Request for Proposals
   for
The Retirement Systems of Alabama
   for
Service Organization Controls 2 Type 1 Reporting Services
   As of
12/31/2020
   And
Alabama Supercomputer Authority
   for
Service Organization Controls 2 Type 2 Reporting Services
   As of
12/31/2021,
12/31/2022,
12/31/2023,
and 12/31/2024
   for the
Huntsville, Alabama Data Center
   Managed by
Alabama Supercomputer Authority
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Section I

General Information for the Proposer

A. Purpose

This Request For Proposals (RFP) solicits vendor proposals for Service Organization Controls 2 (SOC 2) reporting services on the Alabama Supercomputer Authority’s (ASA) description and the suitability of the design and operating effectiveness of the controls in place at the Huntsville, Alabama data center of the Alabama Supercomputer Authority as of December 31, 2020, in accordance with attestation standards applicable to SOC 2 reporting established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants for the trust principles security, availability, and confidentiality. The Retirement Systems of Alabama desires to contract with the ASA for colocation services related to disaster preparedness at their Huntsville data center location. The ASA data center in Huntsville is not SOC 2 certified. In order to assess the controls in place and the effectiveness of those controls, RSA desires to have a SOC 2 Type 1 report on the ASA data center located in Huntsville, Alabama completed as of December 31, 2020.

After the initial report as of December 31, 2020, the ASA will engage the same firm for SOC 2 Type 2 reporting services for the twelve month periods ending December 31, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

The results of this RFP will be two contracts: one with RSA for the December 31, 2020 SOC 2 Type 1 report and one with ASA for the SOC 2 Type 2 reports for the twelve month periods ending December 31, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

B. Description of the Alabama Supercomputer Authority and the Services Provided

The Alabama Supercomputer Authority (ASA) is a state funded corporation founded for the purpose of planning, acquiring, developing, administering and operating a statewide supercomputer and related telecommunication systems. The ASA will provide RSA with Managed Colocation Services to support certain technology equipment at the Alabama Supercomputer Center (ASC). Managed Colocation Services will include the following:

1. Provide adequate secured space with necessary environmental and electrical properties for the operation of the computer/server equipment as specified by RSA.

2. Emergency AC electrical power if normal facility power is interrupted.

3. Access for authorized RSA personnel to the building (24/7), as authorized by RSA CEO or CEO Designee.

4. Notification to RSA of any physical, operational procedures or network modifications/changes that might affect the operational status of the site.
5. Immediate notification of any outages (planned or unplanned) that might affect
the normal operating status of the site.

6. To treat the RSA equipment and associated data as separate and distinct from that
of ASA. No modifications/changes will be made to any RSA asset without the
express written approval of RSA.

7. To proactively resolve any operational issues that affects either party.

8. To provide other services as agreed upon by the parties.

9. To provide a temporary office space during disaster recovery exercises and actual
disaster events to accommodate up to six (6) RSA personnel. Priority for this
office space will always be given to RSA clients with an actual DR event over
another client’s DR exercise. Should there be a conflict, other space can be made
available but may not allow all personnel in one room.

More information about ASA can be found at their website, https://www.asc.edu/.

C. Proposal Timetable

• May 20, 2020 – RFP issued.

• June 1, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Deadline to schedule 30-minute teleconference
  interviews with RSA and ASA personnel prior to proposal. Request interview via
  email to Jessica.Jones@rsa-al.gov.

• June 2 - 4, 2020 – On-site or teleconference interviews with RSA and ASA
  personnel.

• June 29, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. CST – Deadline for any questions from prospective
  vendors. All vendor questions must be submitted via email. Responses will be
  posted on the RSA and ASA websites.

• July 6, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. CST – RSA’s responses to vendor questions will be posted
  on the RSA and ASA websites.

• July 20, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. CST – deadline for receipt of sealed proposal.

• July 27, 2020 – Finalist Interviews, if needed.

• August 3, 2020 – RSA and ASA complete their reviews and award the contract.

All proposals will be submitted (six (6) copies) plus an electronic disk in a sealed wrapper
with the following plainly marked on the front:
RETIREMENT SYSTEMS OF ALABAMA
SOC 2 REPORT PROPOSAL
RFP 020 20*00008
OPENING July 20, 2020

Proposals will be sent:

Via UPS or FedEx to:    Via US Mail to:

Ms. Shannon McWhorter    Ms. Shannon McWhorter
Retirement Systems of Alabama Retirement Systems of Alabama
201 South Union Street PO Box 302150
Montgomery, Alabama 36104 Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2150

Proposers may, if desired, include a redacted proposal, which shall include redaction of confidential information allowed by law to be redacted from public records in Alabama. Such redacted proposals shall be subject to the provisions stated below in Section I, Paragraph H.

