IETF Secretariat Services RFP Q & A

Proposal Process

a. What is the estimated timeframe of when oral presentations and site visits would take place?

ANS: August, possibly September

b. How many other companies have been asked to bid?

ANS: The RFP was mailed directly to 5 parties, but it was also posted on the IETF website to encourage additional parties to bid as well. As stated in the RFP, the names of all Offerors will be announced on July 31, 2007.

c. Is the current IETF management company being asked to bid on the business?

ANS: See above and later.

Meetings

a. IETF Meetings
i. Registration for Meetings—is there a registration fee to attend the meeting.

ANS: Yes. Significant information about the registration process for IETF 69 is available at the IETF web site, which was referenced in the RFP.

ii. How many people will [meeting company] coordinate with to create and manage the schedule/agenda; do we with work with the Secretariat or direct with the WG chairs?

ANS: Secretariat creates the schedule/Agenda.

iii. Will [meeting company] work directly with the meeting host or through the IETF secretariat?

ANS: Information about the roles of the Host and Sponsors is available online. This information and your understanding of the services for which you are bidding should answer your question. The Secretariat is expected to coordinate with the meeting host.

iv. Will [meeting company] be required set up and participate in site visits with the Secretariat and the IT companies to determine the meeting location prior to confirming contract, or will site visits to determine feasibility be the sole responsibility of the meeting company?

ANS: Bids should specify the services the Vendor would undertake, the methodology it would employ to deliver those services, and how it would interact with other vendors. This will allow the Offerer to propose a different way of doing things. Travel for meeting and tech qualification of a venue is necessary and needs to include appropriate parties.

v. Are site visits required for planning of the meeting with the Secretariat and the IT company or is this the sole responsibility of the meeting planning company?

ANS: See previous answer.

vi. What criteria are used to select meeting venues?   Are we able to view this document? Ie. An RFP that is currently sent to the hotels etc.

ANS: Among the criteria used to select meeting venue are location, availability, Hosts and sponsors, tech infrastructure, meeting space, costs, and risks. The RFP is not available.

vii. Can we review the meeting tools that you currently have/use?

ANS: Tools are listed in SOW. Vendor may propose tools, may propose these tools, additional tools, or a completely different set of tools.

Contracts

1. Which meeting venue contracts (hotels, convention centers, social) are signed for 2008, 2009, etc.?

ANS: Hotel contracts have been signed for IETF 71 in Philadelphia and IETF 73 in Minneapolis in 2008. No contracts have been executed for 2009. Socials are contracts between Hosts and the site. See www.ietf.org/meetings/0mtg-sites.txt for venues.

2. What are IETF Contract concessions for venues?

ANS: See iaoc.ietf.org/mfstatement_detail.html for some detail regarding venue concessions.

3. Are we able to view the IETF acceptable terms and conditions for meeting venue contracts?

ANS: Acceptable terms and conditions for meeting venue contracts are negotiated for each venue. Information is confidential.

4. Does IETF have its own legal council, that venue contracts can be sent to for their review, after which they would consult with the meeting planning company?

ANS: See SOW requirements and 2006 contract. Vendor may identify exceptions in proposal (see format d.14).

5. Is it a requirement that the meeting planning company sign the venue agreement or is IETF able to sign the venue agreement ?

ANS: See SOW requirements. Vendor may identify exceptions in proposal (see format d.14).

6. Is it possible to review an IETF upcoming meeting contract that has been signed?

ANS: Information is confidential.

Retreats

i. Is onsite support required?

ANS: No. However, a senior person representing the Clerical Services is expected to attend the IESG Retreat.

ii. Estimated attendance for each retreat?

ANS: Based on group for which retreat is being held. Information available online.

iii. How many days is each retreat – on average?

ANS: Two.

iv. What region of the world do the retreats take place?

ANS: Worldwide.

v. What type of venue is utilized (i.e. resort, corporate offices, downtown hotel)?

ANS: All of these have been used in the last few years.

vi. Rooming list or individuals make reservations directly?

ANS: Both have been used in the last few years, but list reservations are preferred.

vii. Do the attendees register online to attend? Is onsite registration required?

ANS: Attendees register for IETF Meetings, but only commit for retreats.

viii. What criteria are used to select meeting venue? Are we able to view this document?

ANS: Membership changes each year, so different criteria are used each year.

Proposal Format (RFP Section D. page 12)

1. Can you please define 'Commitment' (#6) and 'Methodology' (#7) for meeting the functional requirements and service levels?

ANS:
Commitment is an agreement to perform the service at the service level indicated.

Methodology is how the service is to be delivered.

Vendor must identify Exceptions to commitments in the proposal (See format d.14).

