Request for Information

RFI-ED-JP058-01

Iowa Education Portal Single Sign On Solution

Notice to Respondents

Date of Issuance: February 27, 2023
Proposals Due: 3:00 p.m. Central Time, March 20, 2023

For information regarding this notice and throughout this process, interested service providers shall contact only the issuing officer:

Jill Borgeson
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E 14th St
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Phone: 515-205-4764
E-mail: jill.borgeson@iowa.gov

Section I - Introduction, Background, and Objectives

1.1   Introduction

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) is interested in obtaining information from qualified vendors for the Iowa Department of Education portal. The IDOE is also interested in the vendors' capabilities to implement, support, and train information technology (IT) staff and end users on the system. This Request for Information (RFI) is the first in a series of steps to pragmatically evaluate the products in the marketplace. The objective in requesting information is to identify the systems, software, and services of reputable and proven vendors with a demonstrated ability to provide a single sign access to IDOE applications. Further, the intent is to delineate the different options and features of these existing systems and the vendors' ability to implement, support, and train.

The IDOE portal software that is the focus of this RFI will manage users, applications, organizations and security. The IDOE is interested in learning about the software and hardware requirements for hosted solutions or software as a service vendor. The RFI encourages vendors with any of these approaches to respond. Vendors with technical solutions that can address the needs of this RFI and that also have other technical solutions for data acquisition, analysis, or administrative functions, which share the same architecture as the solution, should explain those add on products/options/modules to the IDOE.

Information received from Respondents in response to this RFI will be used to provide background information for the preparation of a Request for Proposals (RFP). The intended purpose of this RFI is to allow all interested Respondents to present statements of interest, qualifications and strategies for addressing the needs of the State in this area.

1.2   Background Information Concerning This Request for Information

The IDOE implemented the Iowa Department of Education Portal in 2010 (EDPortal). The major goals and components were and remain:

- Provide a single point of access for all IDOE applications as required by the State of Iowa.
- A single user account and password for IDOE users for all applicable organizations.
- A system that provides the ability to authenticate and authorize users.
- A system that controls access to IDOE organizations' applications.
- A system that provides authorized access to approximately ten external 3rd party applications.
- A system that provides authorized access to approximately forty internal applications.
- A system that can support 60,000+ users.

1.3   Summary Information about the Agency

Iowa's K-12 educational system consists of approximately 327 public school districts and 140 state and independently accredited nonpublic schools. There are approximately 40,000 students per grade level within the state. The IDOE also oversees Iowa Community Colleges. Iowa has a statewide system of 15 community colleges. These public, postsecondary, two-year institutions are organized as comprehensive community colleges. Each college serves a multi-county merged area that may vary in size from four to twelve counties; all of Iowa's 99 counties are included in one of these merged areas.

1.4   Request for Information Procedures

This request requires any Respondent wishing to submit information to respond to this Request for Information (RFI) by 3:00 p.m., Central Time, on March 20, 2023. Invitations to demonstrate maybe be scheduled after the evaluation of received proposals is completed.

Respondents must provide 1 electronic copy and 3 hard copies of their proposal by the specified due date and time. The electronic copy may be e-mailed or, on a CD and included with the hard copies.

1.5   Schedule of Events

Issue RFI   February 27, 2023
Questions regarding RFI Due   March 6, 2023
RFI Responses Due   March 20, 2023

1.6   Contact Information

The contact at the Iowa Department of Education for inquiries, comments, clarification questions and scheduling will be:

Jill Borgeson
Department of Education
400 E 14th St
Des Moines, Iowa 5031
jill.borgeson@iowa.gov
Telephone 515-205-4764

1.7   Clarification Questions

Clarification questions about this RFI are to be submitted to the Iowa Department of Education by the date and time noted in paragraph 1.6 and to the attention of the contact noted in paragraph 1.7.

1.8   Submission of Responses

The response may be hand-delivered, faxed, e-mailed, or mailed to the Iowa Department of Education to the attention of the contact noted in paragraph 1.6. If the information is to be provided electronically, the response may be limited to instructions regarding access of the electronic information. Responses will not be accepted over the telephone.