Proposals may be hand delivered to Room 574 of the Retirement Systems Building, 201 South Union Street, Montgomery, Alabama. Proposals will be accepted until 2:00 p.m. CST and opened at that time. Proposals will not be accepted after this time. The RSA and ASA reserve the right to reject any and all responses to this RFP.

D. Delivery Schedule

The SOC 2 Type I Report must be completed with an opinion issued by February 28, 2021. The SOC 2 Type 2 Reports must be completed and opinion issued by February 28 of each subsequent year.

E. Payment Schedule

Payment will be made based upon submitted invoices for work performed during the period. Invoices may not be submitted more frequently than monthly. Payment will be made within 30 days of receipt of the invoice.

F. Selection of Firm

The RSA expects to employ the successful vendor for the December 31, 2020 SOC 2 Type 1 report, and ASA expects to employ the same successful vendor for the SOC 2 Type 2 reports for the periods ending each of December 31, 2021, December 31, 2022, December 31, 2023, and December 31, 2024. All responding proposers will be notified in writing within a reasonable length of time following the selection. Prior to the selection of a firm, two or more proposers may be requested to make oral presentations to the evaluation committee. The proposal shall become the property of the RSA and ASA.

G. Economy of Preparation
Proposals should be prepared simply and economically and provide a concise description of the proposer’s response to the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on clarity. Neither the RSA nor the ASA will be responsible for any costs incurred by any proposer in the preparation of a proposal or oral presentation to evaluation committee.

H. Disclosure of Proposals

Proposals may be subject to disclosure and/or reproduction under Alabama law after the completion of the RFP process. Proposers may, if desired, include a redacted copy of their proposal within their proposal package. Proposer’s redacted copy of the Proposal shall include redaction of only confidential and/or proprietary information that is allowed to be redacted from public records under Alabama law. Proposer shall be responsible for defending its determination that the redacted portion of its proposal is not subject to disclosure. Furthermore, proposer shall indemnify, hold harmless, and defend RSA and ASA for any and all claims arising from or relating to proposer’s determination that the redacted portions of the proposal are confidential, trade secret, or otherwise protected from disclosure. Should proposer fail to include a redacted proposal in its proposal package, RSA and/or ASA are each authorized to produce the entire proposal, as submitted, in response to a public records request should RSA and/or ASA decide to do so.

I. News Releases

News releases pertaining to this RFP or the service to which it relates will be made only with prior written approval of both the RSA CEO or his representative and the ASA CEO or his/her representative.

J. Addenda to the RFP

Any modifications made to the RFP prior to the proposal due date will be provided in writing to all solicited vendors and placed on the RSA and ASA websites.

K. Contact Point

Any questions that arise concerning this RFP may be directed to Ms. Shannon McWhorter at Shannon.McWhorter@rsa-al.gov.

L. Minimum Qualifications

Proposals will be accepted from firms where both the firm and the assigned personnel meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Audit Manager/Partner on this engagement must possess a current Certified Information Systems Auditor certification and must have at least five years of experience SOC 2 reporting on datacenters classified as a Tier 3 or Tier 4 facility.
- All firm personnel assigned to this engagement must be able to pass a national background check completed at the firm’s expense.
- All firm personnel assigned to this engagement must sign and accept a non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement.
• Furnish resumes for primary persons responsible for the engagement reflecting relevant experience.
• Furnish references from a minimum of three clients for whom the firm has completed SOC 2 Type I and Type 2 reports.
Section II

Information Required from Proposers

Proposals must be submitted in the format outlined below:

A. Qualifications of the Firm

1. Business Organization

State the full name and address of your organization, and if applicable, the branch office or other subordinate element that will perform or assist in performing the work hereunder. Indicate whether you operate as an individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or other type of entity; include the state in which you were formed or incorporated. State whether you are currently licensed to operate your business in the State of Alabama.

2. Prior Experience

As part of your proposal, include a brief statement (maximum five pages) concerning the relevant experience of persons from your firm who will be associated at the highest management levels, with the proposed engagement. Do not include general corporate background brochures. Emphasize experience directly applicable to SOC 2 Type I and Type 2 reporting for Tier 3 and/or Tier 4 datacenters. Please provide references for past performance.

