



**STATE OF MARYLAND
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
PROCUREMENT, CONTRACT AND GRANT ADMINISTRATION
187 HARRY S. TRUMAN PARKWAY
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401**

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

FOR

Grant Management System

RFI No. K24-0064-25G

Unless otherwise stated in this RFI, the Maryland Judiciary's Procurement Portal will be the sole method of communication during all phases of the RFI. We encourage Suppliers to whitelist emails from the Procurement Portal to ensure relevant emails are not blocked and/or marked as spam. Additionally, Suppliers are strongly encouraged to access the Procurement Portal on a regular basis to view and respond to relevant communications.

KEY INFORMATION SUMMARY SHEET

Request for Information

Grant Management System

RFI No. K24-0064-25G

Issue Date: 02/07/2024

Issuing Office: Procurement, Contract and Grant Administration

Procurement Officer: Savannah Healy
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Department of Procurement, Contract and Grant Administration
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RFI Submission: Submissions are exclusively accepted electronically via the [Procurement Portal](#).

Important Events: Refer to the project details and important events on the Procurement Portal for the date and time of the pre-proposal conference (as applicable), site visit(s) (as applicable), deadline for questions, and solicitation closing date & time.

Oral Presentations: Anticipated February 2024



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SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The purpose of this RFI is to learn more about cloud-based grant management systems that allow funders and awardees to manage grant awards and activities through the entire grant life cycle (from application to close-out). While one system managing the entire grant life cycle is preferred, the AOC are open to learning about systems that may manage only part of the grant lifecycle.

B. ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this RFI, the following abbreviations or terms have the meanings indicated below:

1. AOC – Administrative Office of the Courts
2. Procurement Officer – The AOC representative responsible for this RFI.
3. Procurement Portal – Strategic sourcing software allowing the Judiciary to receive and evaluate bids and proposal electronically.
4. Supplier – An entity that submits a response to this RFI.

C. PURPOSE

Any information received in response to this RFI will assist the AOC in composing and validating a scope of work that may be used at a future date for a procurement. The requirements in this RFI do not represent the AOC's final requirements and may or may not be included in a subsequent procurement (e.g., Request for Proposal, Invitation for Bid, etc.). The issuance of this RFI does not constitute a commitment to issue a procurement or award a contract. Furthermore, interested suppliers shall abstain from submitting quotes or bids in response to the RFI.

A submission in response to this RFI does not guarantee that the Supplier will be included in any subsequent procurement. A non-submission in response to this RFI does not preclude the Supplier from inclusion in any future procurement.

D. PROCUREMENT OFFICER

The sole point of contact in the AOC for purposes of this RFI is the Procurement Officer noted on the Key Information Summary Sheet. The AOC may change the Procurement Officer at any time. Only information communicated by the Procurement Officer shall be deemed the official position of the AOC. No other State of Maryland or AOC employee, official, or representative has the authority to change the requirements of this RFI.

E. QUESTIONS

Suppliers shall direct all communication regarding this RFI to the Procurement Officer. Submit questions to the Procurement Officer, by email, or through the opportunity Q&A section on the Procurement Portal, no later than the date indicated on the solicitation. The Procurement Officer, based on the availability of time to research and communicate, shall answer questions at their discretion prior to the closing date and time.

F. CLOSING TIME & DATE

Responses are requested not later than the date and time indicated on the solicitation. Responses received after the closing date and time listed in the solicitation may not be considered. Responses may be modified or withdrawn by the Offeror through the Procurement Portal any time before the date and time set forth in the solicitation.

G. ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Suppliers may be asked to participate in oral presentations, demonstrations, or discussions. The oral presentations and/or demonstrations may be conducted onsite and/or virtually. Any oral presentation and/or demonstration is informational only and for the purpose of determining feasible solutions and recommendations that could be included in a future procurement. Suppliers shall not include any pricing information in their oral presentations, demonstrations, or discussions.



H. ECONOMY OF PREPARATION

Responses shall be prepared simply and economically providing a straightforward, concise description of the Supplier's ability to meet the requirements of this RFI.