1.9   Review and Rejection of RFI Responses

The State reserves the right to reject any and all responses, in whole and in part, received in response to this RFI at any time. Issuance of the RFI in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award any contract. This RFI is designed to provide Respondents with the information necessary for the preparation of informative response proposals and demonstrations of product. This RFI process is for the States' benefit and is intended to provide the State with competitive information to assist in the selection of goods and services. The RFI is not intended to be comprehensive and each Respondent is responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive response and a complete product capability demonstration. The RFI response and demonstration will not be subject to an RFI type evaluation but only to a review of suggested product performance, cost *(cost may be estimated by Respondent, if an*

estimate, Respondent shall state that it is an estimated or approximate cost) of processes offered and of abilities to perform services that may be of use to the State.

An RFI response may be rejected outright and not reviewed for any one (1) of the following reasons, therefore Respondents are asked to make every effort to meet the RFI timelines and to include the requested information:

1.9.1   Failure of Respondent to deliver the response by the due date and time.

1.9.2   Failure to include information requested in the RFI.

1.9.3   Failure to offer demonstrations.

1.10   **Public** *Records and Requests for Confidential Treatment*
The Agency's release of public records is governed by Iowa Code chapter 22. Contractors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Chapter 22 before submitting a Proposal. The Agency will copy and produce public records upon request as required to comply with Chapter 22 and will treat all information submitted by a Contractor as non-confidential records unless Contractor requests specific parts of the Proposal be treated as confidential at the time of the submission as set forth herein **AND the information is confidential under Iowa or other applicable law.**

1.10.1   **Form 22 Request for Confidentiality**
FORM 22 MUST BE COMPLETED AND INCLUDED WITH CONTRACTOR'S PROPOSAL. COMPLETION AND SUBMITTAL OF FORM 22 IS REQUIRED WHETHER THE PROPOSAL DOES OR DOES NOT CONTAIN INFORMATION FOR WHICH CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT WILL BE REQUESTED. FAILURE TO SUBMIT A COMPLETED FORM 22 WILL RESULT IN THE PROPOSAL CONSIDERED NON-RESPONSIVE AND NOT EVALUATED.

1.10.2   **Confidential Treatment Is Not Requested**
A Contractor not requesting confidential treatment of information contained in its Proposal shall complete Section I of Form 22 and submit Form 22 with the Proposal.

1.10.3   **Confidential Treatment of Information is Requested**
A Contractor requesting confidential treatment of specific information shall: (1) fully complete Section II of Form 22, (2) conspicuously mark the outside of its Proposal as containing confidential information, (3) mark each page upon which the Contractor believes confidential information appears **and CLEARLY IDENTIFY EACH ITEM for which confidential treatment is requested; MARKING A PAGE IN THE PAGE MARGIN IS NOT SUFFICIENT IDENTIFICATION**, and (4) submit a "Public Copy" from which the confidential information has been excised.

Form 22 will not be considered fully complete unless, for each confidentiality request, the Contractor: (1) enumerates the specific grounds in Iowa Code chapter 22 or other applicable law that supports treatment of the material as confidential, (2) justifies why the material should be maintained in confidence, (3) explains why disclosure of the material would not be in the best interest of the public, and (4) sets forth the name,

address, telephone, and e-mail for the person authorized by Contractor to respond to inquiries by the Agency concerning the confidential status of such material.

The Public Copy from which confidential information has been excised is in addition to the number of copies requested in Section 3 of this RFI. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the Proposal as possible.

Failure to request information be treated as confidential as specified herein shall relieve Agency and State personnel from any responsibility for maintaining the information in confidence. Contractors may not request confidential treatment with respect to pricing information and transmittal letters. A contractor's request for confidentiality that does not comply with this section or a contractor's request for confidentiality on information or material that cannot be held in confidence as set forth herein are grounds for rejecting contractor's Proposal as non-responsive. Requests to maintain an entire Proposal as confidential will be rejected as non-responsive.

If Agency receives a request for information that Contractor has marked as confidential and if a judicial or administrative proceeding is initiated to compel the release of such material, Contractor shall, at its sole expense, appear in such action and defend its request for confidentiality. If Contractor fails to do so, Agency may release the information or material with or without providing advance notice to Contractor and with or without affording Contractor the opportunity to obtain an order restraining its release from a court possessing competent jurisdiction. Additionally, if Contractor fails to comply with the request process set forth herein, if Contractor's request for confidentiality is unreasonable, or if Contractor rescinds its request for confidential treatment, Agency may release such information or material with or without providing advance notice to Contractor and with or without affording Contractor the opportunity to obtain an order restraining its release from a court possessing competent jurisdiction.

