



IPA

Request For Proposals (RFP)

No. IPA/RFP/DSE/010/2024

RFP for Scalable Cloud Computing Resources, Support, and Monitoring

Issue Date: 19th September 2024

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Synopsis of the RFP

RFP No.	IPA/RFP/DSE/010/2024
Issue Date	Thursday 19 th September 2024
Title	RFP for Scalable Cloud Computing Resources, Support, and Monitoring
Issuing Office	Innovations for Poverty Action 1701 Rhode Island Ave NW, Suite 3-124 Washington, DC 20036
Point of Contact for Questions	global-procurement@poverty-action.org STRICTLY include the RFP number in the subject line.
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals	Monday 23rd September 2024 at 5 PM Eastern Time (ET)
Proposal Submission Address	global-proposals@poverty-action.org STRICTLY include the RFP number in the subject line.
Anticipated Award Type	Firm Fixed Price Contract / Vendor Agreement
Basis for Award	The award will be issued to the responsible and reasonable offeror who provides the best value to IPA and its client using a combination of technical and cost/price factors.

1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1. Purpose

IPA invites qualified offerors to submit proposals in response to the RFP for Scalable Cloud Computing Resources, Support, and Monitoring. Details of the specific requirements can be found in the Scope of Work section.

1.2. Issuing Office

The Issuing Office and Contact Person noted in the above synopsis is the sole point of contact at IPA for purposes of this RFP.

1.3. Type of Award Anticipated

IPA anticipates awarding a Firm Fixed Price Purchase Order. This award type is subject to change during the course of negotiations.

A Firm Fixed Price Purchase Order is: An award for a total firm fixed price, for values less than \$150,000, for the provision of specific services, goods, or deliverables and is not adjusted if the actual costs are higher or lower than the fixed price amount. Offerors are expected to include all costs, direct and indirect, into their total proposed price.

2. General Instructions to Offerors

2.1 General Instructions

“Offeror”, “Subcontractor”, and/or “Bidder” means a firm proposing the work under this RFP. “Offer” and/or “Proposal” means the package of documents the firm submits to propose the work.

Offerors wishing to respond to this RFP must submit proposals, in English, in accordance with the following instructions. Offerors are required to review all instructions and specifications contained in this RFP. Failure to do so will be at the Offeror’s risk. If the solicitation is amended, then all terms and conditions not modified in the amendment shall remain unchanged.

Issuance of this RFP in no way obligates IPA to award a subcontract or purchase order. Offerors will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with the preparation or submission of their proposal. IPA shall in no case be responsible for liable for these costs.

Proposals are due no later than **Monday 23rd September 2024 at 5 PM Eastern Time (ET)**, to be submitted to global-proposals@poverty-action.org. Late offers will be rejected.

The submission of a proposal to IPA in response to this RFP will constitute an offer and indicates the Offeror’s agreement to the terms and conditions in this RFP and any attachments hereto. IPA reserves the right not to evaluate a non-responsive or incomplete proposal.

2.2 Proposal Cover Letter

A cover letter shall be included with the proposal on the Offeror’s company letterhead with a duly authorized signature and company stamp/seal using the [Proposal Cover Letter template](#) (see Attachments) for the format. The cover letter shall include the following items:

- The Offeror will certify a validity period of 90 days for the prices provided.
- Acknowledge the solicitation amendments received (If any).

2.3 Questions Regarding the RFP

Each Offeror is responsible for reading and complying with the terms and conditions of this RFP. Requests for clarification or additional information must be submitted in writing via email

or in writing to the Issuing Office as specified in the Synopsis above. No questions will be answered by phone. Any verbal information received from an IPA employee or other entity shall not be considered as an official response to any question regarding this RFP.

Copies of questions and responses will be distributed in writing to all prospective bidders who are on record as having received this RFP after the submission date specified in the Synopsis above.

3. Instructions for the Preparation of Technical Proposals

Technical proposals shall include the following contents:

1. **Technical Approach** - Description of the proposed services which meets or exceeds the stated technical specifications or scope of work. The proposal must show how the Offeror plans to complete the work and describe an approach that demonstrates the achievement of timely and acceptable performance of the work.
2. **Management Approach** – Description of the Offeror’s staff and support level agreements assigned to the activity. The proposal should describe how the proposed team members have the necessary experience and capabilities to carry out the Technical Approach. In addition, the proposal should clearly demonstrate how the Offeror will avail itself to support IPA in carrying out the Technical Approach.
3. **Past Performance** – Provide a list of at least three (3) recent awards, contracts, or engagements of similar scope to that covered in the Technical Approach. The information shall be supplied as a table ([template provided in Attachments](#)), and shall include the legal name and address of the organization for which services were performed, a description of work performed, the duration of the work, and a current contact (email or phone number) of a responsible and knowledgeable representative of the organization. See Attachments.

3.1 Services Specified

For this RFP, IPA is in need of the services described in Attachment: Scope of Work.

4. Instructions for the Preparation of Cost/Price Proposals

4.1 Cost/Price Proposals

Provided in the Attachments section of this RFP is a template for the [Price Schedule for firm-fixed price awards](#). Offerors shall complete the template, including as much detailed information as possible. Any required payment terms must be included in the cost proposal. However, if the offeror prefers to submit their cost/price proposal in a different format, that is also acceptable.

It is important to note that Value Added Tax (VAT) shall be included on a separate line. The Subcontractor is responsible for all applicable taxes and fees, as prescribed under the applicable laws for income, compensation, permits, licenses, and other taxes and fees due as required.

5. Basis of Award

5.1 Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal will be evaluated and scored against the evaluation criteria and evaluation sub-criteria, which are stated in the table below.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Sub-criteria (if needed)	Maximum Points
Technical Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrated technical capacity to build robust and maintainable ELT data workflows; - Demonstrated expertise in developing data solutions that handle diverse, complex data sources and permissions; - Technical ability in SQL and Python, CI/CD, and Infrastructure as Code - Clear understanding and strategy for cost control when using cloud computing resources 	60
Management Approach or Personnel Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear approach for understanding IPA's business needs and data flows - Approach to onboarding and knowledge sharing of solutions recommended - Support level agreements and clear delineation of responsiveness and escalation policies 	30
Corporate Capabilities or Past Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstration of on-going or completed engagements that align with the technical approach in this RFP 	10
Total		100

5.2 Proposal Submission Format

To facilitate the evaluation process by the Evaluation Committee, Offerors are strongly encouraged to submit their proposals in the following format:

- i. Cover Letter
 - a. Include a concise cover letter introducing your proposal. Use the provided template.
- ii. Introduction / Business Profile
 - a. Provide an overview of your organization, its history, and relevant experience.
- iii. Statutory and Compliance Documents
 - a. Include essential documents such as business registration, tax files, and any other relevant compliance documents.
- iv. Technical Proposal
 - a. Refer to Section 3 for detailed instructions on preparing the technical proposal.
 - b. Ensure to provide all necessary supporting documentation and attachments as required by the Evaluation Criteria.
- v. Cost / Price Proposal
 - a. Include detailed cost/price information as outlined in Section 4.
 - b. Should be realistic and acceptable.
- vi. Implementation Timelines / Gantt Chart (if applicable)

- a. Include timelines or Gantt charts outlining project implementation schedules if relevant to your proposal.
- vii. Any Other Pertinent Information
 - a. Include any additional information that you believe is essential to your proposal.

Please adhere to this format to ensure a structured and comprehensive submission that will aid in the evaluation process.

5.3 Best Value Determination

IPA will review all proposals and make an award based on the technical and cost evaluation criteria stated above and select the offeror whose proposal provides the best value to IPA. IPA may also exclude an offer from consideration if it determines that an Offeror is "not responsible", i.e., that it does not have the management and financial capabilities required to perform the work required.

IPA may award to an Offeror without discussions. Therefore, the initial offer **must contain the Offeror's best price and technical terms.**

5.4 Responsibility Determination

IPA will not enter into any type of agreement with an Offeror prior to ensuring the Offeror's responsibility. When assessing an Offeror's responsibility, the following factors are taken into consideration:

1. Provide evidence of the required business licenses to operate.
2. The source, origin and nationality of the products or services are not from a Prohibited Country.
3. Having adequate financial resources to finance and perform the work or deliver goods or the ability to obtain financial resources without receiving advance funds from IPA.
4. Ability to comply with required or proposed delivery or performance schedules.
5. Have a satisfactory past performance record.
6. Have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics.
7. Have the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls and technical skills.
8. Have the necessary production, construction and technical equipment and facilities, if applicable.
9. Be qualified and eligible to perform work under applicable laws and regulations.

5.5 Additional Due Diligence

Upon completing the evaluation process, IPA may choose to engage in additional due diligence processes with a particular vendor or vendors without notifying the bidder.

The purpose of this process is to ensure that IPA engages with reputable, ethical, and responsible vendors with solid financials and the ability to fulfill the contract. Additional due diligence may include, but is not limited to, the following processes:

- Reference checks
- Verification of whether the firm has been barred by any organization or is on any anti-terrorist checklist

5.6 Bidders' Presentations

At the discretion of IPA, selected Offeror(s) may be invited to supply additional information on the contents of their proposal during the evaluation period. Such Offerors could be asked to give a presentation of their proposal / solution (possibly with an emphasis on a topic of IPA's choice) followed by a question-and-answer session.

If IPA determines that there is such a need, the presentation will be held at virtually and more information will be shared with the selected bidders. Offerors will be given reasonable time to prepare for the presentation.

NOTE: Presentations or other individual contact is expressly prohibited before the closing date for proposal submission.

6. Inspection & Acceptance

The designated IPA staff will inspect from time to time the services being performed to determine whether the activities are being performed in a satisfactory manner, and that all equipment or supplies are of acceptable quality and standards. The subcontractor shall be responsible for any countermeasures or corrective action, within the scope of this RFP, which may be required by the IPA Country Director/Representative as a result of such inspection.

7. Compliance with Terms and Conditions

7.1 General Terms and Conditions

Offerors agree to comply with the general terms and conditions for an award resulting from this RFP. The selected Offeror shall comply with all Terms and Conditions listed in the accompanying [Attachment](#).

8. Procurement Ethics

Neither payment nor preference shall be made by either the Offeror, or by any IPA staff, in an attempt to affect the results of the award. IPA treats all reports of possible fraud/abuse very seriously. Acts of fraud or corruption will not be tolerated, and IPA employees and/or subcontractors/grantees/vendors who engage in such activities will face serious consequences. Any such practice constitutes an unethical, illegal, and corrupt practice and either the Offeror or the IPA staff may report violations to the Toll-Free Ethics and Compliance Anonymous Hotline at +1 844 837 5445. IPA ensures anonymity and an unbiased, serious review and treatment of the information provided. Such practice may result in the cancellation of the procurement and disqualification of the Offeror's participation in this, and future, procurements.

By submitting an offeror, Offerors certify that they have not/will not attempt to bribe or make any payments to IPA employees in return for preference, nor have any payments with Terrorists, or groups supporting Terrorists, been attempted.

9. Attachments

9.1 Scope of Work for Services or Technical Specifications

9.1.2 Background

Innovations for Poverty Action's (IPA) Data Science and Engineering team requires assistance in setting up and maintaining Extract Load Transform (ELT) data modeling, orchestration, and observability. This project is necessary to streamline IPA's research data processing workflows, improve data integration from various sources, and enhance our ability to develop analytics and data products for IPA's clients. The implementation of these data pipelines will ensure compliance with data security requirements and industry best practices in data engineering.

9.1.3 Scope

The scope of work will establish resilient, scalable, and maintainable ELT data pipelines and orchestration mechanisms for the IPA Data Science and Engineering team. The scope includes extracting data from REST APIs, the Box API, and SQL databases; loading data into AWS S3 buckets or Azure blob storage and a cloud data warehouse; developing transformations using SQL and Python; and setting up infrastructure as code for deployment and orchestration of data workflows. Additionally, IPA data modeling must be able to integrate with the deployment of machine learning models developed via Python scripts and APIs. The project will utilize tools such as SQLMesh, dbt, or similar data modeling framework for transformations and focus on creating efficient, scalable, and maintainable data processing systems. All code will be source controlled in an IPA-managed GitHub repository. Where infrastructure needs to be developed, we will require code written in Terraform or a similar service, such as AWS CDK's Python API.

