



IPA

Request For Proposals (RFP)

No. IPA/RFP/DSE/011/2024

RFP for Secure Cloud Computing Development Environment

Issue Date: 12th September 2024

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Synopsis of the RFP

RFP No.	IPA/RFP/DSE/011/2024
Issue Date	Thursday 12 th September 2024
Title	RFP for Secure Cloud Computing Development Environment
Issuing Office	Innovations for Poverty Action 1701 Rhode Island Ave NW, Suite 3-124 Washington, DC 20036
Deadline for Receipt of Questions	Wednesday 18th September 2024 at 5 PM Eastern Time (ET) (Responses to questions or clarifications will be shared within 48 hours after the clarification window closes)
Point of Contact for Questions	global-procurement@poverty-action.org STRICTLY include the RFP number in the subject line.
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals	Wednesday 25th 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

1.4. 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 **Wednesday 25th 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.

1.5. 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).

1.6. 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, test, and deploy infrastructure as code;- Expertise in developing data solutions that handle diverse, complex data sources and permissions;- Clear understanding and strategy for cost control when using cloud computing resources	50
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">- Cloud computing certifications- Security and compliance certifications- Demonstration of completed work to build and deploy cloud data solutions on Azure, AWS, GCP, or similar cloud providers- Demonstration of on-going or completed engagements that align with the technical approach in this RFP	20
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

- Include a concise cover letter introducing your proposal. Use the provided template.

ii. Introduction / Business Profile

- Provide an overview of your organization, its history, and relevant experience.

iii. Statutory and Compliance Documents

- Include essential documents such as business registration, tax files, and any other relevant compliance documents.

iv. Technical Proposal

- Refer to Section 3 for detailed instructions on preparing the technical proposal.
- Ensure to provide all necessary supporting documentation and attachments as required by the Evaluation Criteria.

v. Cost / Price Proposal

- Include detailed cost/price information as outlined in Section 4.
- Should be realistic and acceptable.

vi. Implementation Timelines / Gantt Chart (if applicable)

- Include timelines or Gantt charts outlining project implementation schedules if relevant to your proposal.

vii. Any Other Pertinent Information

- 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

5.4 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

Scope of Work for Services or Technical Specifications

9.1 Background

Innovations for Poverty Action's (IPA) Management and Information Systems and Data Science and Engineering teams seek assistance in establishing a proof of concept, development environment on cloud computing infrastructure. This project is necessary to ensure proper security and authentication as well as data governance practices are established for IPA. Ultimately, data managed through this infrastructure project will enable IPA to deliver data assets (e.g. csv, parquet, as well as SQL queries) that IPA project teams can analyze either via Stata, Python, R, or PowerBI.

9.2 Scope

The scope includes extracting data from REST APIs used for survey data collection (namely, the SurveyCTO REST API); loading data into Azure blob storage and connecting object storage to a cloud data warehouse for querying and analytics.

The scope of work will create and deploy cloud data infrastructure using infrastructure as code (e.g. Terraform, OpenTofu, Pulumi) to test and deploy a development environment that will enable IPA to transition core research data workflows to cloud services. Role-based access controls will be determined via IPA's Entra ID authentication and group membership definitions.

All code will be source controlled in an IPA-managed GitHub repository. At the end of this engagement, IPA should be able to modify, test, and deploy the development and have the proper documentation to deploy to production environments.

9.3 Objectives

The primary objectives of this contract are to support and deploy a development environment on Azure for IPA's testing of cloud computing infrastructure as well as data analytics of IPA's survey data via an enterprise cloud data warehouse.

IPA is investing in its cloud computing infrastructure for several reasons:

- To increase data security and data governance over IPA's research data
- To expedite data quality assurance through automated data checks and standardization
- To reduce the burden on individual teams and projects to manage their own data workflows
- To establish a central warehouse for survey metadata and survey response data

- To enable IPA's innovation in the space of machine learning and artificial intelligence

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

10. Requirements

10.1 Tasks

INFRASTRUCTURE AS CODE

1. Develop and deploy cloud data infrastructure in a development environment;
2. Develop infrastructure as code, CI/CD workflows, and other deployment mechanisms;
3. Ensure data security (e.g. IP address limits, VPNs) and data governance over IPA's research data;
4. Connect IPA's authentication mechanism (Entra ID) with cloud computing for role-based access controls.

RESEARCH DATA SYNCING

5. Demonstrate and deploy solutions for extracting and loading data from IPA's main source of research data, SurveyCTO API to centralized cloud storage;
6. Implementation of loading mechanisms to transfer data into Azure blob storage and the designated cloud data warehouse.

10.2 Deliverables

Infrastructure as code in a GitHub repository and deployed to cloud services to enable development environment testing of core IPA research data workflows.

10.3 Schedule

The contract period will cover October to December 2024.

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.