1.11   Copyrights

By submitting a response, the Respondent agrees that the state may copy the response for purposes of facilitating the evaluation or to respond to requests for public records. The Respondent represents that such copying will not violate any copyrights in the materials submitted.

1.12   Restrictions on Gifts and Activities

Iowa Code chapter 68B contains laws which restrict gifts which may be given or received by State employees and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with State government. Respondents are responsible for determining the applicability of this chapter to their activities and for complying with these requirements. In addition, Iowa Code chapter 722.1 provides that it is a felony offense to bribe a public official.

1.13   Content of the RFI

1.13.1 The State reserves the right to modify this RFI at any time.

1.13.2 Responses should be based on the material contained in this RFI or any other relevant information the Respondent thinks is appropriate.

1.13.3 By submitting a response each Respondent agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against the State, the Department of Commerce, the Attorney General, or the State of Iowa, or any employee of the State, Department of Commerce or Attorney General, based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided or concerning the States' failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the Respondent with pertinent information as intended by this RFI.

1.14   Cost to Respondents
The State is not responsible for any costs incurred by a Respondent, which are related to the preparation or delivery of the response, any on-site inspection that may be required, or any other activities related to this RFI.

1.15   Responses Property of the State
All printed information used to demonstrate a Respondent's product becomes the property of the State. The State will have the right to use ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in the responses.

1.16   Sources of Information Used by the State In Addition to the Responses
The State reserves the right to contact Respondents after the submission of responses for the purpose of clarification and to ensure mutual understanding.

1.17   No Obligation to Issue RFI
The issuance of this RFI does not obligate the State in any way to issue an RFI for the goods and services described in this RFI.

Section II - Submittal Requirements

The requirements section expands on the desired functional feature set and outlines further technical, support and implementation requirements and considerations. The section is divided into cost/licensing, functionality, technical architecture, security, implementation and support, integration and market position.

Vendors are expected to respond to each individually numbered item with concise descriptions and sufficient detail for the evaluation team to assess the true application functionality.

2.1   Respondent Identifying Information

2.1.1   State the name and principal place of business of the Respondent.

2.1.2   Identify the Respondent's type of business entity such as a corporation or partnership.

2.1.3   State the Respondent's place of incorporation, if applicable. At the respondent's discretion, provide an organization chart for the Respondent. Include any parent, subsidiary and affiliate companies you feel may be relevant to this presentation.

2.1.4   State the name, address, email address, telephone number and FAX number of the Respondent representative to contact regarding all technical matters concerning this RFI.

2.2   Respondent References

2.2.1   List all jurisdictions or customers for which the Respondent has provided similar products.

2.2.2   Indicate the dates on which each contract began and ended or is expected to end.

2.2.3   Please include any applicable references, including name, telephone number and position of the reference with respect to the identified service, and explain how this could benefit the State.

2.3   Experience with Portals and Single Sign On Systems
Please provide narrative describing your experience with Portals and Single Sign On Systems (SSO) systems. Include information about who you provided the service for, particularly for public entities.

2.4   Overview
Overall implementation of an updated version of the EDPortal will allow users to be able to function and flow through different applications using the single sign on process. We are looking for a system that gives Iowa Department of Education users a single sign-on experience with the ability to authenticate and authorize access. Granting a user the ability to reset passwords and manage lock out. A user needs to request authorization for organizations and applications to perform their job within the realm of education. Users consist of all levels of school personnel including, but not limited to, Superintendents, Business officials, Principals,

Teachers, Associates, substitutes, Area Education Agency support, Transportation directors, Mechanics, Nutrition directors etc.

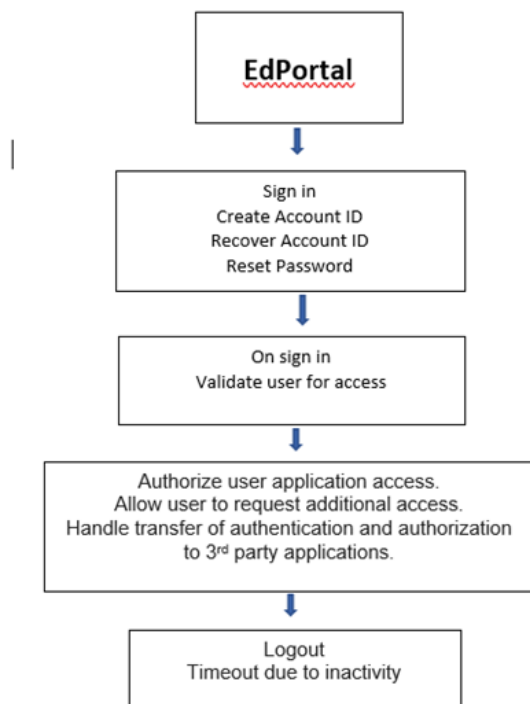Please provide an overview of your system.

