



**STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
PO Box 45811, Olympia WA 98504-5811**

DATE: December 29, 2023

TO: RFP #2323-840 – WA Cares Fund Website Development Services Bidders

FROM: James O'Brien, Solicitation Coordinator  
DSHS Central Contracts and Legal Services

SUBJECT: Amendment No. 1 – Answers to Bidder Conference Questions, Questions Received after the Bidder Conference, Bidder Conference Presentation, Update to RFP Project Scope, Update to Attachment A – Sample Contract Statement of Work, and Updated Schedule

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DSHS amends RFP #2323-840 to provide guidance and answers to the questions received before the Bidder Conference, to questions received at Bidder Conference held on December 20, 2023, to questions received by the solicitation coordinator as of the close of business on December 26, 2023, to provide the presentation that was given during the Bidder Conference, to update the RFP project scope, to update Attachment A - Sample Contract, and to post an updated schedule for this RFP.

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**Questions received before Bidder Conference:**

**Question #1:** Are there any roadblocks to offshore development? (Though our HQ is based out of NY, the R&D will be done from our offshore offices in India.)

**A:** We don't anticipate issues with staff being located outside the U.S. However, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #2:** Are you expecting any onsite engagement during the project duration?

**A:** No, we are not expecting any engagement in person or on site.

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**Question #3:** Would you accept proposals from vendors working in a different time zone (e.g.,

IST)?

**A:** Yes, however, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #4:** Is there any incumbent? If yes, then why are you looking for other companies? Are you not happy with them? If there is an incumbent then are they bidding for this opportunity?

**A:** Yes, another vendor built the website. After they completed the initial work, we decided to pursue a new solicitation for future web development projects and ongoing maintenance. As good stewards of the public funds we have been entrusted with, we want to be thorough in our efforts to select the best vendor possible. We can't speak to whether the vendor that built the website will bid for the project.

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**Question #5:** The mentioned budget of US\$ 350,000 >> is it inclusive of all the line-items listed under the "Project Scope" (i.e., 'Kick-Off and Transition', 'Routine Maintenance and Support'... and 'Project Management and Coordination')

**A:** Yes, the contract maximum of \$350,000 includes all contract activities listed in the Project Scope section of the RFP document.

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**Question #6:** Would you be open to working with a Canadian vendor to get this project done?

**A:** We don't anticipate issues with staff being located outside the U.S. However, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #7:** Is the RFP below open to businesses outside of State of WA?

**A:** Companies based outside the state of Washington can bid on this RFP, but they won't receive the extra points allocated in the scoring for Washington small businesses or Washington Veteran owned businesses. Additionally, while we don't anticipate issues with staff being located outside the U.S., all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #8:** Does the attached RFP allow for workers to reside overseas (specifically, in India)?

**A:** We don't anticipate issues with staff being located outside the U.S. However, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #9:** Is there already a WA Cares, DSHS, or WA state-wide Siteimprove account?

**A:** We do not have a siteimprove account. We are currently using a combination of Google Analytics and Moz to get our SEO and website analytics information and would like to continue use of these platforms.

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**Question #10:** Would we be able to get access to existing design files (Figma, Sketch, Adobe XD, etc)?

**A:** You will have access to our site repository which includes all design files included on the website.

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**Question #11:** Can you elaborate on the scope of the chat tool integration? Is there any custom development required, or is it simply adding code provided by Salesforce?

**A:** It will require adding the code provided by Salesforce and providing the URL of every page the code is added to back to the salesforce developers. In addition, coordination with the Salesforce developers will be needed during implementation. Currently, it doesn't look like this project will require any custom development.

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**Question #12:** To what degree has the site already been made compliant in terms of accessibility? Does it already meet WCAG 2.2 requirements, and has there already been work and testing in terms of keyboard accessibility and screen reader support?

**A:** Our previous front-end website developer and our contracted user experience design firm designed and tested for compliance with WCAG 2.1, level AA standards. Now that WCAG 2.2 is in place, we are looking to ensure all future updates to the website meet WCAG 2.2 standards. If there are any areas where work completed by the previous vendor or our in-house team is not up to standard, we do not expect the new Contractor to remediate those issues without an amendment to the contract.

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### **Questions received during the December 20, 2023 Bidder Conference**

**Question #13:** What is the approximate monthly visitors, page views? Where is the site currently hosted? Is there flexibility in the hosting location?

**A:** There are about 35,000 users and 100,000 page views per month on average. The site is currently hosted on Pantheon. As far as flexibility in changing the hosting location, it would depend on the reason for doing so.

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**Question #14:** I did not see the minimum qualification listed in the RFP but it said we'd be evaluated against min qualifications. Can you provide those?

**A:** There are no minimum qualifications for this RFP. All bidders would be expected to meet the requirements as listed in the sample contract (Attachment A) and meet all OCIO requirements and any other requirements as listed in the RFP document.

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**Question #15:** What level of support do you need in terms of after-hours 24x7 support?

**A:** We anticipate the vast majority of the support we would need would happen between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time. It would be great to have a contact from the vendor's organization

available in case of any emergencies or unforeseen outages, but we expect that would be rare.

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**Question #16:** Just to confirm: the RFP states "While the State does not give gender or race-based preferential treatment, it does seek equitable representation from Washington Small Businesses as well as the veteran, minority, and women-owned business communities." However, the scoring does seem to provide preferential treatment? Just wanted to confirm which is correct.

