

Northwest Workforce Council

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Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide: Information Technology Services

Bidders' Questions & Answers

1. If a firm does not currently have a business license to do business in the state of Washington, can the license be provided upon the award?
 - *Yes, but the award will be conditional on providing the UBI.*
2. Once RFP's are selected and scored, will there just be a selection or will there also be an interview process?
 - *NWC reserves the right to conduct follow-up interviews should the review panel find information provided to be insufficient to effectively evaluate vendor proposals.*
3. Can we exceed the 10-page limit with letters of recommendation?
 - *Yes, may be included as addenda.*
4. What are the responsibilities in terms of website management and do you have internal support for these sites?
 - *NWC provides internal content management for its knowledge management intranet site (nwdawn.org) and for the board's website (nwboard.org). The knowledge management intranet is on a Claromentis platform, supported under separate licensing agreement.*
5. What third party applications do you use?
 - *Deep Freeze, Office 365, Claromentis (mentioned above), Washington State's case management system (currently Efforts to Outcomes).*
6. What other line of business applications do you use?
 - *Abila MIP, Xerox MFD interface, Pitney-Bowes postage*
7. Do you anticipate organizational growth to include additional locations in the next 3-5 years?
 - *No.*
8. You mentioned you're a non-profit, correct?
 - *Yes, that is correct.*
9. Do you have any State or Federal laws you are required to adhere to?
 - *Yes, absolutely. We are federally funded and maintain strict compliance with state and federal law in all operations. NWC is a highly compliant and outcome driven organization. We have operated for over 40 years with no adverse findings or questioned costs.*

10. Do you deal with DDR or DDA? To clarify, we work with non-profit agencies who assist individuals with developmental disabilities get jobs.
- *Through the structure of the workforce development system in our four (4) county region, we operate through a team-based partnership approach. WIOA requires certain grant recipients to be part of a local partnership and to align service offerings with each other. Vocational Rehabilitation, for example, has staff in the Whatcom and Skagit WorkSource Centers. Your responsibility would be to support the IT of the Workforce Council, not these other partner organizations or programs.*
11. As payroll is managed in-house, what processing system do you use, and has it been customized in any way?
- *Abila MIP has a payroll processing application we utilize. It has not been modified to suit our organizational needs.*
12. What ticketing system do you currently have in place & would the selected vendor have access to the system to pull volume metrics and trend analysis data available from these tickets?
- *The name of the ticketing system used by the current provider is unknown. Monthly activity detail reports are provided with each invoice. The winning vendor will be provided access to twelve (12) months of this data.*
13. Under Statement of Work – Overall System Management (pg. 6 of the RFP) there is a bullet that reads: *Provide project management for selected upgrades and/or changes.* Does this assume NWC has staff available to assist with implementation, or would the vendor be solely expected to complete the PM work?
- *The vendor would be expected to complete the project management work. Depending upon the project, other work may be provided by a third-party vendor, such as Claromentis for version upgrades of the knowledge management system.*
14. In talking about mission critical applications, and business applications, this RFP is for the support of the infrastructure, do you have support programs in place so that the selected vendor... do they have to understand the applications and the be able to troubleshoot the application level, or is it just the IT asset infrastructure service that you're looking for?" (i.e. if a staff member submits a trouble ticket for DAWN, what would the specific role of your IT support be to assist in this situation?)
- *IT's role is to ensure the staff members' access to DAWN is functional. The knowledge management system is mission-critical for NWC. If the actual issue resides with DAWN's internal infrastructure, this issue would be taken care of through the third party- Claromentis. Other third-party applications such as Abila MIP and Office 365 are similarly supported by the product vendor but would likely require interface with NWC's IT services provider to resolve issues. We would look to the IT vendor to champion the expedient return to service of technology assets.*
15. Are there any service level agreements?
- *The NWC knowledge management system intranet (www.dawn.org) is a mission-critical work essential. NWC staff require access to this site to conduct their daily work. It is a high priority as are access to internet-based tools such as the state's case management system, Abila MIP, and Office 365.*