2. If the Statement of Work (Appendix 2) can be viewed as the functional requirements - is it acceptable to combine our responses for each component of the SOW to address both 'Commitment' and 'Methodology' at once?

ANS: RFP requires proposal format to be utilized.

3. Regarding 'References' in #10, would you like different references for each of the three sections (clerical, meetings, and technology)?

ANS: One should provide up to three references for the services being bid. They may or may not be different.

4. Can the IAD be a reference for a company?

ANS: The IAD is not able to be a reference for any bidder.

Statement of Work (Appendix 2)

Meeting Services

1. IETF Meetings.
f. Meeting Accommodations.
iii. Within the Meeting venues, Vendor shall arrange for an appropriate number of conference rooms to accommodate anticipated Working Group sessions and other breakout meetings which includes at least the following:
6. An accommodation of wireless network access in all meeting rooms and appropriate public areas, such as meeting lounge areas;
7. A network operations center (commonly referred to as the "NOC") and Help Desk of appropriate size and location to handle the network operations and customer support during the Meetings; (p.22)

Request for Clarification:
Regarding A.1.f.iii #6 & #7, the meeting host has typically worked with the IETF Administrative Director (IAD) to choose a provider, set-up, design and manage the wireless network and NOC.
i. Is this a new responsibility of the Secretariat moving forward?
ii. If so, what are the specific responsibilities associated with the role?
iii. Is the expectation that we will always use a professional service provider or would we be using a volunteer model (or a combination of both)?

ANS: An "accommodation of" does not mean provide, but ensure that rooms can be so configured. The same is true for #7.

Meeting Services

1. IETF Meetings.
f. Meeting Accommodations.
iv. Vendor shall provide a mailing list for IETF meeting attendees to communicate issues/problems directly to the NOC team, during the meeting. (p.22)

Request for Clarification:

ANS: Mailing *list* should be mail *address*.

Meeting Services

1. IETF Meetings.
g. Registration Services.
iii. Vendor shall provide Letters of Invitation within three (3) business day to participants who register and need them in order to obtain visas or other travel documents. Prepayment of registration fee shall not be required for the issuance of a letter of invitation when the participant has attended one meeting in the previous three years. (p.23)

Request for Clarification:
The Letter of Invitation typically needs to be issued by (and sent from) the country hosting the conference.

ANS: Offeror should indicate exceptions in its proposal.

Meeting Services

1. IETF Meetings.
g. Registration Services.
iv. Vendor shall provide online registration services for the Social for deposit into the IASA-ISOC account when event registration opens or as soon thereafter as the Social details are fixed. (p.23)

Request for Clarification:
Will the host be required to use the vendor to provide these services?

ANS: Vendor shall provide online registration services for the Social as needed in accordance with the SOW.

Clerical Support Services

1. Clerk Functions.
c. Managing meetings. The Vendor shall perform the following services specifically for the IESG. Such service may be extended to the Supported Organizations upon request by the IAD.
iv Collecting, maintaining and administering the IESG process documents, including, but not limited to, "narrative" meeting minutes, statements, IONs, and (p.27)

Request for Clarification:
The IETF Secretariat does not currently post or archive the IETF Operational Notes (IONs).

ANS: The SOW calls for some services that are not provided by the current Secretariat.

Clerical Support Services

1. Clerk Functions.
e. Archive Services.
xi Long-term archive service to provide the members of the IETF community the ability to submit data objects for archive, retrieve archived data objects and tag archived data objects as obsolete. (p.27)

Request for Clarification:
There are many options for this type of service and request some guidance on the type and scope of service to be provided.

ANS: The bidder shall describe how this archive will be provided.

IT Support Services

1. IETF Infrastructure Services
i. Distributed Information
         ii. RSS and ATOM feeds

Request for Clarification:
Request more direction on what supporting this service entails.

ANS: The bidder shall describe how this service will be provided.

IT support services:

1. Website

1) While we understand the general context of delivering services, as the prices need to be fixed could you be more precise in term of workloads concerning websites support :

a. Quoting from the RFP "Develop content as directed by IAD" which volume basis? What kind of complexity of the contents (Text? Graphics? Both?).

b. Quoting from the RFP "Apply common look-and-feel for all pages...". How many pages, which sites, who does provide the layout? More details are needed

ANS:
The IETF intends to redesign its website and some subdomains at ietf.org for redevelopment and launch in 2008. Specifications for the redesign will be done by the IETF. It is anticipated such redesign will provide for a simple text and low graphics look and feel. The development work will be bid out. Maintenance of the sites may include new pages which will then adopt the same site look and feel. Additional detail will be provided during contract negotiations.

Current Data:
Total number of Web Pages of *.ietf.org (All static): 130,367
Of those 130,367:
118 pages are manually maintained,
3565 pages are generated/maintained by scripts (there are 54 web pages generating scripts),
126,597 pages are either outdated or frozen (not being updated any more, such as Proceedings),

86 pages are maintained by other groups.