**A:** As the solicitation states we are giving preferential treatment (awarding points) to Washington veteran owned and Washington small businesses. And we are awarding points for those companies compliant with Executive Order 18-03. Those three areas are gender and race neutral and are in line with Department of Enterprise Services (DES) guidance.

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**Question #17:** Who is your current vendor for these services?

**A:** We do not have a vendor under contract right now. We are managing the site in-house while we transition from our previous vendor that built the website to our new Contractor.

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**Question #18:** How much custom code is used in the site?

**A:** Drupal is highly customizable and allows the integration of web applications and mashups using third party APIs. Drupal follows common PHP conventions for object-oriented code, and established industry best practices. Like all Drupal sites, the WA Cares website is a combination of contributed modules and custom code. We do have some training materials available to walk through how some of this coding is set up.

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**Question #19:** Can you share what vendor built the website?

**A:** Portland Webworks.

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**Question #20:** Would the training materials be available before the proposal deadline?

**A:** Training materials will not be available since they include sensitive login information that we would not want to share with a vendor until they are under contract.

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**Question #21:** Given the project scope is a mix of support/maintenance and specific deliverables, is the expectation that those specific deliverables would just fall within ongoing monthly support hours or would you expect to see the scope for those and estimates broken out separately?

**A:** In the Project Scope in the RFP document and the Statement of Work in the sample contract, we have indicated which projects we expect the Contractor to complete as separate flat-fee projects. Per question 7A in the bidder response form, we expect to see a budget breakdown for each area of activity listed in the Statement of Work.

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**Question #22:** Is there an incumbent for this contract? If so, please provide the incumbent name,

current contract number, duration, historical level of effort, and value of the contract.

**A:** We are managing the site in-house while we transition from our previous vendor that built the website to the new Contractor. The site was originally built by Portland Webworks **as part of** contract 2123-32444. Work on the contract began in November 2022 and the contract ended in October 2023. The contract maximum was \$310,900. The level of effort involved in that contract was different from this RFP because it included building a new site, including substantial coordination with our user experience vendor and testing of the site.

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**Question #23:** Will the incumbent be eligible to bid on this project?

**A:** Yes, the incumbent is eligible to bid on this project.

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**Question #24:** Can the work be performed remotely?

**A:** Yes, work can be performed remotely. However, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #25:** Can part of the work be performed outside of the US, such as in India?

**A:** We don't anticipate issues with staff being located outside the U.S. However, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #26:** How large is the current site (total number of pages and files)?

**A:** There are currently 654 pages and files. This includes all pages translated into 13 languages.

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**Question #27:** What are the major pain points with your current site?

**A:** We do not have major pain points with the site since it is newly built. There are some projects that we have not yet completed (those listed in the Statement of Work in the sample contract) that are our major areas of focus for this contract.

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**Question #28:** Bid Response Form, Page 5, Questions no 5 and 6: Can we submit responses as a separate attachment?

**A:** Yes. Responses may be submitted as a separate attachment. However, please annotate in the Attachment D, Bidder Response Form, where those answers are located. If the answers are not readily apparent as to where they are located, the submitting bidder risks losing points. Additionally, it is incumbent upon the bidder to clearly mark what question is being answered with a specific attachment. If it is not abundantly clear what question is being answered with what specific attachment, points may be lost.

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**Question #29:** Is there any scope for content development?

**A:** No, all content is already developed, and future content will be developed in-house.

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**Question #30:** Has WA Cares identified key personnel for this contract? If so, please provide the list.

**A:** Yes, key personnel will include our Marketing and Communications Manager, Community Relations and Outreach Program Manager, Vendor Manager, Benefits Application Program Manager, and WA Cares Director.

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**Question #31:** Can WA extend the due date for a week?

**A:** Yes, the new due date will be Tuesday January 16, 2024 by 5:00 pm PST.

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**Question #32:** Can the offeror provide pricing in an Excel sheet?

**A:** Yes. But the breakdown must be clear and the answer must be clearly stated. Any confusing or mislabeled sheets may result in the reduction of points or no points being awarded.

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**Question #33:** Is the offeror mandatory to have Washington Small Business status in Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) in to order to be qualified to respond to this RFP?

**A:** No, it is not mandatory to have a Washington State small business status, but you will not receive the extra points allocated in the scoring for Washington small businesses.

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**Question #34:** Is there any set-aside goal for this project?

**A:** No. This is a fully state funded project and there are no set aside goals. Points will be allocated as per the RFP and this is an open solicitation.

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**Question #35:** Is it mandatory to submit hard copy responses for the WA Cares Fund RFP, especially considering the mention in Section D, 6th subsection, that refers to a solicitation requiring hard copies of the response? If hard copies are required, could you provide details on the submission process and any specific instructions?

**A:** It is highly preferred to receive all bids electronically. Hard copies are not required. Please review Section D of the RFP document. Hard copies are NOT required. Failure to adhere to Section D of the RFP may result in a bid being disqualified.

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**Question #36:** Could you please clarify a specific point in the RFP (Section 3 - Project Scope, Subsection 3 - Support for Design and Functionality Changes, Point b)? It mentions that the Contractor shall spend up to 300 billable hours working on design and functionality changes

identified by the WA Cares team.

a. Could you clarify if this allocation of 300 hours for design and functionality changes is an overall hour limited till June 2025 or limited per monthly or quarterly basis?

b. Or does it mean any design/functional change should not exceed 300 hours, and if it exceeds it may have to undergo further decomposition which should result in 2 or more change orders (tasks) with hours spilt across while each decomposed change should be less than 300hours.

