

Request for Proposal Number: **IFIB-ACT-SACT-20-23**

Reference: **Q&A #1**

Date of Issue: **23 Nov 2020**

The following questions were raised with respect to subject IFIB/RFP. Responses are to provide clarification.

Question	Response
<p>1. The subject IFIB refers to a “completed and returned the Enclosure of the transmittal letter of this IFIB” on page 3, para 3.a. It is unclear whether there is a specific transmittal letter template. Could you clarify the instructions or point to the proper form?</p>	<p>This refers to a bidder that responded to the initial Notification of Intent to bid on this solicitation. Nothing further is required during the submission phase.</p>
<p>2. Please confirm whether the work under the tender can be performed entirely remotely. In accordance with Section 3. "Scope", you permit this possibility. However, in the profiles criteria for individual contract personnel you partially include this requirement. Do you assume that the DevsecOps Engineer, Solution Architect, Data Scientist, Agile Acquisition, Product Manager, UI/UX Designer, Platform Architect, Security Professional can entirely perform work remotely?</p>	<p>The Innovation Hub is the preferred place of duty however for some labour categories; HQ SACT will consider remote services. Bidders should be clear when offering remote services and include location for provision. Remote services from Europe are allowed, however HQ SACT will not fund travel expenses should on-site support meetings be required.</p> <p>The following labour categories however must provide services on site at the Innovation Hub, HQ SACT or a combination of the two; remote working due to COVID restrictions will be considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Agile Acquisition, Data Scientist, DEVSECOPS Engineer, Security (See Amendment 1)</p>

3. In the case of remote execution, is the entity engaged in the proceedings obliged to have NATO facility security clearance? If so, at what level?	There is no mandatory security clearance requirement for this work; however a NATO or National SECRET FSC would be beneficial in the event future work at a classified level is required.
4. Paragraph 6.1 calls for 1x DevSecOps Engineer; however, the Pricing matrix (pg. 14) suggests 3 positions.... Is only 1 position required for 2021 pricing (with resume)?	See Amendment 1
5. Paragraph 6.2 calls for 2x Solution Architects; however, the Pricing matrix (pg. 16) suggests only 1 position?	See Amendment 1
6. Pricing matrix (pg. 16), first column (<i>Base Period</i>) for Data Scientist 3 is not shaded.... Confirm this is a 2022+ position?	See Amendment 1
7. Is there any interest in Contractor providing fully-managed Scrum teams at a fixed cost and capacity per Sprint?	No.
8. STATEMENT OF WORK: could you please specify the tasks / duties per each profile?	See amendment.
9. Regarding remote working – are there any profiles that would provide services remotely? If so, is it accepted to provide the services from Europe?	See 2R and Amendment 1
10. Referencing SOW paragraph 4.3 To enable initial pricing for required travel to the Innovation Lab for a remote working option, please provide the annual estimated number and duration of travel for in person support at the Innovation Lab in Norfolk.	Travel is not required for the iHUB SOW for contracts that are “remote support.” Personnel on contracts for remote operations are not required to travel to the physical laboratory location to complete work.
11. Referencing SOW paragraph 6.2 It states “2 resumes required for consideration.” Can companies propose pricing for a number of Full Stack	No. See Amendment 1

<p>Developers in 2022 without submitting 2 resumes for 2021?</p>	
<p>12. Which backend and frontend framework is preferred? (page 23, point 6.2)</p>	<p>They are both preferred since the full stack developer is creating the back end and front end coding using TDD and agile methodologies as part of a Balanced Team.</p>
<p>13. Is a fully remote position possible in this particular project? If yes, is there any onboarding in HQ physically required in the US in Norfolk ,or on-boardings can be done remotely (what is the estimated time of it ?</p>	<p>Yes. There is no physical on-boarding requirements for the HQ or in the Norfolk laboratory facility.</p>
<p>14. Will you consider developers specializing only in frontend or backend applications but with knowledge of several frameworks and programming languages?</p>	<p>We will consider all Full Stack Developer Subject Matter Experts that meet the Best Value criteria set forth in the solicitation.</p>
<p>15. What are the standard and overtime working hours (incl. time zone)</p>	<p>Reference Annex D (Para e) HQ SACT Working Hours, 7.5 hours daily between 0800 and 1700 Eastern Standard (Daylight) Time HQ SACT does not recognize ‘overtime’. Any hours worked in excess of 7.5 hours daily must be approved in advance by the COTR and billed at the same rate (note: this reduces from the overall 1800 hours per year unless specifically identified as surge)</p>
<p>16. Are you open to agree that they will work in Polish CEST time zone which is GMT + 1, so they will be on call for you between 04:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. your local time EST (Monday – Friday) , or you have your own working hours and time zone preferred. Please specify.</p>	<p>Yes. Work times will be coordinated with the Product Owners and Product Managers to ensure NATO member countries can participate in operations. However, all remote meeting times will be coordinated using EST.</p>
<p>17. What will be the frequency of the business trips to the United States and what will be the estimated length of such trips? Who will cover the cost of travel (accommodation, flights, meals). Should we include it as a separate cost position in the price specification?</p>	<p>17A. No business trips are required to accomplish remote working. 17AB. If contractor is requesting a remote working option, the costs of such trips will be at contractors expense.</p>