I. PUBLIC ACCESS TO JUDICIAL RECORDS

A Supplier shall specifically identify those portions of its response that it considers confidential, proprietary commercial information, or trade secret, and provide justification why such materials, upon request, shall not be disclosed by the AOC under Title 16, Chapter 900 of the Maryland Rules. The inspection of Judiciary procurement documents shall be governed exclusively by the Judicial Branch Procurement Policy. Procurement documents are presumed to be open to the public for inspection, except as otherwise provided by the Judicial Branch Procurement Policy.

J. INCURRED EXPENSES

The AOC will not be responsible for any costs incurred by a Supplier in preparing and submitting a response, in making an oral presentation, in providing a demonstration, or in performing any other activities relative to this RFI.

END OF SECTION I.



SECTION II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. DESCRIPTION OF ISSUING AGENCY

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is the central support agency for the state judicial branch and provides a broad range of support services to Maryland's courts in operations, information technology, management, legal government relations, financial, administration, and programs.

The AOC currently has twelve (12) grant programs managed by five (5) grantmaking departments, which fund approximately one hundred and sixty (160) grants per year with an annual disbursement of approximately \$35,000,000.00. Grants may range from less than \$5,000 to over \$2 million, and Grantees are typically individual courts within the Judiciary, local government agencies, or nonprofit organizations. There are also some cases of the AOC receiving federal grants that it subgrants through its programs. The process for each grant program is generally standardized with minor differences with the internal review. Post-grant award and reporting are uniform across all programs.

B. SUMMARY OF CURRENT SYSTEM

The AOC currently uses a combination of systems to manage its grant programs. These include a web-based grant management, as well as Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook. Grant departments use these systems in different combinations, but follow the same schedule and procedures for seeking applications and making awards.

C. SUMMARY OF CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

The existing grants management system is used inconsistently across departments. The cloud-based solution is used by various departments to post funding opportunities and receive grant applications. It was previously used by all departments and was also used to manage grants post-award. The AOC's grant management system is no longer being used to manage awards because it does not provide easy-to-use budget, expense, and modification management at the line-item level, the user security roles lack sufficient granularity to provide AOC staff and Grantees with appropriate access, and quarterly reporting requires users to navigate to multiple screens to create/view all the elements of the reports. Due to these inefficiencies, the current system has increased AOC staff time needed to manage grant awards.

Post award, all grant-making departments use Microsoft Word and Excel, e-mail, and shared computer files. All report submissions and budget modifications are completed via email and tracked manually. General award oversight, data reporting, and trend analysis all must be done manually. These non-integrated systems require more AOC staff time to manage effectively.

D. VISION FOR FUTURE STATE

Suppliers shall reference the solution Information set forth in Section III for information detailing the Administrative Office of the Court's current requirements for the future grant management system based on our current understanding of the market.

END OF SECTION II.



SECTION III. REQUESTED INFORMATION

A. SUPPLIER INFORMATION

Suppliers shall provide the following information:

1. Address
2. Website
3. Point-of-Contact (POC) information (e.g., name, title, email, phone)
4. Brief history of the Supplier
5. Summary of the Supplier's current offerings (i.e., products and services)
6. Summary of the Supplier's current customer base
7. Any available standard brochure/literature about the Supplier

B. SOLUTION INFORMATION

The Maryland Judicial has identified the following potential requirements for a future solution based on our current understanding of the marketplace. Suppliers shall review the identified requirements and provide feedback concerning the proposed requirements. Feedback shall identify any potential issues with any proposed requirements or any technology advancements that may render a requirement unnecessary.