3. Personnel

Identify lead individuals by name and title and include a resume of each.

4. Authorized Officials

Include the names and telephone numbers of personnel authorized to execute the proposed contracts with the RSA and ASA.

5. Current Alabama Supercomputer Authority Users

Current customers of RSA’s HQ Data Center, current customers of the Dexter Avenue Data Center, and current customers of the Alabama Supercomputer Authority’s Huntsville Data Center are prohibited from submitting a proposal in response to this RFP due to the conflict of interest. Please state in the proposal whether or not your firm currently utilizes any of the foregoing data centers.

6. Additional Information and Comments

Include any other information believed to be pertinent but not specifically requested elsewhere in this RFP. A copy of your most recent financial statement and last audit performed by a certified CPA firm should be available upon request.
B. Planned Approach

Please include a detailed explanation of your planned approach to the audits and reporting. Must follow guidelines established by TSP Section 100, Principles and Criteria for the following trust principles:

- Security – the system is protected against unauthorized access (both physical and logical).
- Availability – the system is available for operation and use as committed or agreed.
- Confidentiality – information designated as confidential is protected as committed or agreed.

C. Cost and Price Analysis

Proposal must include a pricing model for completion of a SOC 2 Type I report for the applicable trust principles for the December 31, 2020. The same must be done for the subsequent years for the SOC 2 Type 2 reports. The contract that results from this RFP is expected to be based on a fixed fee per report. The information requested in this Section is required to support the reasonableness of your proposal price.

1. Personnel Costs and Hours

Itemize by year in a table each personnel category with a different rate per hour per classification required by the vendor in the performance of the contract. Show:

1. Category; e.g. manager, senior, actuary rate per hour
2. Estimated hours for each category
3. Total personnel costs

2. Provide the proposed costs by year as follows:

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Section III
Criteria for Evaluation

A. General

The following process will be used to evaluate vendor proposals:
   a. A review committee will evaluate each proposal submitted in response to these Proposal specifications.
   b. Responses received within the time frame and in the form specified by the guidelines will first be evaluated to confirm that all proposal sections, as detailed, have been provided in the Proposal response.
   c. Each proposal will be reviewed and points awarded to all items on the Proposal Evaluation Form. A proposal component may be awarded points not to exceed the maximum specified. The total technical score available is 70 points.
   d. Each proposal component will be summed to obtain a total score.
   e. RSA and ASA expect to conduct interviews with the finalists.

B. RSA & ASA’s Rights

Proposers should note that RSA and ASA reserve the right to modify this evaluation structure if it is deemed necessary or request additional information from vendors. It is the intention of RSA and ASA to select the most qualified and cost-effective proposal based on the evaluation of the Proposer’s responses to this RFP. However, RSA and ASA reserve the right to ask vendors for additional information and/or an oral presentation to clarify their proposals. RSA and ASA also reserve the right to cancel or terminate the RFP or reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP.

C. Cost & Price Analysis

The cost evaluation will be based on an examination by the Evaluation Committee of each Proposer’s stated cost components and will constitute 30% of the overall proposal’s evaluation. The pricing for this engagement should be a fixed price. Billing is to be submitted with the detail, by staff member, of hours worked on each task by year. The total paid to the selected vendor for your reports will not exceed the proposed cost unless both parties agree in writing.

Cost scoring will be determined as follows:
   a. Cost proposals must be provided in a separate envelope clearly labeled “Cost Proposal.”
   b. The Proposer submitting the lowest cost Proposal will receive 30 points.
   c. All other Proposers will be evaluated by use of the following formula:

   \[
   \text{Proposer’s Score for Cost Proposal} = \frac{\text{Cost of Proposal Under Evaluation}}{\text{Lowest Cost of All Proposals}} \times 30 \text{ points}
   \]

RSA & ASA are not liable for any expense for use of a job classification by the proposer not identified in the proposer’s response.

D. Proposal Evaluation Form
Proposers must respond to all required components of the RFP. Finalist Interviews will allow for a possible additional 10 points.

Section IV – Additional Documents

The following documents are referenced in this RFP and must be completed and submitted with the proposal:

A. State of Alabama Disclosure Statement (Pursuant to the Code of Alabama 1975, Title 41, Chapter 16, Article 3B)

B. Sample RSA State Contract

C. Immigration Compliance Certificate

D. Proposer Profile Form

E. Proposer References Form

F. IRS Form W-9

G. Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement