RFP VENDOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. ***Are you looking for either a Knowledge Management Tool? Or, a Knowledge Management Consultant who helps you developing the Request for Proposal (RFP) in your search for a Knowledge Management Tool/technology vendor?***

   LACERA is currently looking for a Knowledge Management Consultant who will review and assess the state of LACERA's knowledge, help LACERA organize that knowledge, and help LACERA develop a plan to implement a Knowledge Management System including a knowledge management tool/software. There will be a second RFP to find the knowledge management solution. The consultant will assist in developing the second RFP. Please refer to the Scope of Services.

2. ***In addition to the main bulk of the Technical Response responding to questions from Exhibit C, should Exhibit C also be submitted as a separate document with notes on which page these answers can be found?***
   No Exhibit C does not need to be attached as a separate exhibit as long as Exhibit C's questions are answered within the proposal with the questionnaire's question and numbering.

3. ***Does the client wish vendors to submit Exhibit H at the time of proposal submission?***

   Yes.

4. ***The client states that "One bound and one electronic copy of the written response to this RFP [must be sent] in hard copy form to Eugenia Der". Does the hard copy of the proposal need to be received by July 26th, 5:00 PM PDT? Or, would the client accept a bound copy sent and dated before July 26th, 5:00PM PDT but received thereafter?***

   The electronic copy must be received by the deadline; the hardcopy must be postmarked by the deadline.

5. ***The client notes that the proposal should be "limited to 40 pages, excluding Exhibits". Will the client also exclude the TOC, resumes, and appendices?***

   Exhibits A, B, D, E, H, table of contents, appendices, and resumes added as vendor exhibits/attachments are excluded from the page limit. Answers to Exhibit C: Questionnaire are subject to the 40-page limit.

6. ***If vendors have suggestions/edits to include to Exhibit D, where should this be attached in the proposal document (if not separate)?***

Edited Exhibit D can be attached as a separate exhibit showing the redline changes or matrices showing changes.

7. ***Does the client wish for vendors to include price values into their technical response, or should this be kept in a separate pricing excel sheet? Examples of questions that may including number values include Pricing Questions 1 and 3.***

   Pricing sheet can be a separate exhibit but must be referenced to the answers to questions in the questionnaire, Exhibit C.

8. ***Does the client prefer pricing to be Firm Fixed Price (FFP) by milestones/deliverables or Time and Materials (T&M) format?***

   LACERA prefers Firm Fixed Price.

9. ***Does the client have a preferred timeline for the scope of work provided?***

   The timeline is approximately 12 months.

10. ***Could company plans and SOC-2's requested in the Risk Management sections be excluded from the page count?***

    SOC-2 can be excluded from the page count. Company plans can be attached as a vendor exhibit excluded from the page count. However, the plans must be referenced to the answers to the questions in the questionnaire, Exhibit C.

11. ***Is the client interested in phased implementation support for the knowledge base solution, or would the client like to focus on the design and plan for this engagement?***

    LACERA would like the focus to be on design and plan.

12. ***To clarify, if a vendor is not submitting a SOC-2 with the proposal, will they need to complete Exhibit E at the time of proposal submission?***

    Everyone is required to complete Exhibit E.

13. ***Could the client expand on the meaning of "Reasonableness of fees"? Does the client have a specified budget for this work?***

    The consultant selection is not based on the lowest bid. LACERA will choose the consultant based on the best value.

14. **Could the client clarify the meaning of "Availability" in the criteria table? Is that meant to refer to a vendor's ability to fulfill the project, their staff availability, and/or the availability of the client's teams?**

   "Availability" means being available to begin the project upon award and continuing until completion.

15. **Does LACERA have any knowledge management software vendors currently in initial consideration?**

   No.

16. **The RFP indicates that one of the three main objectives of this project is to "implement a centralized knowledge database for both internal and external users based on knowledge taxonomy and security controls, which will ensure optimization for use by future AI." What kind of future AI solutions is LACERA planning to implement or what kind of knowledge management challenges is LACERA planning to solve with AI?**

   LACERA is in the process of developing an AI policy. That policy will determine our AI needs in the future. Additionally, LACERA is in the process of selecting a new Member Experience Communications Platform (call center, chat, email, etc. management platform) that will incorporate AI as part of the program. This AI will need to access various existing knowledge documents and eventually tap into the Knowledge Management System.

17. **The RFP indicates that the consulting services requested include developing and implementing "an organization wide taxonomy and/or ontology to be used for an enterprise-wide knowledge management system." Does LACERA (or any of its 15 divisions) have any taxonomies or ontologies in use?**

   LACERA does not have any formal taxonomies or ontologies in use.

18. **Would a vendor be precluded from participating if they do not have an SOC-2 currently in place? Given that SOC-2 is related to cloud storage of customer data, we're not clear on the requirement for it.**

   No, a vendor will not be precluded from participating if they do not have a SOC-2 currently in place. A vendor who does not have a SOC-2 in place is required to complete Exhibit E in its entirety.