**A:** The WA Cares team is currently finalizing details for a set of changes to be made to the site, most notably refining the worker contribution calculator located at <https://wacaresfund.wa.gov/how-it-works>. We are not yet able to provide enough detail on those planned changes to ensure bidders can provide an accurate flat-fee price for the project (as we have requested for the other projects in the Statement of Work), so we have included a bank of billable hours we can use to complete that project.

a. This is an overall hour limit (for the “Support for Design and Functionality Changes” project, not including the work that falls under other sections of the Statement of Work) until June 2025.

b. No. The bank of 300 hours for design and functionality changes is separate from the other projects listed in the Statement of Work.

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**Question #37:** As part of “Support for Design and Functionality Changes”, is our assumption correct that during this phase any new request (enhancement/change request) to be estimated, execution plan reviewed & approved before the plan is in action. As part of this exercise contractor to engage resources accordingly i.e., ramp up/down of resources to get the mutually agreed upon work.

**A:** Yes.

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**Question #38:** Will it be a separate a SoW for such each above change to design and functionality?

**A:** The Contractor and the WA Cares team will have an agreement in writing on the anticipated hours to complete each change, as outlined in that section of the Statement of Work.

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**Question #39:** Given that the current website is built in Drupal and hosted by Pantheon, there may be unknowns/discoveries which may result in further assessment and in such case do you reconsider to review estimated effort/cost?

**A:** If there are any unforeseen impacts that change contract scope, we will address it at the time the issue arises.

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**Question #40:** Can we assume that the upgrade is on existing infrastructure or proposed to be done in a new environment?

**A:** The work included in this contract will take place in the same environment.

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**Question #41:** Does the current site meet OCIO 141.10 security standards compliance?

**A:** Yes, it is our understanding that the current site meets OCIO 141.10 standards. If there are any areas where work completed by the previous vendor or our in-house team is not up to standard, we do not expect the new Contractor to remediate those issues without an amendment to the contract.

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**Question #42:** Does the current site meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 compliance?

**A:** Our previous front-end website developer and our contracted user experience design firm designed and tested for compliance with WCAG 2.1, level AA standards. Now that WCAG 2.2 is in place, we are looking to ensure all future updates to the website meet WCAG 2.2 standards. If there are any areas where work completed by the previous vendor or our in-house team is not up to standard, we do not expect the new Contractor to remediate those issues without an amendment to the contract.

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**Question #43:** Assuming any issues from compliance with relevant standards, including applicable security standards in OCIO 141.10 and accessibility standards in Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 to be captured as new request and goes through regular change order process.

**A:** If there are any areas where work completed by the previous vendor or our in-house team is not up to standard, we do not expect the new Contractor to remediate those issues without an amendment to the contract.

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**Question #44:** Does WA care anticipate including user experience profiles/rates such as UX designer, Usability testers, Accessibility designers etc.,

**A:** We have a user experience design vendor in place that worked to complete all UX design for the current website, including user journeys and usability testing. As a general rule, any requests for significant design changes to the website will be based on designs created by the UX vendor.

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**Question #45:** For Chat integration, code snippet is provided by Salesforce while vendor is responsible to provide CRM tool. Is the reference to CRM tool vendor another 3rd party contractor? In this case what are the URLs in context called out in RFP to be provided by contractor to the CRM tool vendor?

**A:** Salesforce is the vendor responsible for building the CRM tool and will provide a code snippet to integrate chat functionality into the website. The URLs mentioned in that section are URLs for any pages where the code snippet is placed.

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**Question #46:** Is the work expected to be performed on-site, or is remote work acceptable for the WA Cares Fund project?

**A:** Yes, remote work is permitted. However, all key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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**Question #47:** Is our assumption correct that the contract structure for this project has few fixed flat fee and time & material based?

**A:** This contract structure is deliverables-based. The Contractor must complete the deliverables listed in each section of the Statement of Work for the flat fee proposed by the Contractor in their bidder response form. The only exception is section 3 of the Statement of Work (“Support for Design and Functionality Changes”), which will be billed on an hourly basis. However, the Contractor must meet the requirements outlined in that section and complete all changes within the budget and timeline agreed in writing.

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**Question #48:** Is there a timeline to deliver each point outlined in project scope?

**A:** A proposed schedule for finalizing the projects with known due dates is included in the sample contract at the end of the Statement of Work in the Deliverables Table. The timeline for the other projects, including chat tool integration and provider intake form, will be further in the future and will be determined in coordination with the Contractor and our other vendors after the conclusion of this RFP.

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**Question #49:** Ideally what is the timeframe internally envisioned by WA Cares to complete the overall project scope, and by when it is expected to go in support & maintenance?

**A:** A proposed schedule for finalizing the projects with known due dates is included in the sample contract at the end of the Statement of Work in the Deliverables Table. The timeline for the other projects, including chat tool integration and provider intake form, will be further in the future and will be determined in coordination with the Contractor and our other vendors after the conclusion of this RFP.

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**Question #50:** Do you require resumes from key personnel? If so, is there a page limit for resumes?

**A:** No, we are only requesting the information outlined in question 5B of the bidder response form for each key personnel.