Does not include tools.ietf.org, which is being maintained by another group.

2. Customer Support

2) On the customer support services: we understand that some (kind of) SLA would be defined , what kind of precise requirements for any SLA and kind of support to customers are envisaged?

ANS: See Appendix 3 of the RFP and the 2006 contract with the incumbent at http://iaoc.ietf.org/documents/IETF_Services_Agreement_UNC2_Executed_12-15-05.pdf. Note: contract has been modified to remove confidential material. Additional detail will be provided during contract negotiations.

3. Distributed Information

3) Distributed Information: more details are needed concerning Official I-D Archives

ANS: The service required is notice provided via RSS and ATOM of version changes and IESG actions to specific Internet Drafts to which individuals have subscribed for such service.

4. Tools

4) Tools:

a. As the vendor shall, at no charge, maintain, correct and update the current suite of tools, resources allocated to such activities must be clearly limited . This task could also be more resources consuming as there are a broad variety of tools working in different environments. Could you provide more information on the current practices and workload and view to limit resources allocated to that task ?

ANS: Additional Tools information can be found in the Standards Process Support Guidelines, which are posted at http://iaoc.ietf.org/contracts.html. It is believed current workload consumes one fulltime programmer.

b. Although we noticed that tools shall be open sourced and with a license as directed by IAD, are there still any licensing issues for any of the software tools

ANS: The tools are the property of the IETF Trust. Vendor will be provided a license to use the tools as necessary to perform the services. The IETF is still in the process of open sourcing and identifying an appropriate license for the open-sourced tools.

Clerical Support Services

5) While all functions and services to be provided are understood, it is not obvious to assess all activities with respect to existing and future workloads, could you provide the chart of the organization (number of staff, functions...) for such services as existing today ?

ANS: Contract with the current Vendor requires services, but does not specify how, by whom, or how many staff are needed to satisfactorily perform those services. Some indication of workload is provided by references, text and charts in Appendix 3. Additionally the Standards Process Support Guidelines provides considerable detail in the work being performed. Moreover, the IAOC is seeking the best combination of performance and cost for the benefit of the IETF, not necessarily the lowest bidder.   The best combination of performance and cost will be determined and set during contract negotiation and execution.

General questions:

6) Is there any constraint concerning the location of the staff ?

ANS: Generally, there is no requirement as to the location of the staff. As long as such location, time zone, technology infrastructure does not interfere with the delivery of the services there is no constraint. Vendor

will have appropriate staff on site for IETF meetings to fulfill the service requirements of the Meeting and support of the IESG.

7) Are you (ISOC) willing to accept that the contract will be subject to the [laws of the] jurisdiction of the vendor?

ANS: No. The contract will be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia without giving effect to any choice of law rule that would cause the application of the laws of any jurisdiction other than the internal laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia to the rights and duties of the Parties. However, Offeror may provide, and ISOC would consider, a legal opinion, at Offeror's expense, on the specific changes to the terms and conditions of the contract that would be required for the contract to also comply with the laws of the jurisdiction of the vendor.

8) Are you accepting prices provided in the proposal in Euro ?

ANS: Since payment may be required in any currency, prices in Euros are acceptable.

General Procedural Question

1. Assuming you select vendors other than incumbents, do you anticipate a transition period where incumbent(s) and new vendors overlap? If yes, what is the approximate length of the overlap?

ANS: A transition period is provided for in the timeline and occurs between contract award and the effective date of the contract during which the incumbent and successor(s) overlap.

2. Have any of the current service providers in one of more of these service areas expected to submit a proposal in this process? If so, in which service areas.

ANS: The incumbent, NeuStar Secretariat Services, is performing all services and is expected to submit a proposal for all services.

General Contract Question

3. The rfp states: "The contract will be negotiated based on ISOC's standard services contract form" (§J, item 3, page 9). Where does one find the ISOC's standard contract?

ANS: Examples of ISOC's standard contracts may be found at http://iaoc.ietf.org/contracts.html.

Proposal Format Question

4. The standard format seeks "annual reports of business". For privately held firms that do not produce formal annual reports, what are the alternatives for this request? If you can be more specific about what you believe an annual report will provide you, perhaps responses to those specific issues would suffice. (§D, item 16, page 12)

ANS: A public corporation's "annual report" provides insight into the company's management and board of directors; and its lines of business, time in the business, customers, and financial success. Such information assists in the assessment of the company's focus, experience, stability, and success in order to achieve a level of confidence in its ability to deliver the services bid in a professional and timely manner.