2.5   Additional Functionality

The Iowa Department of Education is interested in what your system is capable of beyond the minimum requirements. Information about modules or additional features that could be added at the time of implementation or in a later phase is encouraged from vendors?

2.6   User Authentication Process

The below diagram is provided for illustrative purposes and is a high level depiction of the IDOE user authentication. Regardless of the structure, security is a paramount concern. Access to applications themselves will need to be limited to appropriate personnel (based on assigned security roles).

Please provide a data flow process for your system.

```
                ┌──────────────────┐
                │     EdPortal      │
                └──────────────────┘
                          │
                          ▼
         ┌─────────────────────────────┐
         │          Sign in             │
         │     Create Account ID        │
         │     Recover Account ID       │
         │       Reset Password         │
         └─────────────────────────────┘
                          │
                          ▼
         ┌─────────────────────────────┐
         │         On sign in           │
         │     Validate user for access │
         └─────────────────────────────┘
                          │
                          ▼
    ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
    │      Authorize user application access.     │
    │     Allow user to request additional access.│
    │  Handle transfer of authentication and      │
    │          authorization                      │
    │          to 3rd party applications.         │
    └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
                          │
                          ▼
         ┌─────────────────────────────┐
         │           Logout             │
         │    Timeout due to inactivity │
         └─────────────────────────────┘
```

2.7   Potential Usage

The Iowa Department of Education potential usage:

A system that can support 60,000+ users

A system that can support 10,000+ concurrent users

A system that supports 7,000+ diverse organizations (school districts, etc.)

Please provide examples of the number of users, applications, and organizations for your solutions.

2.8   Costs/Licensing

   a. Describe your licensing model and cost structure including initial and ongoing maintenance costs. What is the five-year total cost of ownership?
   b. What is your cost structure for enhancements and ongoing maintenance to the system? Is there a cost for adding programs or processes?
   c. Is there a cost based on the number of users and/or number of users logged in?
   d. Do you have an incremental structure for renewal of license?
   e. What is the cost difference between hosting internally vs vendor hosting?
   f. What is the cost for adding an application?

2.9   Organizational Structure

The Iowa Department of Education has an existing hierarchy of organizations which provides access and control to applications, organizations and reports.

   a. Describe your software's ability to manage organizations, relationship between organizations and organizational structure. Does your system have hierarchical levels for organizations, example: parent/child relations? Describe your software's ability to identify organization types, example: District, building, Area Education Agency, nutrition site, transportation company, preschool, etc.
   b. Describe how your software manages organizational changes over time?
   c. How many address types can be assigned to an organization?
   d. Does your software have custom fields for additional information relating to organizations?
   e. What other information is collected about an organization?

2.10   Applications

   a. Describe the process of setting up a new application and applicable roles.
   b. Does your software allow for unlimited applications?   Does your software allow applications to be set to specific organizations? Does your software allow applications to be set up for multiple organizations?
   c. How are specific applications associated with specific organizations?   Can application roles be set up for organizational levels. ex - Districts, buildings, AEA, state level.
   d. What software is used for integration of 3rd party applications. e.g.: SAML 2.0, OAuth, OpenID, etc**.**

2.11   User experience

   a. Describe your user authorization and authentication process. Does your software provide multi-factor authentication? How does your system create a unique ID for each user? Describe the process a user would experience to reset their password? Does the system have a recovery method for users unable to remember their accounts and/or passwords?