16. Are you looking for an hourly or monthly bid breakdown?
 - *See Item C on page 9 of RFP.*
17. Do you currently utilize a Voice over Internet system, if so, is there switching and routing to support this system?
 - *The Oak Harbor and Friday Harbor locations use VOIP. The service provider is Intermedia with connectivity via Comcast and Rock Island (respectively). NWC equipment supports the telephony at these locations.*
18. Is there a scheduled on-site visit per week?
 - *A four (4) hour site visit is scheduled for the same day each week. This is generally in Bellingham but may be scheduled at one of the other locations as need arises.*
19. Do you have an in-house support liaison for your staff and the IT vendor?
 - *The NWC Regional Manager is the IT vendor liaison. There is not an in-house IT support staff.*
20. What anti-virus software are you currently using & is this something that is vendor supplied?
 - *Yes, this is vendor supplied. All Office 10 equipment is running Windows Defender, the current vendor uses WebRoot anti-virus on all supported machines.*
21. Who manages your organization's email? Is this provided by your vendor?
 - *NWC uses Office 365. The licensing is paid directly to Microsoft from NWC. The vendor supports the user interface with the product.*
22. Could you provide us with a list of services or your current model for IT support so that we might provide direct comparisons when submitting our proposal?
 - *Bidders may assume the model described in the RFP is the current model.*
23. Does NWC own the servers it uses?
 - *Yes, they are DELL products and they are housed on site.*
24. Is the networking gear under contract?
 - *Yes, support of the network hardware is a part of this contract. Wi-Fi is provided via Comcast at Bellingham and Mount Vernon.*
25. What about warranties or support contracts for network gear/firewalls?

NWC's network hardware and purchase date is indicated in the following table:

WH	SWITCH- 2960 s Series 48 Port Gigabit	06/27/14	CISCO
WH	ASA 5512-X ADAPTVE SECURITY APPLIANCE	10/02/14	CISCO
WH	SWITCH POWER CONNECT	08/20/07	DELL
WH	SWITCH POWER CONNECT	08/20/07	DELL
SK	SWITCH 2960 s Series 48 Port Gigabit	06/27/14	CISCO
SK	ASA 5512-X ADAPTVE SECURITY APPLIANCE	10/02/14	CISCO
IS	PowerConnect 6248 - uplink module	05/08/08	DELL
IS	ASA 5512-X ADAPTVE SECURITY APPLIANCE	10/02/14	CISCO

26. How many tickets do you currently receive per week? Afterhours? What is the after-hour expectation of the IT vendor?
- *See Q&A response number 12.*
 - *Afterhours users are the few remote users, mainly administrative staff. If unable to remote into the network after hours, those users have the option to go to the office, so an emergency response is not required. There is one employee working remotely from overseas that does not have that capacity, however her issue(s) could be addressed during normal business hours.*
 - *We would expect to be notified, if through system monitoring, a serious issue is detected that would infringe upon the organization's ability to conduct its business on the next normal day/hour of operation. This situation may warrant an emergency after-hours response to ensure continued uninterrupted operations.*
27. What monitoring solution infrastructure is currently in place to monitor your servers?
- *This is unknown.*
28. Are you a 501c3 organization?
- *Yes.*
29. Can you confirm how many total servers need to be managed? Physical and virtual?
- *It is as written in the RFP.*
30. Regarding onboarding/offboarding of staff support: how often does NWC utilize this service?
- *We are a small organization with low to moderate turnover. We currently use the present vendor's onboarding/offboarding electronic form to communicate specific new user needs/requirements.*
31. Is there any expectation to provide support to your customers using the computers in your Center's labs or resource areas?
- *Only the Mount Vernon location has a computing lab. It is operated with Deep Freeze and domain group policies and requires little active support as a result. Non-staff customer support is not a component of this RFP.*
32. Regarding the budget proposal: are you looking for a 1st year budget, followed by years 2 and 3 at reduced rates? Or a package rate for the 3 years combined? Please clarify.
- *We anticipate respondents will take into account efficiencies gained in the 2nd and 3rd years of the contract and build that into their pricing for the three-year term of the contract.*
33. Regarding system and asset management: is it expected that vendors assist with new procurements as well?
- *Yes. We also look to the IT services vendor to provide strategic guidance in procurement and operating environments.*
34. Is this a new requirement?
- *No, we currently have this service under contract.*
35. If not a new requirement, who is the incumbent company and what is their contract number/dollar amount?
- *Litzia, LLC is the incumbent service provider. The current contracted monthly amount is \$6,801 + taxes.*