1. Potential Requirements:
 - a. System:
 - (1) The grant management system must be a secure, cloud-based system, accessible from any Internet-enabled device.
 - (2) Suppliers must have a Service Organization Control (SOC) 2 Type II report, or equivalent (as determined by the AOC), for both the As-a-Service (e.g., infrastructure, software, platform, hardware) and the subservice (e.g., Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud Platform). A SOC 2 Type II report for the subservice alone will not meet the requirements.
 - (3) The AOC prefers single-sign-on (SSO) utilizing SAML authentication via Azure Active Directory.
 - (4) If the system required LDAP connectivity to the Judiciary's active directory environment, suppliers must use LDAPS.
 - (5) The Judiciary requires Multi Factory Authentication (MFA) for all connections coming from the internet. If the product/system supports SAML authentication via Azure Active Directory, the Judiciary will handle MFA integration within the application. If the product/system only supports LDAP, the product/system must include MFA capabilities.
 - (6) Provide a detailed narrative of the ability and mechanism to integrate with Office 365, Sharepoint, OneDrive, and custom developed Java & Spring applications.
 - (7) If the application/service will be sending email on behalf of the Judiciary, the application must support one of the following: DKIM signatures (JIS will provide a private key to be used by the cloud provider) or Authenticated mail relay through the Judiciary's mail provider, Office 365.
 - (8) Suppliers shall describe their method/ability to integrate with other systems and applications (e.g., RESTful APIs).
 - (9) If the product/system is web based, it must support Chrome or Edge Browser.
 - (10) If accounts are not Active Directory integrated, accounts must be disabled after a specified amount of inactivity.
 - (11) Encryption via database or column level.
 - b. Accessibility
 - (1) The grant management system shall have the ability to:
 - i Assign user roles with granular controls for both AOC staff users and Grantee.



1. The AOC must be able to assign multiple users to the same opportunity/grant with the capability to complete different tasks (e.g., assign various users to view only, create, edit, etc.)
- ii Configure password complexity rules and frequency of expiration.
- iii Utilize single sign-on and/or two-factor authentication, if possible.
- iv Clear audit trail for users, applications, and awards management.
- v Permit administrator role that can manage other users/user roles.
- vi Allow Grantee user role to review grants that have been assigned to them.
- vii Allow users to be assigned to more than one organization.
- viii Drag and drop attachments to applications, awards, or notes.
- ix Generate formatted documents and send emails to Grantees and applicants.
- x Customize auto-generated emails.
- xi Move multiple applications and awards through a workflow at once.
- xii Permit AOC staff to create an indefinite number of custom dashboards, in real-time, with up-to-date information.
 1. Dashboards shall be able to include tasks and workflow assignments.
- xiii Export any data from the system.
- xiv Configure who and when each assigned user receives notifications.
- xv Integrate with Outlook for tracking communication with applicants and Grantees.
- xvi Allow an award to be in more than one workflow at a time.
- xvii Provide unlimited support for an indefinite number of AOC staff and Grantee users.
- xviii Store a large amount of data and documents (e.g., copies of grant documents, images submitted by grantees, copies of policy documents, communications, letters provided to grantees, etc.)
- xix Create configurable workflows and task assignments.
- xx Support users working on multiple awards, opportunities, and records at the same time without slowing down the system.
- xxi Utilize granular user roles to allow multiple AOC users to work on applications and awards.
- xxii Be easily understood and learned by both AOC staff and Grantees.
- xxiii Generate dashboards for Grantee accounts that provide quick access to information on their application (e.g., grants awarded, funding spent, major deadlines, etc.)

c. Pre-Award:

- (1) Prior to reviewing and finalizing an award, the grant management system shall have the ability to:
 - i Post multiple funding opportunities with unique application forms.
 - ii Use skip logic in funding opportunities and applications.
 - iii Use category tags to display or hide fields.
 - iv Copy and paste individual fields.
 - v Permit AOC staff to easily create, edit, copy applications and funding opportunities.
 - vi Control application appearance (e.g., font, size, color, headings, etc.)
 - vii Incorporate confidentiality and conflict of interest confirmation for reviewers before they can see applications.
 - viii Require applicants to enter detailed budget justifications for each line-item requested.
 - ix Utilize security roles for Grantees to view all active and historic applications.