Are accounts locked upon invalid attempts? Can an account be unlocked by a user without administrator assistance?

b. Describe your software's process for a user to request access to applications. Does your software provide a bulk update to assign users access to applications? Does your software have the ability to autoprovision access?

c. Describe how your software can be personalized with custom branding for a desired look and feel.

d. Describe your software's notification/confirmation process ex: email approval/denial of application request? Does your software have a way to send out messages/alerts to individuals based upon system role, organization affiliation, application role, etc.? Does your software have the ability for a user to choose to receive portal and app-specific notifications?

e. Does your software have the ability to time a user out of the system after a predetermined length of inactivity? Can this limit be set by application?

f. Describe how your software displays authorized user applications. e.g.: menus vs dropdowns/hover overs. Describe how a user would view multiple organizations?

2.12   Security/system monitoring

a. Does your software have the ability to authorize persons to grant access to specific users and applications to each organization? Does your system have a master security administrator?

b. Describe your software's management of user/access. Does your software have the ability to export application/organization/user information to excel or spreadsheets?

c. Does your software have the ability to report a view of active users? Does your software provide any standard reports?

d. Does your software have the ability to report user access changes over time?

e. Does your system have the ability to: retire/delete users, retire/delete applications or close/delete organizations?

f. Describe your software's logging, auditing, and error reporting capabilities.

g. Does your system have a message board menu? Does your software have the ability to display messages on the home page? Does your software have the ability to post and manage notifications/alerts using multiple presentation/interface methods? How complex is it for messages to be updated? Can your message board support HTML code? Example: help info, links to user training guides, links to other educational sites.

h. Describe any value added features, functionality and/or products.

2.13   Technical Architecture

a. Describe your software's operating system (PC, MAC, Linux) support and compatibility. Explicitly identify any software features and functionality that aren't native to any of the client (PC, MAC, Linux) platforms.

b. Describe your software's client configuration requirements, including hardware, and operating system

c. Delineate the browser compatibility of your system. Does your software work on the following browsers: Google, FireFox, Safari, and Edge.

d. Describe your systems support for mobile devices including Ipads, Iphones, Androids and chromebooks. Does your system allow for some applications to have mobile support and not others?
e. Describe how your software is ADA / 508 compliant for the visually impaired, including compatibility with screen readers.

2.14   Security

a. Describe how your system protects a user and application privacy.
b. Describe your software security architecture between base application and 3rd party applications. Describe your software's operating system (PC, MAC, Linux) support and compatibility. Explicitly identify any software features and functionality that aren't native to any of the client (PC, MAC, Linux) platforms.

2.15   Implementation and Support

a. Response times for repairs and replacement components.
b. Provide description of scheduling procedures, lead time, and response time.
c. Describe in detail your software implementation process including typical timeline to implement.
d. Describe any recommended implementation services for your software.
e. Describe your software's functional and technical support mechanisms. Describe your software's support options, including availability and escalation processes.
f. Describe the various training options available for your software.
g. Describe your options for end user support.
h. Describe your system's availability, fault tolerance, business continuity, and disaster recovery plans.
i. Describe your plan for load balancing testing and user volume testing.
j. Describe the management of your system. Is your system hosted by your organization, in the cloud or client hosted?   Where is this deployed? Provide an overview of your technology stack.
k. For those systems where the vendor houses the repository, describe the physical security. Please include information on disaster recovery plans at that location.
l. Describe the documentation provided with the product along with applicable costs for any additional documentation.
m. Describe the skills and time required by Agency personnel for initial installation and implementation of the proposed system.
n. Are custom service levels available? If so, describe in detail

2.16   Integration

a. Describe the ability of the system to be integrated with 3rd party applications.
b. If the solution is hosted by the vendor, DE would like to reserve the right to extract information. How would a hosted system handle this kind of access? Describe in detail your software implementation process including typical timeline to implement.

Attachment 1
Form 22 – Request for Confidentiality

CONTRACTOR NOTE: SUBMISSION OF THIS FORM 22 IS REQUIRED

THIS FORM 22 (FORM) MUST BE COMPLETED AND INCLUDED WITH YOUR RESPONSE (PROPOSAL) TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFI). THE FORM IS REQUIRED WHETHER THE PROPOSAL DOES OR DOES NOT CONTAIN INFORMATION FOR WHICH CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT WILL BE REQUESTED.

FAILURE TO SUBMIT A COMPLETED FORM WILL RESULT IN THE PROPOSAL CONSIDERED NON-RESPONSIVE AND ELIMINATED FROM EVALUATION.

I. Confidential Treatment Is Not Requested
   A request for confidential treatment of information contained in our Proposal is not submitted.