	17AC. These costs should be rolled up as overhead and considered in the proposed hourly rate.
18. Can we onboard our consultants also remotely or do you require stationary onboarding in Norfolk? How long is it estimated to take ?	There is no physical on-boarding requirements for the HQ or in the Norfolk laboratory facility. Onboarding should take approximately two weeks.
19. Who will cover the costs of living? What should we include in this?	Cost of living is the responsibility of the contractor and should be considered when preparing proposal.
20. What kind of relocation assistance do you offer?	HQ SACT does not offer relocation assistance for contractors. This is entirely the responsibility of the company and should be considered when preparing proposal.
21. How many days off per year Consultant can take?	Reference Para 4 of Annex D, Special Terms and Conditions.
22. 4.1.1 “Two or more years within the last 2 years experience in full-stack JavaScript / Python / Java development” QUESTION: Which language is preferred?, what version(s) of programming language(s) do you use?	There is no preference. The programming languages used for development will depend on the projects assigned and discussed within the balanced team. .
23. “Two or more years' experience in front-end development (e.g. React, Angular, etc...)” QUESTION: Which framework is preferred? What version(s) of specific framework(s) do you use?	There is no preference. The framework chosen depends on the projects assigned and discussed within the balanced team.
24. “Two or more years' experience in back-end development (e.g. Node.js, Django / Flask, SpringBoot, etc ...) “ QUESTION Which framework is preferred? What version(s) of specific framework(s) do you use?	There is no preference. The framework chosen depends on the projects assigned.
25. Please provide us full information about technology stack which you use.	This is part of the onboarding process.
26. What are daily percentage proportions between responsibilities in frontend and backend development? E.g 70- 80% backend/ 20-30 % Frontend.	This is dependent on the project since both responsibilities are required for all projects.

27. Does fullstack developer is responsible for tests? Such as e.g. unit, integration, performance, regression, functional tests etc.? What kind of tools do you use?	Yes. TDD is a priority for all projects and the tools are discussed during the onboarding process.
28. What databases do you use?	This information is discussed in the onboarding process.
29. What kind of Architecture do you have? Microservices?	This information is discussed in the onboarding process.
30. Do you use any good practices during software development, such as Continuous Integration or Continuous Deployment / Delivery, TDD, DDD, Pair Programming?	Yes.
31. How big is the team? Who is in the team – regarding profiles (Business Analysts, Testers, Scrum Master,.. etc.?) and what is the seniority level of these people?	We use a balanced team approach with a minimum development team organized with a Product Manager, Product Owner, Full Stack engineers, UI/UX Designer, and potentially Data Scientists.
32. 4.3 Data Scientist role: The requirements specified in the documentation are: 4.3.1 Experience with data science best practice, particularly applied mathematics and/or programming, e.g. Python or R QUESTION 1: Which language is preferred, Python or R? Which do you use? QUESTION 2: How big is the team? Who is in the team and what is the seniority level of these people?	No preference on languages. We use a balanced team approach with a minimum development team organized with a Product Manager, Product Owner, Full Stack engineers, UI/UX Designer, and potentially Data Scientists.
33. 4.4 UI/UX Designer role: The requirements specified in the documentation are: 4.4.1 “Proficient in a variety of design and prototyping tools — Sketch, InVision, Adobe Creative Suite, Axure, or others”	No Preference in tools. We use a balanced team approach with a minimum development team organized with a Product Manager, Product Owner, Full Stack engineers, UI/UX Designer, and potentially Data Scientists.

<p>QUESTION 1: Which tool is preferred? QUESTION 2: How big is the team? Who is in the team and what is the seniority level of these people?</p>	
<p>34. The requirements specified in the documentation are:</p> <p>5.1 “Bidder’s proposed for the performance of services under the contract must meet the minimum qualifications stated in the SOW. All personnel (including subcontractors) must be citizens of a NATO member nation. All personnel that will perform work at NATO facilities or who will have access (including remotely) to NATO networks must have a valid NATO SECRET level security clearance”</p> <p>QUESTION 1: Is it possible to obtain required level of security clearance after specific person is selected to perform service?</p> <p>QUESTION 2: If working remotely does a selected person will have an access to NATO networks?</p>	<p>QUESTION 1: NO. Members requiring a security clearance must have an active NATO or National clearance at the time of award.</p> <p>QUESTION 2: NO. If a candidate is selected for remote work only, he/she will not have access to a NATO network and will not require a security clearance.</p>
<p>35. It is stated that “All personnel that will perform work at NATO facilities or who will have access (including remotely) to NATO networks must have a valid NATO SECRET level security clearance”. Are there any Positions that DO NOT REQUIRE NATO Secret clearance as they will not directly have access to NATO facilities ? An example is DevSecOps Engineer (Point 6.1.a in Specs) where in experience it is described: “Preferred active NATO or National SECRET (or higher) security clearance” not CRITICAL.</p>	<p>YES. Each labour category indicates whether a NATO or National SECRET (or higher) security clearance is required or preferred. If identified as preferred, then they do not require a clearance and will not have access to NATO facilities or networks. This becomes a scored criteria on the best value matrix.</p>
<p>36. Does remote location where work will be performer has to comply with special requirements or it can be regular Office location (or person home due to COVID restrictions) of supplier?</p>	<p>The remote location would require a NATO Facilities Security Clearance (FSC) ONLY if classified work were being done on site. If contractor is proposing remote work without security clearances for its personnel, then there are no restrictions.</p>