- x Permit budget requests to be created at the line-item level with AOC staff control on allowable budget categories.
 - 1. Budget requests shall permit the option to have matching funds be required, optional, or turned off entirely.
- xi Permit Grantees, Reviewers, and AOC staff to download and print applications.
- xii Provide a user-friendly system for building application forms.
 - 1. Application forms shall include multiple types of fields such as:
 - a. Short or long answer
 - b. Multiple choice
 - c. Yes/No
 - d. Allow for the inclusion of web links, pictures/charts, attachments, and formattable text.
 - e. Allow for skip logic so questions can be hidden or revealed depending on applicability.
- xiii Permit AOC staff and Reviewers access to manage reviewer tasks without having to go into each application.
 - 1. Application reviewers shall be able to add comments on applications, which are visible to AOC department staff.
 - 2. AOC staff shall be able to configure and use workflows to manage applications.

(2) Pre-award review process must include:

- 1. An application portal for Grantees that is easily understood and learned.
- 2. Application management for AOC staff.
- 3. A database where all the applications submitted against an opportunity may be viewed in one place.

d. Post-Award:

(1) After the AOC's finalized award process, the grant management system shall have the ability to:

- i Share documents with Grantees.
- ii Send bulk emails to specified Grantees.
- iii Convert successful applications into grant awards.
- iv Have a consistent setting for all awards within a given funding opportunity/area, but also allow for differences between areas.
- v Permit Grantees to submit supplemental requests to increase their total award.
 - 1. AOC staff shall be able to configure what information is required in the request.
 - 2. Audit trails shall be able to capture each request, workflow action, and approval.
 - 3. Award budget shall automatically update if approved.
- vi Have expense caps be configured at both the category and line-item level.
- vii Permit AOC staff to see budget variances at the funding opportunity level and at the individual award level.

(2) The post-award budget system shall:

- i Easily configure award budgets.
- ii Allow the award budget to not match the requested amount.
- iii Be configured in the same manner as the application.
- iv Include both approved budget categories and line items.

- (3) The following shall apply for the post-award intuitive budget modification process for Grantees and AOC staff:
 - i Ability to submit modifications at the line-item level and include justifications and attachments.
 - ii Utilization of workflows to manage budget modifications.
 - iii Ability to approve or reject all or portions of a modification request.
 - iv System automatically updates the award budget upon approval.
 - v System creates a record of the past budget and any modifications.
 - vi Clear process to review and approve or reject a budget modification.

e. Financial Reporting:

- (1) The grant management system financial reporting shall have:
 - i Ability to run administrative reports on user roles and user access.
 - ii Ability for AOC staff to create custom queries and reports from grant applications and awards.
 - iii Financial management of grant awards is easy to use and intuitive for Grantees.
 - 1. Grantees shall be able to see their award budget, and project budget, and the amounts remaining.
 - 2. Expenses must be entered in a way that allows the grantee to know how much is left in the budget for that item at the time of entry.
 - 3. Budget summary shall automatically update when expenses have been entered, to see how much has been spent overall, as well as how much has been spent for each line-item and budget category.
 - 4. Grantee must be notified and blocked when they attempt to enter expenses that exceed the budget.
 - iv Customizable dashboard where AOC staff can see what reports have been reviewed and which are still pending.
 - v Workflows to manage budget modifications, supplemental request, and progress reports.
 - vi Ability to have expenses entered by the Grantee at the line-item level.
 - vii Ability for Grantees to see the budget, current expenses, and remaining funds when entering expenses.
 - viii User roles within the Grantee account to control which users can see the budget and manage expenses.
 - ix A progress reporting process that is all in one place and includes narrative responses, numeric data, and upload fields.
 - x Reports for performance data that include formulas to tabulate the information.
 - xi Built-in reports and the ability to create custom reports.
- (2) The grant management system financial reporting shall have the accessibility to allow:
 - i Grantees to find and correct errors.
 - ii Tracking and reporting on matching funds.
 - iii Invoices include details on what is being billed.
 - iv Grantees to generate an invoice as part of their financial reporting.
 - v Grantees to run reports on their spending, with filter options to allow control of data/time period is included in the report.
 - vi Grantees to see what they submitted from one quarter to the next. (i.e. when submitting Q2, they need to be able to easily see what they submitted for Q1.)
 - vii Grantees to see when reports are due, and the status of their reports (not-started, in-progress, complete, submitted).