19. **Can the client clarify what differences they may have with regards to a "knowledge base", a "knowledge database", and an "enterprise-wide Knowledge Management System" in relation to their vision for work on the project? Or, are these terms meant to be used interchangeably?**

These terms are being used interchangeably.

20. **What was the trigger for initiating the project at this time?**

Implementation of a Knowledge Management System is part of LACERA's strategic plan. We have reached a point in our maturity where we need to coordinate and collaborate on an enterprise level in order to maximize efficiency and deliver the superior member experience we have committed to in our Strategic Plan.

21. **Has there been any external KM assessment/audit and/or recommendations prior to this project?**

No.

22. **Has there been any business requirements analysis work relevant to this project?**

No formal business requirements analysis has been performed.

23. **Has there been any user research relevant to this project? (Surveys, interviews, focus groups, use/user analytics, etc.)**

Yes.

24. **Do you have the vision of a future state in terms systems and services? (Self-service, customer support, third party vs inhouse, etc.)**

Please refer to the Scope of Services.

25. **How are you envisioning using AI? (Chatbots, question answering, automatic content tagging, etc.)**

LACERA is in the process of developing an AI policy. However, we do envision using AI for the following: chatbots, improved responsiveness on our website, analytics, real time assistance to member service specialists to identify trends in member data, assist with suggestive counseling, quality control, and sentiment analysis among other uses.

26. **Do you have a content strategy for the KB? Has there been any content strategy related work?**

No.

27. **Are there currently any groups or individuals in charge of information management (including data, documents, websites, etc.)?**

Every business division manages its own information.

28. **Approximately how many tangible knowledge assets exist and need to be reviewed and processed for the KB?**

   LACERA has 15 business divisions. The knowledge assets of each division need to be reviewed.

29. **Where are explicit knowledge assets currently stored?**

   Knowledge assets are currently stored in various media, systems, and applications.

30. **How are internal and external users currently finding information? (Self-service search and browse, customer support team, printed material, telephone support, email support, chatbot, etc.)**

   Information is found in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, lacera.com, LACERA intranet site, groupings of home-grown knowledge stores such as operating instructions, training manuals, and business rules, call center, mail, e-mail, etc.

31. **Do any of the 15 divisions create knowledge assets according to a formal set of processes?**

   Yes, there are various procedures of varying degrees in the process of developing knowledge assets. Many business rules are developed based on existing laws and regulations and go through a formal review process. Some are simply documented procedures and knowledge gained through observation and the subject matter expert.

32. **Is there an existing Records Management Schedule?**

   Yes.

33. **Could you provide detailed information on the types of knowledge assets currently in use across the 15 divisions?**

   Knowledge assets include, but are not limited to, policies, procedures, law, FAQs, business rules, operational instructions, etc. These exist in a variety of media including Word, web pages, Excel, old Access Databases, etc.

34. **Are there any existing taxonomies or ontologies in place? If so, can you share details?**

   LACERA does not have any formal taxonomies or ontologies in place.

35. **What are the main challenges you face with the current accessibility of knowledge assets?**

    The main challenges are that our knowledge storage is not consistent across the organization, and it is not centralized.

36. **What are the specific security controls and requirements for the centralized knowledge database?**

    LACERA is requesting the consultant to help develop the security controls and requirements.

37. **Do you have any preferred platforms or technologies for the KMS?**

    No.

38. **Are there any existing systems or databases that need to be integrated with the new KMS? If so, can you provide details?**

    The consultant is expected to develop the plan for the new Knowledge Management System including any integrations with existing systems or databases as necessary.

39. **What are the expectations for the ongoing maintenance process of the KMS?**

    The consultant is expected to help LACERA develop its maintenance process based on industry best standards.

40. **How do you currently ensure the accuracy and currency of the knowledge assets?**

    Currently, each business division is responsible for the accuracy and currency of knowledge assets.

41. **What roles and responsibilities do you envision for the governance of the KMS and taxonomy?**

    The consultant is expected to help LACERA develop the roles and responsibilities for the governance of the Knowledge Management System and taxonomy based on industry best standards.

42. **What are the critical success factors for this project from LACERA's perspective?**

   The critical success factors for this project will be developed alongside the consultant.

43. **Are there specific AI capabilities or features you want to include in the KMS from the outset?**

   LACERA is in the process of developing an AI policy. That policy will determine our AI needs in the future.

44. **Could you provide more detail on the specific types of knowledge and information to be included in the centralized knowledge database?**

   The Knowledge Management System should include, but is not limited to, policies, procedures, law, FAQs, business rules, operational instructions, etc.

45. **Are there any existing systems or databases that will need to be integrated with the new knowledge management system?**

   The consultant is expected to develop the plan for the new Knowledge Management System including any integrations with existing systems or databases as necessary.

46. **Can you provide more information on the expected timeline for the different phases of the project, particularly the implementation of the knowledge management system and the vendor selection process?**

   The consultant is expected to assist with the development of a project plan and timeline for the organization/classification of data and the selection of a Knowledge Management System. There will be a second RFP to find the knowledge management solution.