<p>37. When extension of contracted term will be communicated?</p>	<p>Contract term extensions are communicated as soon as possible but no later than 30 days prior to the end of the current period.</p>
<p>38. Is supplier able to replace provided resources during contract and how the procedure looks like?</p>	<p>Ref Annex D, Para 9, Commitment of Contractor Personnel. Requests to replace resources should be made directly to the Contracting Officer in writing and should include a CV of the proposed replacement along with an outline of how the candidate meets the requirements specified in the SOW. The proposed replacement should be billed at the originally proposed rate.</p>
<p>39. Does working day means 8 hours? If yes do you expect us to provide additional rate for overtime working hours?</p>	<p>Reference Annex D (Para e) HQ SACT Working Hours, 7.5 hours daily between 0800 and 1700 Eastern Standard (Daylight) Time. HQ SACT does not recognize 'overtime'. Any hours worked in excess of 7.5 hours daily must be approved in advance by the COTR and billed at the same rate (note: this reduces from the overall 1800 hours per year unless specifically identified as surge)</p>
<p>40. Does the bidder is able to provide two different rates for onsite and remote working?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>41. Does employee who is contracted as B2B is considered sub-contractor?</p>	<p>HQ SACT recognizes only the PRIME contractor; the relationship between the PRIME contractor and proposed candidates whether B2B, employees, etc. should be transparent; however the PRIME contractor is reminded that it must comply with the requirement to certify that all sub-contractors and proposed key personnel are members of NATO member nations.</p>
<p>42. Does this contract is eligible for electronic invoicing?</p>	<p>Yes. Electronic Invoicing is preferred.</p>
<p>43. Page 5, Para 11.a; Page 11, Section 2.1 States that the bidder's full name address, Point of Contacts, Telephone, Fax number and Internet site, (See Enclosure #2). On page 11, Enclosure 2 is a Compliance Statement document. Please clarify, is there a POC Enclosure? If so, where is this and</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>Page 6, Para 11.b 44. States the Compliance statement is Enclosure #3. Should this be Enclosure #2?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>Page 6, Para 11.e 45. States the Past Performance is Enclosure #4. Should this be Enclosure #3?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>

<p>Page 6, Para 11.f</p> <p>46. States the Company price proposal is Enclosure #5. Should this be Enclosure #4?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>47. Part 1 Bidding Instructions; Page 14; Pricing Sheet, Base Year 2021 (hourly labor rate)</p> <p>According to IFB SoW paragraph 6.1; only 1 DevSecOps Engineer is required. Is ACT requiring 1 candidate or 3 for this IFB as listed in the Pricing Sheet (page 14 Bidding Instructions) for Base Period 2021?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>48. Part 1 Bidding Instructions, Page 16 Pricing Sheet, Base Year 2021(hourly labor rate)</p> <p>According to IFB SoW paragraph 6.3, the requirement is for 2 Solutions Architect candidates. Is ACT requiring 2 candidates or 1 as listed in the Pricing Sheet (page 16 Bidding Instructions) for Base Period 2021?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>49. Part 1 Bidding Instructions; Page 16 Pricing Sheet, Base Year 2021(hourly labor rate)</p> <p>According to IFB SoW paragraph 6.4, the Data Scientist Labor Category is not required until 2022 (“this Labor category is not required until 2022 and companies wishing to compete for this labor category should submit a statement confirming ability to supply Data Scientists with experience/skills/qualifications identified below. Resume's will be requested upon consideration of the 2022 Option Period”). Is ACT still requiring candidates to be proposed as the Pricing Sheet (page 16 Bidding Instructions) is asking for Hourly Rates to be proposed in Base Period 2021?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>50. Part 1 Bidding Instructions; Page 42-44; ANNEX A; Best Value Criteria for DATA SCIENTIST Subject Matter Expert</p> <p>According to IFB SoW paragraph 6.4; the Data Scientist Labor Category is not required until Option Year 2022 (this Labor category is not required until 2022 and companies wishing to compete for this</p>	<p>NO. See Amendment 1</p>