- viii Grantees and funders access to see what grant funds have been spent and how much is remaining in each line item/budget category.
- ix AOC to approve or deny invoices.
- x AOC to drill down into financial reports from Grantees to see the details.
- xi AOC to configure the reporting requirements to include different elements.
- xii AOC to easily review and compare all elements of a quarterly progress report in one place.
- xiii AOC to use data from progress reports to compare across programs, and roll-up the data to produce summary reports.

f. Training and Support

- (1) The supplier shall provide:
 - i System updates and maintenance
 - ii Basic and advanced system training for users, as well as access to training and reference media.
 - iii Robust same-day support team for responding to help requests.
 - iv Ability for funder AOC staff to follow help tickets within the system, including chain of communication and who and what are involved.
- 2. Suppliers shall provide information on any features and functionality not contemplated in this RFI that may be advantageous for the Maryland Judiciary to consider when drafting a future solicitation.
 - a. The AOC understands it is unlikely that a single system will meet all these requirements out-of-the-box and will work with suppliers on acceptable alternatives, process changes, analyzing the cost/benefit of some features, and considering multiple solutions.

C. SERVICES INFORMATION

1. What is the system auditing process?
2. What does product implementation look like?
3. How long is implementation, and can it be completed in phases?
4. What are the security best practices and industry standards utilized?
5. What is the support model/service desk strategy including tools used?
6. What are the procedures and frequency of updates made to the system?
7. What is the process and costing model used for customizations, special projects, and further requested enhancements?
8. Is a host-model utilized and are there any sub-service involved in providing the hosted service?
9. If utilizing a hosting environment, how does it scan for vulnerabilities and/or penetration tested along with the frequency of these scans and tests?
10. What are the formal release activities for releasing updates between development, test, and production environments?
11. What is the deployment architecture for production, development, testing and training environments?
12. What is the deployment process for software updates, security patches, end-point protection upgrades, etc., and its impact on availability of services?
13. What are the internal policies and procedures for handling a breach of data?
14. What are the monitoring procedures and tools used for monitoring the integrity and availability of the systems interacting with the proposed product, detecting security incidents, and ensuring timely remediation?
15. What are the policies for limiting and/or controlling employee access to customer data?

D. SOLICITATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The AOC requests Suppliers to recommend any metrics, documentation, and/or information the AOC should furnish bidders/offerors in any future solicitation. Suppliers should indicate the significance or criticality of that information to the success of either the procurement itself or the subsequent implementation and operation of the solution. Suppliers shall provide any additional clarifications or recommendations that might be valuable to the AOC in developing and issuing a future procurement.



END OF SECTION III.



SECTION IV. RESPONSE

A. RFI SUBMISSION

Suppliers shall submit their response in accordance with the required and optional submittals as defined in Section IV.B of this RFI, and the Procurement Portal.

B. RESPONSE SUBMITTALS

1. Transmittal Letter: Prepared on the Supplier's business stationary and signed by an authorized individual within the Supplier's organization.
2. Claim of Confidentiality: Any information which is claimed to be confidential and/or proprietary shall be identified by section, subsection (if applicable), and page number. An explanation for each claim of confidentiality shall be included. The entire Proposal cannot be given a blanket confidentiality designation.
3. Supplier's Response:
 - a. Supplier shall address each question or requirement in Section III of this RFI. The Supplier's response shall reference the organization and numbering of Section III in the RFI (e.g., "Section III.A.1 Response..."; "Section III.A.2 Response...", etc.).
 - b. The Supplier's response may include additional documentation, comments, observations, or suggestions that may assist the AOC in drafting a future procurement.
4. Pricing Structure:
 - a. Supplier shall include a summary of the model or structure for their pricing (e.g., per user, unlimited, annual fees, as-needed, etc.). The Supplier shall not include any actual pricing (e.g., quotes, bids, price proposals) in their response.

END OF SECTION IV.

