



Alabama Department of Human Resources
SNAP/TANF Information System Quality Assurance RFP 2022-500-05: Round 1

Q1.

1.	General			Could ALDHR share its current SDLC lifecycle diagram?
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R1.

DHR will not prescribe an SDLC for this project. DHR has requested that the DDI Vendor provide details on their preferred SDLC as part of their response to the DDI RFP.

Q2.

2.	General			Could ALDHR share its current gating criteria if one exists?
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R2.

Please reference Section 3.15.1 for information on the gate reviews. Additional information on gate reviews for the project are contained in Section 3.7.1 of the DDI RFP which can be found on the DHR website at <https://dhr.alabama.gov/snap-tanf-information-system/>.

Q3.

3.	General			What tools are in-house or to be acquired for project, requirements, test case and defect management; test automation and performance testing, security testing, code builds (configuration management). What other tools are in-house or to be procured for what purpose?
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R3.

DHR does not have requirements for any specific tools for the processes outlined in this question. DHR has requested the DDI Vendor to provide details on their project, requirements, testing, defect management, and configuration management processes. This information will be available once the DDI RFP proposals are received and evaluated.

Q4.

4.	General			What tools are in-house or to be acquired for problem/issue (tasks, risks, issues, action items, decisions) management?
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R4.
Please see the response to Question 3.

Q5.

5.	1.0: Project Overview (3 rd Bullet)	7		Please explain expectation for the QA vendor to ensure delivered solutions meet the intended timeframes within budget when delays may be outside the control of the QA vendor.
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R5.

As stated in Appendix F: Contractor Cost Proposal, the QA Contractor should provide staffing costs for the DDI phase, Stabilization phase, and Option Years 1 and 2. DHR will make adjustments to the dates for these phases depending on the DDI Contractor’s project schedule.

Q6.

6.	3.0: Purpose of the RFP	23		Text states the QA Contractor will also be responsible for planning, training of State staff, and executing a full Quality Assurance Test and User Acceptance Test (UAT...” Is the assumption that the training is only for State Staff supporting the execution of the Quality Assurance Test and UAT.)
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R6.

Yes. For purposes of Section 3.0, the QA Contractor will train State staff as part of its preparation for executing a full QA and UAT. QA Contractor must also provide UAT training for the DDI Vendor prior to the conclusion of the Stabilization M&O phase. Please see the last paragraph in Section 3.8.

Q7.

7.	3.7: QA Contractor Staffing	27		Should this section be submitted as part of the SOW response in Section 4.2.5.3.1 or as part of the Staffing required in 4.2.5.1.4?
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R7.

Contractors should submit QA Contractor Staffing as part of their response to Section 4.2.5.1.4.

Q8.



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8.	3.6: Quality Assurance Contractor Responsibilities	27		QA Contractor as Test Director for QA Testing and UAT – is the Testing QA Specialist expected to serve in the role of Test Director?
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R8.
The QA Contractor should detail their plans for meeting the requirements and responsibilities outlined in the RFP. DHR has no preference or guidance as to which QA Contractor staff assumes responsibility for this specific task.

Q9.

9.	3.7.3: Project Staff Resumes	28		Are resumes required for all proposed staff or just key personnel?
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R9.
Resumes are required for key staff only.

Q10.

10.	3.7.2: Work Location	28		<p>“The State will provide office space free of charge for up to three (3) QA Contractor staff for the period of time between the QA Contractor award and the DDI Contractor securing suitable office space...”</p> <p>Is there space available for more than three (3) Contractor staff if needed?</p> <p>If yes, how would the State calculate the cost of additional space.</p>
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R10.
DHR cannot commit to having additional space at this time. If space is not available for additional QA Contractor staff, the additional staff members would work remotely until the permanent project worksite is available.

Q11.

11.	3.7.3: Project Staff Resumes (Bullets 3 & 4)	29		<p>Is the client contact information in Bullet 4 a duplicate of the client contact information required in Bullet 3?</p> <p>We assume that only 3 references are required for each key personnel.</p>
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				Is this assumption correct?
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R11.
Only three (3) references are required for each individual proposed for this project.

Q12.

