

Summary of Q&A with prospective bidders

Tender title: Provision of a whistleblowing and case management digital solution

Reference: WBCM/ITB/01/2024

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This document aims to summarise the questions received from prospective bidders and the answers provided in relation to NRC's tender for a whistleblowing and case management digital solution. Company names have been omitted for confidentiality purposes.

Q1. Can bidders provide different company documents based on the national legislation in their country of registration?

A. Yes. The Invitation to Bid requires the following company legal documents, see Section 2 – Bid Data Sheet, paragraph 6. Bidder's Checklist:

- Valid Business License
- Company Registration Certificate
- Tax Registration Certificate.

If, based on national legislation in your country of registration, the listed documents are named differently or if alternative documents are available, please specify the equivalent or alternative documents included in your offer.

Q2. Can you clarify the requirements for the offer to be stamped?

A. As the offers will be submitted electronically, both physical and digital company stamps may be used to authenticate the submitted documents. If the bidder does not have a stamp, please provide a signed statement on company letterhead confirming that the submission is authorised and valid.

Q3. Can you clarify the scope in headcount for this project? (e.g. does this project apply to all employees of NRC globally, and what is the total headcount?)

A. We confirm the project scope covers all NRC employees globally. The number of NRC staff in December 2023 was about 9800 employees. NRC allows access to the same whistleblowing/alleged misconduct reporting system also to former employees and recruitment candidates, board members, contingent workers, interns and volunteers, consultants, partners, suppliers, project visitors, donors, family and colleagues who support those who report.

Q4. Can you clarify whether NRC will handle and triage all incoming cases internally or if this will be done by an external provider?

A. The Invitation to Bid allows for triaging to be performed either internally by NRC, or by an external provider before referring the case to NRC. Bidders should specify the modality they propose and the corresponding price. After triaging, all cases will be managed internally by NRC.

Q5. In REQ_02, you mention the integration of email services within the platform. Can you further clarify the expectations on this and if this a must have or a nice to have? (e.g. do you need to be able to add cases manually to the system that came via e-mail, or do you require integrations with an email provider?)

A. In REQ_02, email integration with the digital solution (email-to-case) is considered a nice to have. Alternatively, NRC-designated staff may manually create cases in the system based on received emails. Bidders should specify their proposed approach for email case intake and the corresponding price.

Q6. Can you clarify what REQ_03 covers?

A. REQ_03 indicates that NRC may consider using a whistleblowing hotline service operated by an external supplier. This is not a must have. The minimum language requirements for case intake are NRC's four working languages: English, French, Spanish, and Arabic. However, NRC operates in many different countries where other languages are spoken, and the whistleblower may not speak one of the working languages. The list of countries where NRC operates, including our representation offices, is available at this link <https://www.nrc.no/where-we-work/> Bidders should indicate in their offer the languages in which case intake services will be operated, if their offer covers REQ_03.

Q7. Is NRC open to considering an automated voice response/phone transcription service?

A. NRC is open to considering an automated voice response/transcription phone line if this remains compliant with relevant legislation and is cost-efficient.

Q8. In REQ_16 you mention that users can create, modify, and manage document templates easily. Can you further specify the requirements on this?

A. Bidders should indicate whether the digital solution will allow NRC to customise document templates autonomously, and if so, how this would be achieved. We recognise that there are various technical approaches for this, such as drag-and-drop editors or customisable pre-built templates. Bidders should specify which approach their solution employs. NRC may choose to restrict access to document customisation functionalities to a limited number of users.

Q9. Can you further expand on the Data Privacy and Security Requirements? What will a privacy and security due diligence process from NRC look like and what is the estimated time and effort for us to complete such a process?

A. Data privacy and security requirements incorporate the minimum standards recommended by the Norwegian Data Protection Authorities and serve to ensure compliance with the EU GDPR and Whistleblowing regulations. The six components in REQ_20 include, but are not limited to:

- Access control features, ensuring system users are identified and the principle of the least privilege is applied.
- Encryption, as a way to ensure appropriate and sufficient information security during the storage and communication.
- Data integrity, protecting the integrity of data and detecting changes in files, servers, and networks.

- Data recovery, ensuring data is available when necessary and access to data can be restored in a timely manner in the event of a physical or technical incident.
- Software resilience, securing the solution against known security holes and vulnerabilities.
- Traceability, enabling changes to be traced and managing security breaches.

Bidders are requested to explain how their solution meets these requirements. NRC's due diligence process for system data privacy and security will involve multiple steps, including a review of the bidder's offer, live software demos by shortlisted suppliers, potential requests for clarifications and testing. The time required may vary depending on the completeness of the information received.