47. **Are there any specific security controls or compliance requirements that need to be considered for the knowledge management system?**

   LACERA is requesting the consultant to help develop the security controls and compliance requirements.

48. **Can you elaborate on the expected structure and complexity of the taxonomy or ontology to be developed?**

No. The consultant is expected to help develop the taxonomy and/or ontology for LACERA.

49. **Are there any existing taxonomies or ontologies currently in use that we should consider or build upon?**

    LACERA does not have any formal taxonomies or ontologies in place.

50. **Could you provide more details on the criteria and process for evaluating and selecting the knowledge management system vendor?**

    This question is outside the scope of this RFP. The consultant is expected to help LACERA develop the criteria and process for evaluating and selecting the Knowledge Management System vendor. There will be a second RFP to find the knowledge management solution.

51. **What level of involvement is expected from the consultant during the vendor demonstration and selection phase?**

    Please see the Scope of Services, point 4 of the required consulting services.

52. **What specific roles and responsibilities are anticipated to be included in the knowledge base and taxonomy governance plan?**

    The consultant is expected to help LACERA develop the roles and responsibilities for the governance of the Knowledge Management System and taxonomy based on industry best standards.

53. **How will the ongoing maintenance and update process be managed, and what are the key performance indicators (KPI's) for success?**

    The consultant is expected to help LACERA develop its maintenance process based on industry best standards.

54. **Could you clarify if there are any specific formatting or content requirements for the redacted electronic copy of the proposal?**

    Redactions should be in a separate PDF. Redactions should cite California law for the reason the redacted information is exempt from the Public Records Act.

55. **Are there any specific guidelines or templates to follow for the proposal submission?**

Please refer to the instructions in the RFP.

56. **What are the preferred methods and frequency of communication between LACERA and the consultant during the project?**

LACERA uses email, in-person, and Microsoft Teams as methods of communication. Frequency of communication will depend on the needs of the project.

57. **Will there be a designated project manager or point of contact from LACERA for this project?**

Yes.

58. **Are there any additional resources or support that LACERA will provide to the consultant during the project, such as access to internal systems, staff, or documentation?**

Yes.

59. **Are there any anticipated challenges or risks that LACERA has identified for this project?**

Yes. Due to the nature of the question, those challenges will be discussed with the selected consultant.

60. **Can you provide more information on the expected optimization for future AI use? What specific AI applications or functionalities are being considered?**

LACERA is in the process of developing an AI policy. That policy will determine our AI needs in the future. However, we do envision using AI for the following, chatbots, improved responsiveness on our website, analytics, real time assistance to member service specialists to identify trends in member data, assist with suggestive counseling, quality control, and sentiment analysis among other uses.

61. **Are there any specific terms and conditions of the contract that the consultant should be aware of before submitting the proposal?**

Yes, please see Exhibit D: Agreement for Services.

62. **What is the process for contract negotiation and finalization once a consultant is selected?**

LACERA will base contract negotiations on the consultant's marked-up copy of Exhibit D.

63. **Is there an expected delivery timeline for this work?**

The delivery timeline for this work is approximately 12 months.

64. **It is our understanding that LACERA is seeking a consulting partner to conduct a review of the current knowledge assets and develop an implementation plan/roadmap and architecture plan, however there are several questions that suggest additional implementation support (i.e. data storage, volume discounts), can you please clarify the scope?**

The scope of this RFP is for the five required consulting services listed under the Scope of Services. The three main objectives describe LACERA's Strategic Plan, Objective 2.2, which can be found on lacera.com. There will be a second RFP to find the knowledge management solution.

65. **The consulting services in the SOW include review of current assets, developing and implementing a taxonomy, developing a knowledge base implementation plan, assisting with procurement of a knowledge management system, and developing a governance plan. However, main objective 1 includes the implementation of a knowledge database. It seems that would be an output of the procurement activities and delivered by another vendor, not of the SOW itself. Please confirm.**

The scope of this RFP is for the five required consulting services listed under the Scope of Services. The three main objectives describe LACERA's Strategic Plan, Objective 2.2, which can be found on lacera.com. There will be a second RFP to find the knowledge management solution.

66. **Can you clarify the specific deliverables you would anticipate from this project?**

Each of the five consulting requirements under the Scope of Services is a deliverable.

67. **What is the purpose of the Vendor Data Security questionnaire at this stage of the project?**

The purpose of the Vendor Data Security questionnaire is to protect LACERA's data and information that will be transmitted and stored by the selected consultant. The questionnaire helps LACERA assess and determine if such controls are in place to our satisfaction.

68. **Please clarify the word "implement" in SOW consulting service 2: "develop and implement an organization wide taxonomy".**

    LACERA does not have a formal taxonomy or ontology that is used organization wide to categorize its knowledge and/or information. LACERA would like the consultant to come up with a uniform taxonomy plan to be used throughout the organization in preparation for a Knowledge Management System.

69. **Please clarify the type of reporting that you envision in Experience and Approach Question 7 and 8. Are these related to an implemented knowledge management product?**

    No. These questions are related to regular status reporting on the progress of the project.