12.	3.7.4: QA Contractor Key Staff	33		Are QA Testing and UAT teams only responsible for functionality testing or are they required to be doing any other type of testing like non-functional, automation script development/execution?
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R12.
The testing done by the QA and UAT teams will cover all facets of the system's operations and test all of the system processing options and environmental conditions for all user interfaces, various transaction sets and sequences to challenge the system's operations and design. This is intended to be a comprehensive test of overall system functionality. The QA Contractor is expected to use the best mix of manual and/or automated testing to thoroughly exercise system functionality as efficiently as possible during QA Testing. Additionally, during UAT, the QA Contractor is expected to use the best mix of manual and/or automated techniques to test the daily reconciliation process between the State legacy systems and the STIS that will run during Pilot. The ALDHR staff on the UAT teams are expected to conduct manual functionality testing, utilizing the system as they would in their day-to-day work.

Q13.

13.	3.8: QA Work Plan (1st paragraph)	35		Is this like QA Contractor staff providing training to DDI Contractor's staff so the DDI staff gets well versed in adhering to the best processes and practices?
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R13.
As detailed in the first paragraph of Section 3.8, "The State expects that the QA Work Plan will be documented and updated on an on-going basis to reflect the current status of the Project. Both the State and the DDI Contractor will provide the QA Contractor with the information and assistance necessary to timely and thoroughly verify and validate project status and quality/ accuracy of deliverable work products."

Q14.

14.	3.11.1: QA Work Plan	36		Does the State currently use or prefer a tool for maintaining a project
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				schedule? For example, Microsoft Project.
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R14.
Microsoft Project.

Q15.

15.	3.11.10: QA Testing Plan	38		Since QA Contractor is responsible for the planning and execution of QA Testing, if necessary, can QA Contractor bring in additional test resources other than Testing QA Specialist?
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R15.
Yes. The QA Contractor may bring in additional test resources as it deems necessary to meet its responsibilities. QA Contractors must ensure that all costs, staffing and otherwise, are included in the QA Contractor's firm fixed price proposal cost.

Q16.

16.	3.11.10: QA Testing Plan	38		What are the different types of testing scope for QA Testing?
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R16.
QA Testing is intended to be a comprehensive test of overall system functionality. It should cover all facets of the system's operations and test all the system processing options and environmental conditions for all user interfaces, various transaction sets and sequences to challenge the system's operations and design. The QA Contractor is expected to use the best mix of manual and/or automated testing to thoroughly exercise system functionality as efficiently as possible.

Q17.

17.	3.11.11: UAT Testing Plan	38		Is QA Contractor expected to write test cases for UAT Or is it only the test management and leadership for test oversight, monitoring, governance, test planning and execution?
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R17.
The QA Contractor will be responsible for the planning and execution of UAT including preparation of the test cases. DHR SNAP and TANF subject matter experts will be available for writing test cases but must be supervised and trained by the QA Contractor. The QA Contractor is ultimately responsibility for the preparation of the UAT testing plan.



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Q18.

18.	3.11.11: UAT Testing Plan	38		Is UAT team responsible only for functionality testing or will they be doing any other type of testing like non-functional, automation script development/execution?
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R18.

Please see response to Question 12.

Q19.

19.	3.12.3: Quarterly Meetings and Reports	40		Please identify or provide a count of the “various committees” the QA Contractor may have to provide quarterly presentations.
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R19.

DHR does not have plans for any committees other than the Executive Steering Committee described in Section 3.12.2. There may be ad hoc meetings periodically during the term of the agreement with state or federal stakeholders in which the QA Contractor must provide a status report or a brief presentation.

Q20.

20.	3.15: General Project Requirements	43		Please clarify if ALDHR and ALDHR-request are two separate streams for making requests.
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R20.

The referenced provision contains a typographical error. The last bullet in Section 3.15 should read “Comply with requests for meetings, information, or documents from ALDHR.”

Q21.

21.	3.19.1: State Responsibilities	48		Would the State provide a list of advisory committee meetings and identify the ones that are quarterly and those that are semi-annual?
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R21.

DHR does not have plans for any committees other than the Executive Steering Committee described in Section 3.12.2. There may be ad hoc meetings periodically



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during the term of the agreement with state or federal stakeholders in which the QA Contractor must provide a status report or a brief presentation.

Q22.

22.	3.19.9: Overview of Project Tests	51		Will ALDHR project SMEs contribute to test cases/scripts development as part of QA Testing?
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R22.

Yes. Please see answer to Question 17.

Q23.

23.	3.19.9: Overview of Project Tests	51		Is it correct to say that QA Contractor should develop test scripts for both QA Testing and UAT?
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R23.

Yes. Please see answers to Questions 17 and 22.

Q24.