9.1.4 Objectives

The primary objectives of this contract are to support, advise, and facilitate IPA's ELT workloads in the following areas:

- Implement scalable ELT data pipelines that are able to run on incremental changes to source data in order to create a cloud data warehouse with survey data and survey paradata (metadata) for IPA's analytics.
- Establish a robust data orchestration system to manage and schedule data workflows.
- Develop infrastructure as code and CI/CD workflows for deploying and managing ELT pipelines.
- Enhance IPA's capabilities in data processing, storage, and analysis.
- Ensure compliance with data handling regulations and best practices.

Transfer knowledge to the IPA Data Science and Engineering team for long-term maintenance and scalability.

10. Requirements

10.1 Tasks

DEVELOPER OPERATIONS (DEVOPS)

1. Advisory support for developing and deploying cloud data infrastructure in development and production environments;
2. Feedback and guidance on infrastructure as code, CI/CD, and other deployment mechanisms.

EXTRACT LOAD TRANSFORM WORKFLOWS

1. Guidance on solutions and approaches to extracting and loading data from IPA's core data sources (e.g. REST APIs, Box API, and SQL databases) to centralized cloud storage;
2. Advice and implementation support on loading mechanisms to transfer data into AWS S3 buckets or Azure blob storage and the designated cloud data warehouse;
3. Implementation support on data modeling using SQL and Python, implementing them in SQLMesh, dbt, or similar data transformation framework;
4. Implementation support on deploying ELT through CI/CD workflows;
5. Implementation support on model tests, audits, error handling, alerting, logging, and monitoring for all ELT pipeline components.

ORCHESTRATION AND MONITORING

1. Cloud-based orchestration that meets IPA authentication and data security requirements.
2. Provide support and implementation for automation of IPA's ELT pipelines.
3. Enable monitoring, cost visibility, and alerting of data pipelines through observability solutions.

10.2 Deliverables

Scalable data modeling infrastructure that provides IPA with cloud computing infrastructure to control costs, observe ELT model deployments, and deliver updated data within IPA's research data warehouse in a timely manner.

10.3 Schedule

The contract period will cover 12 months from signing of the agreement.

10.4 Assumptions

This scope of work assumes that IPA will provide an AWS or Azure account on which the contractor can assist with infrastructure development. Moreover, IPA will provide collaborative access to relevant GitHub repositories and test accounts for IPA's data collection tools (e.g. SurveyCTO).

Proposal Cover Letter

[On Firm's Letterhead]

<Insert date>

TO: Innovations for Poverty Action

[Address]

We, the undersigned, provide the attached proposal in accordance with **RFP-**
(insert number). issued on (Insert date). Our attached proposal is for the total
price of (Sum in Words).

I certify a validity period of (enter number) days for the prices provided in the attached
Price Schedule/Bill of Quantities. Our proposal shall be binding upon us subject to the
modifications resulting from any discussions.

We understand that IPA is not bound to accept any proposal it receives.

Yours sincerely,

Authorized Signature:

Name and Title of Signatory:

Name of Firm:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Company Seal/Stamp (Where Applicable):

10.5 Price Schedule

Item Number	Description/Specifications	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Price
1	List the items that are to be supplied (enter additional lines as needed)			
2	Delivery Cost			
3	VAT			
GRAND TOTAL IN (USD).				

Payment terms:

10.6 Past Performance Form

Include projects that best illustrate your work experience relevant to this RFP, sorted by decreasing order of completion date.

Projects should have been undertaken in the past three years. Projects undertaken in the past six years may be taken into consideration at the discretion of the evaluation committee.

#	Description of Activities	Location Province/ District	Client Name/Tel No/ email address	Cost	Start-End Dates	Completed on schedule (Yes/No)	Completion Letter Received? (Yes/No)	Type of Agreement (fixed price, cost reimbursable)
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

10.7 Terms and Conditions

- a) The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by IPA.
- b) All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the RFP.
- c) All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for entire period provided by respondent.
- d) All awards will be subject to IPA contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
- e) IPA reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.
- f) IPA reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
- g) IPA shall solely own all intellectual property (e.g. datasets, material, etc.) created under the resulting award.
- h) All information provided by IPA in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. IPA is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
- i) IPA reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
- j) The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of IPA, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.