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**Question #51:** What format do you prefer for providing cost/pricing information? Do you need an end-to-end execution plan or just resource categories with hourly rates?

**A:** Per question 7A of the bidder response form, we are requesting a budget breakdown that includes the proposed total fee for each area of activity listed in the Statement of Work.

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**Question #52:** Are there any specific websites that you want the contractor to look up as inspiration for the WA Cares Fund website?

**A:** The Contractor will be provided with the website branding guide developed by our user experience vendor when the website was originally built. As a general rule, any requests for significant design changes to the website will be based on designs created by the UX vendor.

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**Question #53:** Do you require dedicated support during specific working hours, or is 24/7 support expected?

**A:** All key staff members working on this contract must be reachable by email/phone for questions and available for meetings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time. We anticipate the vast majority of the support we would need would happen during those hours. It would be great to have a contact from the vendor's organization available outside those hours in case of any emergencies or unforeseen outages, but we expect that would be rare.

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**Question #54:** For the Drupal 10 Transition:

a. Was the site built using Drupal standard practices? (Composer, configuration management, patches automatically applied with references to Drupal.org issue IDs?)

b. Approximately how many custom modules are in use on the site?  
Approximately how many lines of code in custom modules?

c. Does the site make use of multiple domains or groups? (Domain access module, Group module, OG module, multi-site?)

d. What build system does the theme use? (no build system/straight CSS, Sass/compass, Gulp, NPM, Tailwind, Laravel Mix, etc)

**A:** a. Yes.

b. There are 12 custom modules. Because we had a previous vendor build the website, while we know there is custom code, we are unable to confirm with accuracy how much was custom and how much was templated.

c. No, this website is a single domain with no subgroups.

d. It is a custom theme using JavaScript and CSS. We are interested in having the Contractor review the current deployment system and providing recommendations moving forward.

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**Question #55:** For the Chat Tool, is there a documentation page for the desired integration? Is the desired chat system already identified/selected?

**A:** Yes, we will be using the Salesforce chat solution as described in the Statement of Work.

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**Question #56:** For the Provider Intake Form - 7.iii, how many variations are there for where the submitted data gets sent? (e.g. Email, webhook, specific API endpoints/formats, chat platforms, etc.)

**A:** At this time, we expect the primary function of the form will be to transmit submitted information by email to the appropriate contact using conditional logic.

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**Question #57:** How many content pages are being maintained currently?

**A:** We currently have 654 pages and files. This includes all pages translated into 13 languages.

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**Question #58:** How many unique templates (i.e., page layouts) are in use?

**A:** We will be able to provide the new Contractor with the back-end set-up of the website after they are under contract.

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**Question #59:** What are the # of plugins implemented and can we get a list?

**A:** We will be able to provide the new Contractor with the back-end set-up of the website after they are under contract.

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**Question #60:** How much custom code is present and what is it used for?

**A:** Because we had a previous vendor build the website, while we know there is custom code, we are unable to confirm with accuracy how much was custom and how much was templated.

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**Question #61:** Can a copy of the source code (with custom code and plugins) that is currently deployed be provided? Since much of the maintenance requested is to be performed on a fixed fee basis, it would be helpful to fully understand the current state of the code implementation in order to propose fixed-fees that are the most cost-effective for DSHS.

**A:** Source code will not be available since it includes information that we would not want to share with a vendor until they are under contract.

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**Question #62:** Are there databases hosted within the Drupal implementation? For what data?

**A:** We currently do not have any databases.

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**Question #63:** Are there system integrations with the Drupal site (other than the CRM chat tools)?

**A:** We currently don't have any system integrations.

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**Question #64:** Section A - Item 3.1.b (Transition from Previous Vendor)

Who is the previous vendor mentioned in this section? Are they eligible to submit a proposal for this RFP? Is there a reason DSHS has issued this RFP instead of continuing to work with this vendor using a Sole Source or extending their current contract?

**A:** The previous vendor is Portland Webworks. After they completed the initial work, we decided to pursue a new solicitation for future web development projects and ongoing maintenance. As good stewards of the public funds we have been entrusted with, we want to be thorough in our efforts to select the best vendor possible. They are eligible to submit a proposal for this RFP, but we can't speak to whether they will bid for the project.

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**Question #65:** Please confirm that the fees paid to the previous vendor for all transition tasks

does not need to be included in the fixed-fee we will quote.

**A:** It does not. That language was included in error and has been updated to reflect that the transition is between our in-house team and the new Contractor.

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**Question #66:** How many hours is budgeted for the prior vendor to participate in the transition?

**A:** The previous vendor has completed their contractual agreements. We have training session recordings and documentation they provided before the end of their contract to assist with the transition.

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**Question #67:** Section A - Item 3.2.b (Routine Support of WA Cares Fund team)  
What types of changes implemented in-house and at what frequency are they made? Are there regular meetings to review changes with all stakeholders (including the web development & maintenance vendor) before they go-live? What type of support questions are typical?

**A:** We will take care of most front-end updates and changes in-house. Our internal team responsible for making changes will meet regularly with the new Contractor, as outlined in the statement of work (section 8, "Project Management and Coordination"). Since this is a new website that was recently built, we don't anticipate major content and design changes until around 2025. We don't have typical requests since this is a new program and a new website and this vendor will be our first maintenance vendor.