<p>labor category should submit a statement confirming ability to supply Data Scientists with experience/skills/qualifications identified below. Resume's will be requested upon consideration of the 2022 Option Period).</p> <p>Is ACT still requiring candidates to be proposed and to fill out the Best Value Criteria, even though work will not start until 2022?</p>	
<p>51. Part 1 Bidding Instructions, ANNEX A; Pages 33 - 59; Best Value Criteria; 1st requirement in each Matrix and for ALL Subject Matter Experts</p> <p>First line item in each Matrix located in Annex A states " Minimum of one past performance citations within the last seven years to show that it has successfully completed work that is similar to or directly traceable to the requirements outlined in this SOW". Please explain what type of information, and in what form, is required for the completion of this section of the matrix.</p>	<p>See Enclosure 3 – Past Performance Information Form</p>
<p>52. Part 1 Bidding Instructions, para 12 (g); Proposal Submission</p> <p>The sentence, “Contractors are required to specifically reference with in the proposal”, is unclear as to what must be referenced. Please clarify.</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>53. SOW para 12, Releasability</p> <p>The para states, “The products and services under this SOW will need to be releasable to entities identified under the statements made with regard to both Intellectual Property Rights and any applicable export control laws, Ref: ACT-SACT-20-23, G T&C, clause #21 and paragraph 15 (below).”</p> <p>Please confirm that because the work will be largely executed from the US that all companies, whether of US origin or not,</p>	<p>Compliance with applicable export control requirements, including the US EAR and the ITAR, if applicable, are the responsibility of individual contractor companies. This includes determinations of whether export control regulations apply to the subject contract performance, and effecting compliance where required. HQ SACT’s obligation is to *facilitate* compliance, where the contractor company has determined a compliance obligation exists.</p>

<p>must comply with US Export Control Act and US ITAR?</p>	
<p>54. Annex D, Special T&Cs, para 3.f. The para refers to 15 days of SACT holidays Could you provide a list of the 15 days of SACT holidays?</p>	<p>Official Holiday dates differ each year. The below is the 2021 dates for your consideration.</p> <p>New Year's Day; Friday; 01 January 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Day; Monday; 18 January 2021 President's Day; Monday; 15 February 2021 Good Friday; Friday 2 April 2021 Easter Monday Monday 5 April 2021 Memorial Day Monday 31 May 2021 Observance of Independence Day, Monday; 05 July 2021 Labor Day; Monday; 06 September 2021 Columbus Day; Monday; 11 October 2021 Veterans Day; Thursday; 11 November 2021 Thanksgiving Day; Thursday; 25 November 2021 No Work Day; Friday; 26 November 2021 No Work Day; Thursday; 23 December 2021 No Work Day; Friday; 24 December 2021 Christmas Day; Saturday; 25 December 2021 No Work Day; Monday; 27 December 2021 No Work Day; Tuesday; 28 December 2021 No Work Day; Wednesday; 29 December 2021 No Work Day; Thursday; 30 December 2021 New Year's Day (observed); Friday; 31 December 2021</p>
<p>55. Solutions Architect Matrix (Pg39) Point 6 states 'Industry recognizable cloud solution architect certification.' However, the grading asks for the number of qualifying years rather than a Y/N. Should this be revised to require a Y/N?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>56. Part 1 (Bidding Instructions), Sections 11.a-11.f Paragraph 11 of Part 1 (Bidding Instructions) describes the content of bidders' proposals. The enclosure numbers shown however do not align with the enclosures provided in the document. For example, Item (a) does not have an Enclosure associated with it. Item (b) refers to Enclosure 2, not Enclosure 3. Will NATO please fix the enclosure numbers, so they match their respective enclosures?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>

<p>57. Part 1 (Bidding Instructions), Section 11c The solicitation states that offerors proposals are to consist of, among other things, "Provision of administrative, financial, and technical volumes." Will NATO please explain what offerors are required to submit in each of the stated volumes?</p>	<p>Administrative and technical volume may be combined. Administrative volume should contain all documents listed above, company background information, past performance citation, etc. Technical volume should contain CV's/Resumes of proposed candidates, details of experience, reachback capabilities, technical approach, etc. The financial volume should clearly demonstrate that the company is financially solvent and able to successfully perform this requirement. Financial volumes are not required for companies that have been nominated through its national delegate, Department of Commerce or Department of Finance, Trade, etc.</p>
<p>58. The solicitation states, "Contractors are required to specifically reference with the proposal" Will NATO please clarify what offerors are required to reference?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>59. Enclosure 1 (Proposal Content/Checklist) The solicitation states that offerors are to provide a Technical Proposal as part of their proposal submissions. Will NATO please clarify if the Technical Proposal consists of the CVs and completed SOW Annex A tables for the candidates proposed or is something else required to satisfy this requirement? If so, will NATO please explain what is required?</p>	<p>The CVs and completed SOW Annex A is sufficient as long as it demonstrates unequivocally the qualifications of the candidate.</p>
<p>60. Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 5 Partial Bidding and Teaming Arrangements Do proposed subcontractors require a DOE from the Department of Commerce for this IFIB to be eligible to support this effort?</p>	<p>No. HQ SACT recognizes only the PRIME contractor; the relationship between the PRIME contractor and proposed candidates whether B2B, employees, etc. should be transparent; however the PRIME contractor is reminded that it must comply with the requirement to certify that all sub-contractors and proposed key personnel are members of NATO member nations.</p>
<p>61. Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 5 Partial Bidding and Teaming Arrangements Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 5 states, "Partial bidding is allowed." Are bidders required to provide resumes for the total number of SMEs required in each labour category?</p>	<p>No. Contractors may submit a partial bid within a category.</p>