Q10. Can you classify REQ_23, REQ_24 and REQ_25 (system integrations) as must have vs nice to have. Furthermore, can you expand on the REST API Requirements for incoming data transfer?

A. System integration requirements will ensure interoperability between NRC's existing systems and the new solution. Integration with Okta is a must have. Integration with Salesforce would preferably rely on in-built connector, but NRC may also consider alternative modalities for data transfer with our existing Salesforce-based solution. For API data transfers, priority will likely be given to outbound data transfers, and involve a limited number of data fields. Bidders may provide separate estimates for inbound and outbound transfers if they wish so.

Q11. In REQ_26, can you further expand what kind of data is expected to be migrated, how this data is structured, and the number of cases expected to be migrated?

A. Data to be migrated into the new solution would include both open and closed cases. The estimated number is between 500 and 1000 cases. For each case, information would be contained in an estimated number of 60 data fields. Records will originate from Salesforce and will be available in a CSV format. Some of these records might have file attachments. Bidders are requested to explain how the solution would allow for importing historical data into the system.

Q12. We prefer to utilise our contracts and agreements (due to the very specialist elements of our service that need to be explicitly governed by the contract) and will work with NRC to create a mutually beneficial arrangement. Will exceptions to NRC's Terms & Conditions result in disqualification from award?

A. If your question specifically concerns Article 28, 'Signing of Contract,' please note that NRC has a standard contract template, but we are open to adapt it or consider using the supplier's contract template to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. More generally, though, non-compliance with Section 3 of the tender notice, titled 'NRC Invitation to Bid - General Terms & Conditions,' may result in disqualification of the bid as the section contains key elements of NRC procurement policies, ethical standards, and compliance with relevant legislation.

Q13. Where should the signature and stamp be located on documents without a clear signature area?

A. For sections of the Invitation to Bid that do not have a designated signature area, bidders can use the bottom margin of the page.

Q14. The Bidder's Checklist mentions providing copies of Company Director(s) ID. What is needed to complete this requirement? If we do not have this available and cannot provide it, will this result in disqualification?

A. Submission of one identification document for each Company Director is mandatory. Acceptable documents include a valid passport, national ID, or driving license. Bidders who require additional time to provide these may indicate it in their offer. Please ensure to duly provide information on Company Owners and Managers as required by Section 5 - Bidding Form, paragraph 1.b) 'Owners/Managers'. NRC requires this information to conduct vetting of awarded bidders and to comply with relevant legislation and donor requirements.

Q15. On the Bidder's Checklist, References and Proof of Experience are listed separately from Section 5 (which includes references) and Section 7 (Company Profile and Previous Experience). Does this mean a separate document with this information also needs to be provided?

A. The Bidder's Checklist requires bidders to indicate whether the various documents are included in their offer, as a means of verification to facilitate compliance with the tender. The documents listed in the Bidder's Checklist should be included within the offer itself, spanning from Section 2 to Section 9, with no need of a separate document.

Q16. In Section 7, there is a reference to a Company Profile. What needs to be provided in this?

A. The Company Profile should provide a brief overview of your company, including its history, mission, and values. It should outline the main services you provide and your key areas of expertise. Additionally, please include any certifications and awards obtained that are relevant to your industry.

Q17. In Section 8, within the questionnaire, we are told to reference the page number in our offer where compliance with the requirement is outlined. Does this mean there needs to be a separate document outlining this? Or is it met within another section of the RFP?

A. Bidders may provide the narrative description of their offer in a document annexed to their submission. If you choose to do this, please reference your annex in Section 8, and indicate the page number in the 'Questionnaire of Conformity with the Technical Specifications' as relevant.

Q18. Given the extensiveness of the forms and documents to be submitted, do you accept accumulation of the required information in a single document (E.g. supplier response PDF). For example, given the scope of this project, the Service Provision Schedule provides only room for an extremely brief elaboration.

A. Bidders must ensure their offer includes all the elements requested in the Invitation to Bid, spanning from Section 2 to Section 9. Tables such as the Service Provision Schedule in Section 6 are provided as templates. Bidders can replicate these templates in a document annexed to their offer. Kindly ensure tables are named as specified in the Invitation to Bid for ease of review.

Q19. Can you provide more insights in the foreseen decision, implementation and go live timelines?

A. NRC aims to make the award decision in October 2024, tentatively. The indicative timeframe following the contract award is outlined in Section 4 – Timeline.