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**Question #68:** Please confirm that the Drupal built-in content management system (CMS) is being used and whether there are any customizations in place. How many content admins are there currently? Is there a simple drafter/approver workflow or something more complex being used? Can DSHS provide a copy of the DSHS user manual or instructions that admins use to draft/test/deploy changes?

**A:** The solution uses Drupal for content management and the sites are hosted with Pantheon. There are customizations in place currently that will need to be maintained. There are three main content admins, though only one of those admins is responsible for most changes to the website. Most changes we make to the site are simple content changes that do not require formal testing. For projects that involve more extensive changes, we develop individualized plans for testing and deploying changes.

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**Question #69:** Section A - Item 3.3.d (Design & Functionality Changes)  
How soon in advance will the vendor know about requirements for changes and what is the expected turnaround time for estimates and to begin work after receiving approval?

**A:** A proposed schedule for finalizing the projects with known due dates is included in the sample contract at the end of the Statement of Work in the Deliverables Table. The timeline for the other projects, including chat tool integration and provider intake form, will be further in the future and will be determined in coordination with the Contractor and our other vendors after the conclusion of this RFP.

For each area of activity outlined in the statement of work, we will work with the Contractor to set

realistic expectations and a detailed schedule. The only area of the statement of work that will require the Contractor to provide estimates is section 3 (“Support for Design and Functionality Changes”). We would expect a turnaround time of around three business days at most for providing those estimates, though we may be able to be flexible for more complex estimates.

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**Question #70:** Section A - Item 3.4.a (Drupal Upgrade 9 -> 10)

Have previous upgrades been performed on the site before? What, if any, problems or complications were experienced during those upgrades?

**A:** This is a new website that was built in Drupal 9, so we have not needed to upgrade yet.

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**Question #71:** Section A - Item 3.5.a (Identify Adjustments to Improve Quality of Translations)

How is the vendor expected to assess the quality of the machine translations? Are there language resources or vendors within DSHS that can assist with this assessment or is the vendor expected to sub-contract or provide translation assessment services?

**A:** The vendor is not expected to assess the quality of the machine translations. There is no expectation for the vendor to know every language.

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**Question #72:** Section A - Item 3.5.b (Add Persian & Arabic Support)

Please confirm that the vendor’s responsibility is primarily formatting, styling, and fitting these “right-to-left” translations onto the existing pages and not a completely new design and page styling.

**A:** The vendor will need to translate the content through the Google Cloud API and style the existing pages to fit these languages and improve user experience of users who are viewing content in these languages.

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**Question #73:** Also, please confirm that all UX detail & designs related to this implementation requirement will be provided by the UX & design vendor identified in Section A - Item 3. 8.c.

**A:** We are not currently planning to provide UX designs related to the right-to-left language implementation, since we are only looking to modify the English page style as needed to fit these other languages. The UX vendor will be providing UX detail and designs for projects like section 3 of the statement of work (“Support for Design and Functionality Changes”).

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**Question #74:** Section A - Item 3.6 (Salesforce Chat Tool)

Please confirm that the Salesforce team will be responsible for providing the working code snippet and whether the chat tool provided supports custom styling and whether custom styling is expected.

**A:** Yes, Salesforce will provide the code. The Contractor is expected to add CSS styles to the code snippets provided by Salesforce to match the website styling.

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**Question #75:** Section A - Item 3.7 (Provider Intake Form)

Is there an existing paper form currently being used and can we get a copy to understand how

extensive it is (# of fields, validations, etc.)? What system or database is this provider information saved in or sent to? How is it saved (e.g., API callbacks, DB SQL, email, etc.)? What are the integration requirements and how much of this integration will the vendor need to build versus in-house DSHS staff?

**A:** There is not a paper form currently being used, as the program is new and has not registered providers yet. At this time, we expect the primary function of the form will be to transmit submitted information by email to the appropriate contact using conditional logic.

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**Question #76:** Section A - Item 3.8.c (Coordination with Other Vendors)

Who is the user experience design vendor mentioned in this section (in addition to Salesforce as the CRM vendor)? Is there an established vendor coordination workflow between these vendors and the web development & management vendor? When estimating fixed-fee deliverables listed in the RFP, should we assume that all deliverables from other vendors will be delivered on-time and with sufficient lead-time? How are late or incomplete deliverables to be handled?

**A:** The Holding Company is our vendor for user experience design. We will work with both vendors to establish realistic processes for coordination and timelines for completing deliverables. We will handle any issues with late or incomplete deliverables on a case-by-case basis.

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**Question #77:** Please confirm that the “coordination” with other teams and vendors consists mainly of communicating expected due dates and scope of deliverables, but does not include managing these other teams’ or vendors’ staff, resources & deliverable completion.

**A:** That is correct. DSHS is responsible for managing all vendors.

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**Question #78:** Section A - Item 3.8.f (Detailed Project Plan)

Are we expected to provide the estimated hours, timelines, & deadlines for each deliverable as part of our proposal or during project kickoff once awarded the contract?

**A:** A proposed schedule for finalizing the projects with known due dates is included in the sample contract at the end of the Statement of Work in the Deliverables Table. The timeline for the other projects, including chat tool integration and provider intake form, will be further in the future and will be determined in coordination with the Contractor and our other vendors after the conclusion of this RFP.

Per question 7A of the bidder response form, we are requesting a budget breakdown that includes the proposed total fee for each area of activity listed in the Statement of Work.