<p>62. Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 6.1 and Enclosure 4</p> <p>Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 6.1 states: “The DevSecOps (1 required);” however, the labor rate table in Enclosure 4 on Page 14 asks for pricing for three (3) DevSecOps Engineers.</p> <p>Will NATO clarify the correct number of DevSecOps Engineers required?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>63. Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 6.2 states: “The Full-Stack Developers (2 required in 2021 with 8 required in 2022).” Should this state “2 required in 2021 with 8 additional required in 2022”?</p>	<p>YES. See Amendment 1</p>
<p>64. Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 6.3 and Enclosure 4</p> <p>Enclosure 5, SOW, Section 6.3 states: “The Solution Architects (2 required)”;</p> <p>however, the labor rate table in Enclosure 4 on Page 16 asks for pricing of one (Solution Architect).</p> <p>Will NATO clarify the correct number of Solution Architects required? If two are required, will you please update the labor rate tables of Enclosure 4 to include the additional Solution Architect?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>65. Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 6.4 and Enclosure 4</p> <p>Enclosure 5 SOW, Section 6.4 states: “This labor category is not required until 2022”; however, the labor rate table in Enclosure 4 on Page 16 does not have the Data Scientist 3 greyed out in the Base Period as it does with the other two Data Scientists. Will NATO confirm the correct number of Data Scientists required in the Base Period?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>66. Enclosure 5 SOW, Annex A, Best Value Criteria Scoring Tables (all labour categories)</p> <p>Most of the Best Value criteria allocate points based on a range of experience. For</p>	<p>They are not overlapping. 1 to 2 years and 2+ years is over 2 years.</p>

<p>example, 1-2 years (1-3 Points) or 2+ years (4-7 Points). In this case, if a candidate had 2 years' experience, how would that individual be graded since 2 years' experience is overlapped in both criteria?</p> <p>Will NATO change all instances where the numbers of years of experience overlap?</p>	
<p>67. Enclosure 5 SOW, Annex A, Best Value Criteria Scoring Tables (all labour categories)</p> <p>Enclosure 5 SOW – Annex A states, “Point values assigned based on level of knowledge/experience in relation to the tasks contained in the SOW – not solely on the number of years' experience.”</p> <p>Since there are a range of point values associated with each item scored for each labour category, and the scoring is not directly associated with number of years' experience but rather a judgement as to the level of knowledge/experience of the candidate, it is not possible for the bidder to determine an absolute score for any individual.</p> <p>Is the score for each item in the evaluation matrix determined by the bidder or by NATO?</p>	<p>The bidder is invited to make an assessment, however the NATO Contracts Award Board will determine the official score.</p>
<p>68. Enclosure 5 SOW, Annex A, Best Value Criteria Scoring Tables (all labour categories)</p> <p>Enclosure 5 SOW – Annex A states, “Individuals' résumés will be measured against each of the criteria specified below in order to ascertain whether the individuals have adequately rate the candidates qualifications.”</p> <p>It is unclear what is being ascertained by this assessment. Is 1) the bidder or the candidate expected to provide a rating of the candidate's qualifications, and; 2) is the assessment concerning whether NATO</p>	<p>The bidder should ensure that the proposed candidates resume adequately reflects the experience and skills required in the Statement of Work.</p> <p>The bidder should ensure that within the Annex direct reference is made to the area within the resume/CV that details how the candidate meets this requirement so that HQ SACT Contract Awards Committee can assess and score the candidate properly.</p>

<p>considers that rating adequate? Please clarify.</p>	
<p>69. Enclosure 5 SOW, Annex A, Best Value Criteria Scoring Table for the DevSecOps Engineer Subject Matter Expert Using the Best Value Criteria for the DevSecOps Engineer Subject Matter Expert as an example, the solicitation states, as one of the criteria, “Minimum of one past performance citations within the last seven years to show that it has successfully completed work that is similar to or directly traceable to the requirements outlined in this SOW.” Is the reference to a past performance citation in this mandatory requirement referring to the chronological work history provided on the candidate’s CV?</p>	<p>No. The Past Performance citation applies to the companies experience, not the experience of the proposed candidate. This is included on each BV Criteria sheet simply for ease in evaluation of partial bids.</p>
<p>70. Enclosure 5 SOW, Annex A, Best Value Criteria Scoring Table for the Data Scientist Subject Matter Expert Regarding the Best Value Criteria for the Data Scientist Subject Matter Expert: Since resumes for this labour category are not requested with this submission, we assume the evaluation criteria specified for this position are for informational purposes only to assist in the development of our price proposal. Is this assumption correct?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>71. System/Environment to be provided by Atos for remote working ---Windows 7 for full stack developers --- Windows 7 is not supported by Microsoft. Question: Windows 7 is outdated and not supported by OEM. Pls clarify this expectation.</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>72. For those working remotely, should they also follow US time-zone? Pls share the constraints if any.</p>	<p>Work times will be coordinated with the Product Owners and Product Managers to ensure NATO member countries can participate in operations. However, all remote meeting times will be coordinated using EST.</p>
<p>73. In Section 11 (Content of Proposal), the Enclosure numbers mentioned doesn’t match to the actual Enclosure numbers. For example, on page 11 Enclosure 2 is for</p>	<p>See amendment 1</p>

<p>bidder's full name address, Point of Contacts, Telephone, Fax number and Internet site; whereas on page 11 Enclosure 2 is for Compliance Statement. Similar corresponding mismatch for Enclosures 3 and 4. Can you please clarify ?</p>	
<p>74. How many companies will sign the contract with contracting authority? Is this a framework contract?</p>	<p>It is currently unknown how many companies will be awarded a contract. HQ SACT intends to award to the company(s) whose proposal(s) represent the best value to NATO.</p>
<p>75. ELIGIBILITY This IFIB is open to companies:</p> <p>(d) Bidder's proposed for the performance of services under the contract must meet the minimum qualifications stated in the SOW. All personnel (including subcontractors) must be citizens of a NATO member nation. All personnel that will perform work at NATO facilities or who will have access (including remotely) to NATO networks must have a valid NATO SECRET level security clearance.</p> <p>In this point contracting authority mentioned that all personnel who will have access to NATO networks must have valid security clearance. Is it just about roles: DevSecOps, The Data Scientists, Platform Architect and Security Professional? In other roles, the requirement is not obligatory but only scored.</p>	<p>Correct. Only those candidates identified as requiring a NATO or National security clearance will have access to NATO Networks</p>
<p>76. Does the contracting authority accept only valid security declarations or does it agree that employees are in the process of obtaining the certification? The process is very long and takes at least 8 months.</p>	<p>For positions with a mandatory security clearance requirement, it must be active at the time of contract award.</p>
<p>77. Please explain whether the tenderer must submit an offer to provide all the profiles listed in the chapter 6 for the period: 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021, or whether you can submit an offer to provide only a few profiles (e.g. three)?</p>	<p>Partial bid submission is acceptable.</p>

78. Will the contracting authority provide full-time work for the entire team during the period: 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021?	The minimum candidates identified within each option period are expected to be full time equivalent contractors.
79. Will the contracting authority sign a contract with a company offering only remote work?	Yes. HQ SACT intends to award to the company(s) whose proposal(s) represent the best value to NATO.
80. We understand NATO may consider partially awarding the contract; could you please provide the maximum number of contractors that can be awarded?	HQ SACT intends to award to the company(s) whose proposal(s) represent the best value to NATO. The number of contractors is not limited.
81. Is the government going to interview the proposed Key Personnel? If so, could you please provide an anticipated timeframe?	HQ SACT reserves the right to conduct interviews with proposed Key Personnel if technical clarification is deemed necessary for a fair assessment of skills/experience. Interviews would be requested with two weeks of proposal submission.
82. If NATO decides to partially award this contract and if a position opens up that we did not originally win, would we be able to fill that position after the award if we present the best candidate?	Yes. If a position opens up, HQ SACT may consider inviting submissions from originally compliant companies who bid on that particular labor category. If the position remains unfilled, HQ SACT will consider extending an invitation to all other bidders on 20-23. This is dependant on operational needs and funds availability.
83. Could you please provide the government's expectations for the management of the projects? Who do you foresee managing each project?	We use a balanced team approach with a minimum development team organized with a Product Manager, Product Owner, Full Stack engineers, UI/UX Designer, and potentially Data Scientists.
84. Who will be the product owner from the government side?	NATO Product Owner is part of the Balanced Team and works within the iHUB organization.
85. Is the expectation for this contract to be more staff augmentation at the lowest price, or is the expectation to be the contractor provides management, methodology, and methods expertise to create the viable product required?	Assigned tasks are written into the Statement of Work for each position. We use a balanced team approach with a minimum development team organized with a Product Manager, Product Owner, Full Stack engineers, UI/UX Designer, and potentially Data Scientists.