Selection Question

5. You state that "qualified offerors" will be notified of their selection for advancement to the negotiation phase by September 30, 2007. It is your expectation that those vendors advancing to the negotiation phase will be your final choice(s) in each service area?

ANS: It would be our expectation that those vendors advancing to the negotiation phase will be the leading candidates for the services for which they bid. It is possible, for example, that negotiations could take place with an IT provider, a Meeting Planning firm and a vendor proposing to provide all services. It has also been our practice not to release other bidders in the event that we are unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with the leading candidate.

Scope of Work Question

6. The IETF typically monitors the meeting schedules of other organizations to avoid clashes - what are the other organizations the IETF has been monitoring for this purpose? (§A, item 1.b.ii, page 21)

ANS: See http://www.ietf.org/meetings/clash_list.html

7. Does a policies and procedures manual currently exist for any of the services, especially Clerical Support Services? If so, is it available for review prior to the July 30th proposal submission deadline? If it can be made available, how it is accessed?

ANS: There is no manual per se, but there are Standards Process Support Guidelines, which will are posted at http://iaoc.ietf.org/contracts.html.

8. It is unclear whether the meeting vendor or the clerical services vendor is responsible for working with the WG chairs to finalize meeting agenda - can you clarify your expectations in the area?

ANS: The clerical services vendor is responsible for working with the parties to finalize the meeting agenda.

9. What is the current practice for "clerical staff" attending the 3 large meetings per year (e.g., how many "clerical staff" typically attend and how often)?

ANS: The IESG attends each IETF meeting and conducts its own meetings for which there is typically senior clerical support.

10. Does the IETF own the current IT infrastructure that it uses today to support the organization's activities? If it does, can we assume that this environment will be available for some time after January 1, 2008 and until the new system is launched? If not, will the current environment be available after January 1, 2008 and for what period of time?

ANS: Through the IETF Trust, the IETF owns the current tool set indentified in the RFP. Those tools would be available for use. Hardware and network are expected to be supplied and maintained by the vendor. The IETF owns the following hardware: 8 model 2850 Dell servers and 6 model 1550 Dell servers. That hardware will be made available to the successful vendor. Additional hardware will be needed for nearly 400 GB in archived audio and video files.

Meeting Financial Management.

1. Does the IETF pay any third party vendors (i.e., hotels for meeting costs) directly from the IETF bank account or does the Secretariat make all payments on behalf of the IETF and then request reimbursement?

ANS: Typically the Secretariat has made the payment and then been reimbursed. Occasionally the IETF has made the payments, usually hotel advance payments.

Security

2. What is involved in the Security Threat Analysis and Security Plan that is required for each meeting?
a. Is this something that the Secretariat provides for equipment concerns or attendee concerns or both?
b. What is the expected outcome/document?
c. Is a sample of a past Security Threat Analysis and Security Plan available for review?

ANS: Intent of the document is to obtain an understanding of venue communications, policies and procedures in case of emergencies that may result in the evacuation of meeting attendees. The facilities are toured with venue staff to ensure exits are not blocked and signage is accurate, functioning and available. Such documents are not available for review.

IT Support Services

a. What tools does the IETF own and plan to bring over to the new Secretariat?

ANS: Tools listed in RFP are owned by IETF and are available to be used by Secretariat.

b. What tool software does the IETF currently use that will need to be replaced by the new Secretariat?

ANS: Current tools are functioning. Some tools are used directly by IETF community and may need enhancing; some only by Secretariat staff and may need enhancing. Vendor may propose different tools to accomplish the services. See also: Standards Process Support Guidelines.

c. Will the IETF move any of the existing servers to the new Secretariat location?

ANS: The IETF owns the following hardware: 8 model 2850 Dell servers and 6 model 1550 Dell servers. That hardware will be made available to the successful vendor. Additional hardware will be needed for nearly 400 GB in archived audio and video files.

d. What is the total volume of data and user files to be transferred including live and archived data?

ANS:
Web and FTP: 13.4 GB
I-D Archive: 2 GB
Proceedings: 11 GB
DB files: 1 GB
Mailing Lists Archive: 14 GB
Registration DB: 1 GB
TOTAL: about 42.4 GB

Note in addition that there is almost 400 GB of audio and video files yet to be archived.

e. Of the tools being used, what are the program names, version numbers, and platforms?

ANS:
Programs and Version numbers:
* Perl 5.8.5
* MySQL 4.1.2
* Python 2.4.2
* Django 0.95
* Filemaker 5
* ColdFusion MX
* MailMan 2.1.5

Platforms:
* Linux Red Hat ES
* Windows XP Professional

Meeting services:

Shall the cost of the internet connectivity itself, needed for the meetings, be included in the proposal? If yes, what is the required bandwith?

ANS: No, the cost of meeting internet connectivity itself is not required for the proposal.