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**Question #79:** Section C - Item 5 (Pre-Bid Conference) When will the summary of information shared at the pre-bid conference be made available on WEBS?

**A:** That information has been posted with this amendment.

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**Question #80:** Section E - Item 6 (WA State Small & Veteran Owned Businesses)

Does DSHS intend to comply with the state’s new Supplier Diversity procurement rules (i.e.

Executive Order 22-01: Equity in Public Contracting" and DES policy DES-090-06) with respect to awarding to WA state small or veteran-owned business before considering other bidders? In other words, if there is a responsive and responsible bidder under \$150K that is a Washington State small or veteran-owned business, will the award for this contract be required to go to that bidder before out-of-state bidders are considered?

**A:** DSHS intends to comply with all applicable provisions of POL-DES-090-06. Because the initial value of the RFP is \$350,000.00, Section C.4 of POL-DES-090-06 does not apply.

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**Question #81:** The current website <https://wacaresfund.wa.gov> seems to be mostly CMS. Can you provide details on any third party system integration that the current website fetches the data or content?

**A:** We utilize Google Translate API to translate page content from English to other languages.

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**Question #82:** Out of the total budget indicated, is there any limit on budget/hours per each requirement section from WA point of view?

**A:** No.

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**Question #83:** Does the WA Drupal website fetch data from other applications or post data to other applications currently?

**A:** Currently, we use Google Translate API to translate page content from English to other languages. We don't post data to any other applications.

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**Question #84:** It is indicated that WA is looking for Salesforce based 'Chat Tool Integration'. Is it safe to assume that it will be a snippet integration? Or would it be a custom solution that integrates with Salesforce API?

**A:** It will be a snippet integration, as described in the Statement of Work.

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**Question #85:** For provider intake form, though the form to be hosted in the Drupal website and data to be posted to third party (presuming through an API), does the provider intake form data to be also stored within Drupal platform as well?

**A:** Our current expectation is that we will not be storing the intake form data within Drupal.

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**Question #86:** As the current WA Drupal website is utilizing Google translator for various languages, did the WA team identify any challenges with the translation or any prerequisites that the team would like to share for adding two languages(Persian and Arabic)?

**A:** The delay in implementing Persian and Arabic is that those two languages read right to left, which will require additional formatting changes to accommodate translated text.

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**Question #87:** How many user groups are available in the current platform?

**A:** Our two main user groups are working Washingtonians and employers.

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**Question #88:** Can you share the list of features that the current content authors currently do in the Drupal / CMS?

**A:** Our team manages page content and layouts.

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**Question #89:** Apart from RFP Response format documents/attachments B, C, D and E, does WP expect any additional documents from the vendors? Would it be okay if the vendor would like share the additional information in a separate document along with the requested documents as a RFP response?

**A:** No additional documents are expected from vendors. No points will be given for additional information that is not pertinent to the questions being asked in the RFP.

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**Question #90:** How many environments does the WA Cares Fund platform currently have? We hope it has at least one lower environment for the transition and development activities, please confirm.

**A:** We have a live website and a test environment.

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**Question #91:** Does the support includes any architecture upgrades or major integrations that are in pipeline, if so would it be possible to share a few?

**A:** The projects outlined in the Statement of Work are the major upgrades and integrations we expect to implement in the near future.

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**Question #92:** Would there be any changes with the hosting service provider or will WA continue with current hosting?

**A:** The site is currently hosted on Pantheon. We don't currently anticipate any changes.

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**Question #93:** Do you have any tool to manage and maintain tickets, requests, incidents etc.?

**A:** We do not currently have a tool to manage and maintain tickets with a website vendor, but we are open to using one.

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**Question #94:** Is it safe to assume that the WA Drupal website modules and themes are compatible with the Drupal version 10?

**A:** The website was built with the knowledge that we would like the website to be upgraded to



Drupal 10.

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**Question #95:** Can you confirm if the functional testing, load testing are included in the scope?

**A:** Yes.

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**Question #96:** Confirm if weather server security is part of scope?

**A:** We don't expect major security-related updates to be completed as part of this contract. Routine security scans and updates are included as part of section 2 of the Statement of Work ("Routine Maintenance and Support").

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**Question #97:** It would be helpful if the WA team shares the high level current architecture and Infra details of the website.

**A:** We will be able to provide a detailed site map to the Contractor during the kick-off and transition phase of the contract.

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**Question #98:** We could see the WP website had issues w.r.t WCAG guidelines. Should we assume that the WA team expects the vendor to address current issues and improvement to ensure 90% of accuracy with WCAG 2.2 checklist?

**A:** Our previous front-end website developer and our contracted user experience design firm designed and tested for compliance with WCAG 2.1, level AA standards. Now that WCAG 2.2 is in place, we are looking to ensure all future updates to the website meet WCAG 2.2 standards. If there are any areas where work completed by the previous vendor or our in-house team is not up to standard, we do not expect the new Contractor to remediate those issues without an amendment to the contract.

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**Question #99:** Can you share some insights on current QA process? Does the current QA team perform manual testing or is it automated?

**A:** We are currently performing manual testing.

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**Question #100:** Would WA team open for any suggestions w.r.t QA strategies and process improvements?

**A:** Yes, we are open to suggestions, although we may or may not implement the suggestions.

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**Question #101:** In the context of the Drupal 9 to 10 migration: How involved would DSHS be during testing?