<p>86. Section 4 (d) states that “All personnel that will perform work at NATO facilities or who will have access (including remotely) to NATO networks must have a valid NATO SECRET level security clearance”; section 6, however, mentions that some positions (DevSecOps Engineer, Data Scientists, Platform Architect, and Security Professional) have “Preferred active NATO or National SECRET (or higher) security clearance”. Could you please clarify if the clearance is preferred or mandatory for all positions?</p>	<p>Each labour category specifies whether a security clearance is required or preferred for those positions. Please refer to requirements within each category.</p>
<p>87. Does the government allow Joint Ventures to Participate when one of the members has the Declaration of Eligibility?</p>	<p>Yes, however HQ SACT recognizes only the PRIME contractor; the relationship between the PRIME contractor and proposed candidates whether B2B, employees, etc. should be transparent; however the PRIME contractor is reminded that it must comply with the requirement to certify that all sub-contractors and proposed key personnel are members of NATO member nations.</p>
<p>88. If a JV decides to bid on this contract and one of the members does not have the clearance, can the members who do have an FCL hold the clearance for the employees while the member without a clearance gets the approval</p>	<p>Yes as long as any Classified work is done on the premises of the member with the appropriate FSC. Please note that the requirement for an FSC is not mandatory unless the contractor expects to work on classified solutions.</p>
<p>89. Please clarify Part 1 Bidding Instructions Paragraph 11 CONTENT OF PROPOSAL that the enclosures listed are correct. The attached enclosures do not match with what is stated in Paragraph 11 and only 4 enclosures are provided.</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>90. Would the government identify the number and types of key resumes required? Paragraph 6 of the Statement of Work lists resumes required but doesn't match what is expected in Annex A, Best Value Criteria for each candidate. For example, there is a requirement for 3 DevSecOps Engineer but only 1 resume</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>

<p>required. The Best Value Criteria form requires a compliance matrix to each candidate. Clarification is needed.</p>	
<p>91. According to Paragraph 6.4 of the Statement of Work, 3 Data Scientists are needed starting in 2022; however, on the Sealed Price Proposal Form it shows Data Scientist 3 requires a labor hour rate in 2021. Would the government please clarify whether Data Scientist 3 requires pricing in 2021?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>92. Can ACT confirm the bidders assumption that the past performance form should be signed by the bidders customer with an electronic copy of the original signed past performance included in the bidders proposal?</p>	<p>Confirmed. Reference Enclosure 3.</p>
<p>93. Can ACT identify how many past performances are the minimum to be provided by the bidder to be compliant in its response and also how many past performances to be provided to score maximum points on the best value evaluation?</p>	<p>One. Past performance is not a scored component but rather compliant/non-compliant.</p>
<p>94. Can ACT clarify the following statement and how this should be understood by the bidder "(b) Working in the required field of study and legally authorised to operate in the United States of America, at the time of bidding."?</p>	<p>The contractor is expected to be providing similar support and knowledgeable in Agile best practices, have a good business reputation, be financial solvent and not on any exclusion listings.</p>
<p>95. Can ACT provide an extension to the bid closing date of 3 weeks to allow the presentation of the best potential proposal from the bidders?</p>	<p>No. ACTs aim is to award this contract in 2020 for an immediate start in 2021 in order to avoid service disruption and delays on critical MVP development.</p>
<p>96. Can ACT clarify how the 70/30 split and associated scoring criteria is evaluated? 1. What comprises of the 70% technical score of a bidder and what is the formula used for bidders comparison? 2. What comprises the 30% Price score of a bidder and what is the formula used for bidders comparison?</p>	<p>ACT will conduct an administrative review of the proposal submissions for compliance with the stated instructions; this is followed by a determination of compliant/non-compliant on mandatory criteria (see Annex A). ACT will then score the graded technical criteria (Annex A) by <i>averaging</i> the scores of all board members.</p>

	<p>These final point values make up 70% of the total score.</p> <p>Companies with the lowest price per labour category will get the maximum points (30). Each proposal will submission will receive a point value calculated on the % higher than the lowest price and subtracted from the maximum. Price and technical points will be added together for a total composite score.</p>
<p>97. Partial Awards - Can ACT identify how it intends to utilise partial awards as the bidder is requested to provide a fixed firm price for the full scope of the contract? Will this be divided per resource category, per resource presented, etc? If partial bidding award will be implemented the bidder does not currently identify how partial award can be applied based on how ACT has requested services under this contract.</p>	<p>The firm Fixed price is relevant only to the proposed hourly rates for each individual within each labour category. Awards will be make at the category level rather than the overall cost of the proposal as not all companies will bid on all categories.</p>
<p>98. Can ACT clarify remote working and the inclusion of associated cost in the bidders fixed firm price? The bidder understands that ACT allows remote working however the bidder should include associated potential costs to the local site in Virginia as part of its fixed firm price. In order to do this can ACT provide a summary of anticipated travels on an annual basis per position type requested? If this is not provided it will be impossible for the bidder to propose remote working.</p>	<p>See amendment 1 and responses above.</p>
<p>99. Can ACT confirm that the bidders contractors will be provided working space and access to the required network connectivity at no additional cost to the bidder?</p>	<p>Confirmed. On-site personel will be provided the items described in Para 16 of the SOW.</p>
<p>100. If a bidder proposes the same candidate for multiple roles and the bidder is deemed best value for both roles will ACT provide the bidder with the opportunity to replace the selected candidate for the non selected role with an alternate candidate ?</p>	<p>No. Companies should propose their best fit candidates per labour category. Bidding the same individual against more than one labour category should be carefully assessed.</p>