_____   _____   _____
Company   RFI Number   RFI Title

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Title   Date

****

II. Confidential Treatment Is Requested

The below information is to be completed and signed ONLY if Contractor is requesting confidential treatment of any information submitted in its Proposal.

Per the paragraph labeled as Public Records and Requests for Confidential Treatment in section 2 of the Request for Proposal (RFI), a Contractor requesting portions of its Proposal be maintained in confidence must complete this form and submit it with its Proposal. Contractors should read and familiarize themselves with chapter 22 of the Iowa Code regarding release of public records before completing this Form. Contractor shall refer to the paragraph labeled as Public Records and Requests for Confidential Treatment in section 2 of the RFI for instructions regarding how to request confidential treatment of portions of its Proposal.

NOTE:
   1   ***Completion of this Form is the sole means of requesting confidential treatment*.**
   2   ***A CONTRACTOR MAY NOT REQUEST PRICING PROPOSALS BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE.***

Completion of the Form and Agency's acceptance of Contractor's submission does not guarantee the agency will grant Contractor's request for confidentiality. The Agency may reject Contractor's Proposal entirely in the event Contractor requests confidentiality and does submit a fully completed Form or requests confidentiality for portions of its Proposal that are improper under the RFI.

To request confidentiality, Contractor must provide the following information:

1 ☐ Contractor must conspicuously mark confidential material in its Proposal in accordance with the section titled Public Records and Requests for Confidential Treatment. ***Check box when completed.***

2 Contractor must specifically identify and list the Proposal section(s) for which it seeks confidentiality and answer the following questions for each section listed:
- Explain the specific grounds in *Iowa Code Chapter 22* or other applicable law which support treatment of the material as confidential.
- Justify why the material should be kept in confidence.
- Explain why disclosure of the material would not be in the best interest of the public.
- Provide the name, address, telephone, and email for the Contractor's person authorized to respond to inquiries by the Agency concerning the status of confidential materials.

Please provide the information in the table below. Contractor may add additional lines if necessary or add additional pages using the same format as the table below.

RFI Section:	Contractor must cite the specific grounds in *Iowa Code Chapter 22* or other applicable law which supports treatment of the material as confidential.	Contractor must justify why the material should be kept in confidence.	Contractor must explain why disclosure of the material would not be in the best interest of the public.	Contractor must provide the name, address, telephone, and email for the person at Contractor's organization authorized to respond to inquiries by the Agency concerning the status of confidential materials.

3 ☐ Contractor must submit a Public Copy of its Proposal from which the confidential information has been excised. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the Proposal as possible**. *Check box when completed.***

This Form must be signed by the individual who signed the Contractor's Proposal. The Contractor shall place this Form completed and signed in its Proposal immediately following the transmittal letter. A copy of this document shall be placed in all Proposals submitted including the Public Copy.

*Failure to provide the information required on this Form may result in rejection of Contractor's submittal to request confidentiality or rejection of the Proposal as being non-responsive.

*Please note that this Form is to be completed and signed only if you are submitting a request for confidential treatment of any information submitted in your Proposal.

_____   _____   _____
Company   RFI Number   RFI Title

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Title   Date

Department of Administrative Services – Central Procurement Bureau Review
(For Agency use only)

☐   Contractor's Proposal is rejected as non-compliant because of one or more of the following reasons:

     ☐   Contractor's Proposal is rejected due to not submitting a fully completed Form 22 to either request or not request confidential treatment of information.

     ☐   Contractor's Proposal is rejected due to the request to treat the entire response as confidential.

     ☐   Contractor's Proposal is rejected due to the request to treat Proposal pricing as confidential.

     ☐   Contractor requested confidentiality without submitting a ***fully completed*** Form 22.

     ☐   Contractor requested confidentiality and failed to conspicuously mark such material as confidential within its Proposal in accordance with the RFI.

     ☐   Contractor requested confidentiality without submitting a public copy of its Proposal with the confidential information redacted.

     ☐   Contractor requested confidentiality on material in contravention of the RFI.

     ☐   Other: _____.

☐   Contractor's submission is accepted.[1]

_____   _____

Purchasing Agent Signature   Date

_____   _____

RFI Number   RFI Title

NOTE: Agency's acceptance of Contractor's submission should not be construed as Agency's approval of Contractor's request for confidentiality. Instead, acceptance of Contractor's submission simply means that Agency believes Contractor's Form 22 appears fully completed in accordance with the RFI.