36. If they will have right of first refusal, can you provide detail as to how long they have been supporting in this capacity? This information is critical in our accurate estimation/pricing please.
- *This is an open procurement for all qualified bidders.*
37. If so, can you provide their POC detail and name, so we can gain an understanding of what their desired compensation would be?
- *N/A*
38. Is there a plan to convert the physical servers to virtual servers or will these remain physical?
- *No, there is not a plan to convert at this time.*
39. Is there a plan for the awarded vendor to take over the Backup Disaster Recovery that is currently provided by a pre-existing vendor or will this remain with the pre-existing vendor?
- *This is under contract with another vendor as stated in the RFP.*
40. What is currently being used for Remote Access capabilities?
- *ITSupport247*
41. Is the support for the cell phones related only to business apps such as email or is it for all phone support issues, such as call issues or hardware issues?
- *Email and the rare user connectivity issue or operational instruction.*
42. Is there currently a policy/schedule for OS updates and Security Patches?
- *Yes, this is managed by the IT support vendor.*
43. Is there currently a SIEM or other network monitoring tool for the monitoring and alerting of network issues?
- *This is managed by the IT support vendor.*
44. Are there currently any support contracts with the appliance/workstation vendors?
- *See previous responses. Xerox MFDs are leased and under support agreement.*
45. Is the ticketing system/help desk currently in place or will this be entirely provided by the awarded vendor?
- *To be provided by the awarded vendor.*
46. Is there currently a system for asset tagging/management?
- *Yes, a communication is generated from the IT support vendor to the NWC Property Manager with the detail required to tag new items and to track equipment's movement and condition.*
47. Page 9: Can you let us know what these reports are for NWC? We have our standard reports that we prepare for our clients but want to make sure we are comparing apples to apples.
- *Vendor to describe their system reports, to include an example of typical reporting as an addendum. NWC wishes to use this information for strategic IT planning, issues tracking, and vendor performance assessment.*
48. Can you confirm the number of servers you have, per the RFP, we count 8 servers that the IT support plan will need to support, just want to confirm this? Any servers residing in AWS? Azure?
- *This is as written in the RFP. Also see response to question 29.*

49. Page 5: Network Environment: Does NCW own their firewalls and routers? Or is there a support plan with a 3rd party vendor that provides this? Does the current IT partner that is in place support them?
- *See response to question 25. These are supported by the current IT services vendor.*
50. Are their plans in place to replace the Cisco 5512x firewalls?
- *Not at this time.*
51. Page 6: Can you let us know what “fully compliant with federal standards” is? We have many state agency clients and want to make sure that the level of security we provide them meets your needs.
- *Compliance with Washington state agency standards is sufficient.*
52. Page 6: it states “occasional user support for 8 cellular devices”, can we assume this is for email connectivity?
- *See response to question 41.*
53. Page 6: what is the current process in place for tracking all asset and tagged IT devices?
- *See response to question 46.*
54. Page 8: It is my understanding that we can submit sample reports or letters of recommendations as appendices and that this will not be counted as part of the 10-page RFP limit.
- *See response to question 3.*
55. Page 8: the 10-page limit only applies to the “proposal written narrative” section, this does not include references as that is bullet 3 under section two. So the 10-page limit applies to section A (Organizational Capacity), B (Project Plan/Technical proposal), and C (cost).
- *Yes.*
56. What are the number of staff workstations at each NWC location?
- *The following breakdown is a close approximation:*
 - Whatcom: 20 PCs*
 - Skagit: 13 PCs*
 - Island: 4 PCs*
 - San Juan: 2 PCs*
 - Laptops: 7*
 - Tablets: 3*
57. What is the quantity breakdown of desktops, laptops and tablets. Also, brand / type.
- *NWC staff PC's, laptops, and servers are all Dell products. A few Surface tablets are supported. Staff machines are either Dell 3050 or 7050 (5 in Whatcom only). Also see response to question 56.*
58. The RFP states there are 15 learning lab workstations operated in a learning lab in Mount Vernon. Are these included in the 50 workstations, or in addition to?
- *See response to question 31. These 15 lab machines are in addition to the 50 actively monitored and supported devices.*