**A:** Our internal team will likely be performing our own testing in addition to the vendor's QA process and flagging any issues that we find. We can be flexible on the details of the joint process and will plan to work with the Contractor in advance to determine how we will coordinate testing.

Ultimately, the Contractor will need approval from us to consider the project complete.

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**Question #102:** In the context of the Drupal 9 to 10 migration: Is there a point of contact or stakeholder who can sign off that tests are successful for the new site from DSHS? (eg: To say “it’s working fine” when presented with a draft, so we know that it’s done.)

**A:** Yes.

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**Question #103:** Given the fixed scope: if the contractor finds that keeping the fixed scope require more involvement from the organization to conduct additional testing to save billable hours, is that a possibility?

**A:** Our internal team will likely be performing our own testing and flagging any issues that we find, but we expect this to be in addition to the Contractor’s internal QA process. We expect the Contractor to identify and address any major issues as part of their internal testing before our team tests to confirm the final product meets expectations.

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**Question #104:** Is it safe to assume that the contractor is not expected to write any translations? We ask because the RFP mentions “identify any adjustments that can be made to improve the quality of machine translations.” In some cases an incorrect translation would only be identified by a human translator, and the scope of the RFP does not appear to request manual translation services.

**A:** The Contractor is not expected to manually translate any content. That mention refers to optimizing the configuration of the translation tool itself or of page content/layout to ensure the tool is working as effectively as possible.

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**Question #105:** The RFP mentions that the current system has “Drupal’s Translation Management Tool using Google Cloud.” Does the current setup automatically do the translations, or does the author need to manually input translations for each piece of content?

**A:** We are using automatic translations. We do have an option to input corrections manually, but those corrections have to be manually redone after each change to an English page.

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**Question #106:** Is DSHS open to design changes to support translation beyond the language/character changes? Background: Typically Right-To-Left impacts design, layout and user experience. For example: You might have a menu on the left sidebar in the English website, and you might move it to the right side of the screen in a right to left language.

**A:** Yes, we encourage design changes for languages that read right to left in order to improve user experience for users browsing our website in those languages.

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**Question #107:** Do the authors need to interact with any of the configuration settings for the chat tool integration from within drupal? (For example: different salesforce keys, or showing the chat on certain pages only, etc.)

**A:** No, the snippet provided to the Contractor will contain all the necessary information.

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**Question #108:** Provider Intake form is this expected to be integrated with any outside database besides internal Drupal? For example, does it need to automatically save to Salesforce, or automatically send to a recipient, if so – does it need to work with an existing email transport service?

**A:** At this time, we expect the primary function of the form will be to transmit submitted information by email to the appropriate contact using conditional logic. The email service we use for other forms on our website is SendGrid.

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**Question #109:** What is the ultimate purpose of capturing provider information in general? Is that data meant to be visible publicly in some directory or other fashion?

**A:** To be authorized to receive payment from WA Cares on behalf of beneficiaries, long-term care providers will need to become registered with the program. The purpose of the form is to transmit information from providers who want to become registered to the appropriate intake contact (which could be at DSHS or at a local Area Agency on Aging, depending on where the provider is located) for processing.

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**Question #110:** Is there any expectation of physically meeting, in person, with regards to the project management scope of this RFP?

**A:** There are no in-person requirements.

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Attendees at the December 20, 2023 Bidder Conference included the following:

1. James O'Brien, DSHS
2. Stephaine Ssaaka, DSHS
3. Kristen Maki, DSHS
4. Stephanie Endler – DSHS
5. Samantha Gleason – DSHS
6. Ritu Mangla - infostride
7. Anand Injeti - Skillzguide LLC
8. Zavier McDuffie - Orca Intelligence
9. Trennice Swan - Epathusa Inc
10. Meghan Renuart - Resource Data
11. John Locke - Freelock
12. Josh Skelly - Urban Insight
13. Melissa B - Promet Source

# ***Welcome to the Bidder Conference***

ALTSA/OOS/WA Cares Request for Proposals  
#2323-840

## **Website Development**

December 20, 2023

1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Pacific Time  
via Microsoft Teams

# ***Agenda***

- Introductions and Ground Rules
- Opening Remarks
- Project Scope and RFP Goals
- Important Reminders & Key Dates
- Q&A

# ***Introductions and Ground Rules***

- DSHS Introductions
- Presentation, followed by Q&A
  - Please hold questions until end
  - Questions must be sent to the RFP Coordinator via Chat
- List of attendees may become a public record
- Focus on general issues related to RFP instructions, requirements, etc.
- Verbal responses to questions are unofficial
- Official responses to be posted as an RFP amendment

## ***Procurement Goals***

- Fair, open and competitive procurement process
- DSHS is a public entity and subject to state procurement rules and regulations
- To obtain the services of a qualified organization, who will collaborate with DSHS, ALTSA to provide the IT services requested in the RFP.

## ***Opening Remarks (Kristen)***

# Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

70% of Washingtonians will eventually need long-term services and supports – help with activities of daily living like bathing, eating, and taking medications.

The WA Cares Fund is a new program to ensure working Washingtonians can earn access to long-term care when they need it later in life.

For some people, the \$36,500 (adjusted to inflation) lifetime earned benefit will cover all the care they need. For others, it will provide breathing room during one of life's most challenging stages, giving the family time to develop a plan.



## ***Background (Kristen)***

- We're currently seeking qualified vendors to support the ongoing maintenance and technical backend website updates to our newly built website, [www.wacaresfund.wa.gov](http://www.wacaresfund.wa.gov).
- We're looking for a vendor who has experience in Drupal development and support, provides high-quality work, can provide a highly responsive, collaborative, and transparent communication process and has a clear project management process including production, revision, and final delivery.

## ***Project Scope (Kristen)***

- Provide ongoing maintenance in a Drupal environment including regular secure back-ups, security scans, updates and support and transition to Drupal 10.
- Collaborate closely with our in-house team and support design and functionality changes identified by the WA Cares Fund team that we are unable to perform in-house.
- Work with the WA Cares team to implement chat tool and provider intake form and expand the website's translation tool to two new languages.

## ***Bidders' Proposals***

- Based on the terms, conditions and deliverables set forth in the RFP and Attachment A: Sample Contract
- Provide clear, concise, direct, detailed and specific responses
- Ensure responses are accurate, without assumptions
- Apparent Successful Bidder's Proposal may become part of the Contract

*Submitting a Proposal that does not follow the RFP requirements will be deemed non-responsive*

# ***Submission Requirements***



Attachment B: Sample Submission Letter

Attachment C: Certifications & Assurances

Attachment D: Bidder Response Form

1. Bidder Information (Administrative Response)
2. Bidder EO 18-03 Certification
3. Bidder Certification – Washington Small Business
4. Bidder Certification – Veteran Owned Business
5. Bidder Qualifications and Experience (Management Response)
6. Bidders Solution to RFP (Technical Response)
7. Bidders Proposed Pricing (Cost Response)

Attachment E: Contractor Inclusion Plan

## ***Important Reminders***

- As Amendments are posted to WEBS, these should be carefully reviewed and downloaded by the Bidders
- DSHS is committed to ensuring a fair and open competitive process
- To ensure that all Bidders receive a fair and open opportunity, it is vital that all interested parties abide by the requirements
- **All questions and information regarding this RFP should be directed to the RFP Coordinator and to no one else, unless otherwise directed in writing by the RFP Coordinator**



Bidders may submit written questions or requests for change in Solicitation Requirements until 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time	December 26, 2023
DSHS intends to post responses to written questions	December 28, 2023
Bidders must submit Proposals by 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time	January 9, 2024
Oral Evaluations	January 31, 2024
Announcement of Apparent Successful Bidder on WEBS	February 2, 2024
Contract Execution/Start Date	March 8, 2024



- Questions must be sent to the RFP Coordinator directly via Chat
- **Verbal responses to questions are unofficial**
- Official responses shall be posted on WEBS as an RFP Amendment
- If there are questions that we do not get to today, please submit these via email to the RFP Coordinator at: **[james.obrien2@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:james.obrien2@dshs.wa.gov)**  
***(Kristen/Stephanie/Sam)***

*Final Questions are due via email no later than December 26, 5:00PM PT*

**DSHS appreciates your time and  
interest in this solicitation!**



**DSHS amends RFP #2323-840 document, Project Scope (Section 3. 1. Kick -Off and Transition) to reflect the following:**

1. Kick-Off and Transition

- a. Contractor shall hold a kick-off meeting with the WA Cares Fund team to understand program needs and team member roles, discuss deliverables, and establish expectations for coordination.
- b. Contractor shall coordinate with the **WA Cares Fund team** to transition management of the site, including a tour of the back-end setup, transfer of all relevant source code, documentation and access.
- c. Contractor shall bill for kick-off and transition work as a flat fee paid upon completion of the work, regardless of the number of hours of work completed.

**DSHS amends Attachment A – Sample Contract, Statement of Work, to reflect the following:**

1. Kick-Off and Transition

- a. Contractor shall hold a kick-off meeting with the WA Cares Fund team to understand program needs and team member roles, discuss deliverables, and establish expectations for coordination.
- b. Contractor shall coordinate with the **WA Cares Fund team** to transition management of the site, including a tour of the back-end setup, transfer of all relevant source code, documentation, and access.
- c. Contractor shall bill for kick-off and transition work as a flat fee (\$XXX) paid upon completion of the work, regardless of the number of hours of work completed.

## Updated RFP Schedule

Item	Action	Date
1.	DSHS posts responses to written questions.	12.29.2023
2.	Bidders may submit written Complaints by 5 p.m. PST. [minimum five business days before Response is due]	1.8.2024
3.	Bidders must submit a Response by 5:00 p.m. PST.	1.16.2024
4.	DSHS evaluates Written Responses.	<u>1.23 to 2.2</u>
5.	Oral presentations, if requested by DSHS.	<u>2.9.2024</u>
6.	DSHS announces the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) on WEBS and begins contract negotiations.	<u>2.13.2024</u>
7.	DSHS notifies unsuccessful Bidder(s).	2.13.2024
8.	Bidders may request a Debriefing conference until 5 p.m. Pacific Time. [minimum three business days after ASB Announcement]	<u>2.21.2024</u>
9.	DSHS holds Debriefing conferences, if requested.	<u>2.26.2024</u>
10.	Deadline for submission of Protests by Bidders who participated in a debriefing conference.	Five business days after the date of the Debriefing
11.	DSHS considers Protests, if any, and issues determination.	3.18.2024
12.	Contract Execution/Start Date.	3.22.2024

All other terms and conditions in this Solicitation remain the same.