award credit?	Although Prime Contractor(s) will not receive additional credits, all state departments are required to meet a 25% participation goal with small businesses and 3% with DVBEs. Any additional percentages will provide our departments additional choices with Small Business and DVBE supplied items.
65	Does the State require that prime SB/DVBE teaming/subcontract agreements be submitted with the final proposal? If so, must the teaming/subcontract agreement be the final agreement between the parties for the work or can it be an interim agreement that reflects full commitment but lacks terms and condition?	Yes. Please refer to Section 4.8 Prime Contractor and Use of Subcontractors.
66	How does a Certified Small Business, Manufacturer of Servers, Storage Arrays (SAN, NAS, RAID, J BOD) compete. Large business has greater buying power ??? price Small Business out of business (buy the business) Why would an Emc-IBM-Dell-H/P-STK want to partner with us ?? How do we compete. 5% is not enough. The State wants DISCOUNTS low bid what if comes down to NOT BEST VALUE.	The eRFP is a value-effective procurement that allows both non-small business and California Certified Small Business participation. In addition, at the bidders' conference the State conducted a Small Business and DVBE partnering workshop. Both non-small business and California Certified Small Business maybe be granted the 5% preference. Please refer to Section 4.6, Small Business Preference and Section 4.7, Non-small Business Preference.

Number	Question	Answer
67	If the common configuration requirements for a brand-specific server do not reflect the manufacturers products. What is the process to change the requirements?	Bidders have until April 11, 2005 to request a change to the eRFP requirements. Please refer to Section 2.2.7, Questions, Clarifications or Request to Change the eRFP requirements for further information.
68	Will there be extensions granted similar to the ones granted for DGS-5007?	No. The State is not expecting any extensions on the key action dates at this point. If the State determines that additional time is required, an addendum will be issue to notify all bidders of the new key action dates.
69	Are three (3) required customer reference forms needed for each subcontractor besides the prime? Is it possible the references can just be submitted with the final response?	No. Prime bidders shall submit three customer references. The customer references may come from any customer of the prime or their listed subcontractors in the bid. Please refer to Section 5.4, Customer References for further information.
70	Is it possible to extend the final bid due date by 30 days?	No. The State is not expecting any extensions on the due dates at this point