<p>101. What is the minimum mandatory number labour categories for which we need to propose candidates, in order to be eligible to bid?</p>	<p>One.</p>
<p>102. What is the minimum number of CVs we need to propose to be eligible to compete for the DevOps labour category?</p>	<p>One.</p>
<p>103. Preferred active NATO or National SECRET (or higher) security clearance, Is active NATO or National SECRET only mandatory? Will candidates without active NATO or National SECRET clearance be deemed noncompliant?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>104. What is the minimum number of CVs we need to propose to be eligible to compete for the Full-Stack Developer labour category?</p>	<p>One</p>
<p>105. What is the minimum number of CVs we need to propose to be eligible to compete for the Solution Architect labour category?</p>	<p>One</p>
<p>106. This labour category is not required until 2022. Companies wishing to compete for this labour category should submit a statement confirming ability to supply Data Scientists with the experience/skills/qualifications identified below.</p> <p>What is the minimum number of CVs we need to propose to be eligible to compete for theData Scientist labour category? Is it sufficient to submit a statement confirming the ability to supply, as stated in 6.4 The Data Scientists (page 24)?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>107. What is the minimum number of CVs we need to propose to be eligible to compete for the Product Manager labour category?</p>	<p>One</p>
<p>108. What is the minimum number of CVs we need to propose to be eligible to compete for the UI/UX Designer labour category?</p>	<p>One</p>

<p>109. Minimum of one past performance citations within the last seven years to show that it has successfully completed work that is similar to or directly traceable to the requirements outlined in this SOW</p> <p>Is there any specified format of how the past performance citations should be presented in the technical proposal? Should the past performance citations be presented as part of the resume or separately?</p>	<p>See Enclosure 3</p>
<p>110. Minimum of 25 Points in the Subject Matter Expert Criteria</p> <p>If the proposed candidates achieve the minimum of 25 points and above in the Subject Matter Expert Criteria, but for several of the listed items from the Subject Matter Expert Criteria achieve score of 0 (for example if has less than 1 year of experience in the listed item), will they still be considered compliant?</p> <p>The same question applies the for all positions.</p>	<p>Yes. This is in reference to the scored criteria. A candidate would not get to the scoring stage until deemed compliant with the mandatory qualifications. Response applies to all positions.</p>
<p>111. ANNEX A, Best Value Criteria for the DEVSECOPS ENGINEER Subject Matter Expert (page 33, first table) First Table</p> <p>What information should be provided under the Compliant/Non-compliant columns in the first table that lists three or four items, depending on the position?</p> <p>The same question applies the for all positions.</p>	<p>Companies should self-evaluate and include direct reference to the location within the proposal that ACT can verify the information. This response applies for all positions.</p>
<p>112. Is there any specific resume format in which the experience of the proposed candidates should be presented?</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>113. Is it expected the paragraphs and lines in the CV to be numbered so they can be referenced in the compliance matrices?</p>	<p>This is not mandatory but would be helpful.</p>
<p>114. What other supporting documents are needed for the proposed personnel, besides the CV and the Compliance Matrix?</p>	<p>Any other documents that will support the board in determining compliance or scoring the candidate appropriately. This is entirely up to the company.</p>
<p>115. Section 6.1 reflects a quantity of 1 profile however section 3.4 enclosure 4 of the bidding instructions reflects a quantity of 3, can ACT please clarify?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>116. Section 6.4 identifies that the labour category is not required until 2022, however in section 3.4 enclosure 4 of the bidding instructions the data scientist position 3 is requested to be priced for 2021 onwards, can ACT please clarify?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1</p>
<p>117. Section 6.6 does not identify when the labour category is required, however in section 3.4 enclosure 4 of the bidding instructions the position is requested to be priced for 2021 onwards, can ACT please clarify?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1 – If there is no specification otherwise, the labour category is required 1 January 2021.</p>
<p>118. Section 6.7 does not identify when the labour category is required, however in section 3.4 enclosure 4 of the bidding instructions the position is requested to be priced for 2021 onwards, can ACT please clarify?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1 – If there is no specification otherwise, the labour category is required 1 January 2021.</p>
<p>119. Section 6.8 does not identify when the labour category is required, however in section 3.4 enclosure 4 of the bidding instructions the position is requested to be priced for 2021 onwards, can ACT please clarify?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1 – If there is no specification otherwise, the labour category is required 1 January 2021.</p>
<p>120. Section 6.9 does not identify when the labour category is required, however in section 3.4 enclosure 4 of the bidding instructions the position is requested to be priced for 2021 onwards, can ACT please clarify?</p>	<p>See Amendment 1 – If there is no specification otherwise, the labour category is required 1 January 2021.</p>

121. Can ACT confirm the bidders assumption that as part of the compliance matrixes presented per candidate that the bidder should include its own interpretation of the scording of the candidate presented?	Confirmed
122. Can ACT confirm that the bidder should only accommodate travel costs within its fixed firm price for the Data Scientists and the Acquisition/Contracting Support Specialist roles i.e. for travel between the two primary locations identified and no other roles?	No. The bidder should accommodate travel costs within its firm fixed price for any candidates being proposed for remote work. On-site support will not have travel costs included in the price and should travel become necessary, ACT will fund this separately.