24.	3.19.9: Overview of Project Tests	51		Would ALDHR staff log, retest, and close defects or is QA Contractor expected to perform this responsibility?
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R24.

The DDI Contractor is responsible for logging, retesting and closing defects for Unit, Interface, System (Integration), Performance, and Conversion Testing. The QA Contractor is responsible for monitoring the management and disposition of defects resulting from the testing activities of the DDI Contractor. The QA Contractor is responsible for logging, retesting and closing defects for QA and User Acceptance Testing. ALDHR staff is responsible for monitoring the management and disposition of defects resulting from QA and User Acceptance Testing, as well as oversight of all defect management through the entire life of the project.

Q25.

25.	3.19.9: Overview of Project Tests	51		How many ALDHR project SMEs will participate with script development/modification and test execution in the QA Testing phase?
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R25.



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A total of ten (10) DHR subject matter experts will participate with script development, modification, and test execution. Please see responses to Question 17.

Q26.

26.	3.19.14: Training	52		Would DDI Contractor also provide training for the QA Testing team?
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R26.
Yes

Q27.

27.	3.19.15: Data Conversion and Migration	53		From how many ALDHR legacy systems the data will have to be extracted, converted, and loaded into the STIS?
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R27.

Data will be extracted from thirteen (13) DHR legacy systems. Please reference these systems in Table 1 of the DDI RFP which is available on the DHR website at <https://dhr.alabama.gov/snap-tanf-information-system/>

Q28.

28.	3.19.16: Integration and Interface	53		With how many internal and external systems, the STIS should be integrated, and interface tested?
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R28.

Please reference Section 3.2.1.3 of the DDI RFP which is available on the DHR website at <https://dhr.alabama.gov/snap-tanf-information-system/>. This section provides details on the current SNAP and TANF interfaces. The QA Contractor must test all internal and external interfaces.

Q29.

29.	4.2: Proposal Format	56		This section states we must use TNR 12 pt., black print. Are bidders allowed to use color in graphics, headers/footers, covers, tabs, and/or headings or is the proposal to be entirely in black and white? May we use a font size larger than 12 pt. for headings?
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R29.
Yes, bidders may use color in graphics, headers/footers, covers, tabs, and/or headings. Bidders may also use a font size larger than 12 point for headings.

Q30.

30.	4.2.4: Licenses/ Certificates/ Credentials	57		Please specify what licenses, certificates, and/or credentials are required for the response.
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R30.
The respondent should provide a copy of any license or certificate of any kind that relates to the requirements requested in the RFP.

Q31.

31.	4.2.5.1.4: Project Staff/Resumes/ Job Descriptions	59		This states that bidders may submit a resume or job description for key personnel. RFP Section 3.7.3 states that resumes are required. Please confirm that bidders may submit a job description in lieu of a resume if the key person has not been identified as of proposal submission.
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R31.
Bidders may submit a job description in lieu of a resume for any key position that has not been filled as of proposal submission.

Q32.

32.	4.2.5.1.5: Staff Performance Evaluation and Training	59		Where do we find the State's performance standards mentioned in this section?
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R32.
The provision in Section 4.2.5.1.5 contains a typographical error. Please substitute the word “contractor’s” for “Department’s”. The corrected requirement should read:
“Contractors must describe their staff development program regarding orientation, on-going staff evaluation and training that will be implemented throughout the contract period to ensure delivery of effective services that adhere to the contractor’s required performance standards.”



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Q33.

33.	4.2.5.2: Contractor Financial Stability	59		As a publicly traded company, we must submit a 10-K annually to the SEC. The 10-K contains a statement from the firm that performs the audit of our financial statements. Is the signed statement from our 2018 and 2019 10-Ks acceptable?
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R33.

No. Contractors must provide a copy of the audited financial statements.

Q34.

34.	4.2.5.3.1: Service Delivery Approach	59		<p>This paragraph states, "All services as specified in Section 3: Scope of Project must be addressed in the Service Delivery Approach." There are several sections that are addressed elsewhere in the proposal response format (for example 3.7.3 is also required in 4.2.5.1.4; 3.8 is also required in 4.2.5.3.2).</p> <p>Could the State clarify which parts of Section 3 are required to be addressed in response to this section of the proposal?</p>
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R34.

Section 3 describes what should be included in the Section 4.2.5.3.1 Service Delivery approach, so all the items in Section 3 should be addressed.

Q35.

35.	4.2.5.3.1: Service Delivery Approach	59		We are assuming that we do not need to use the section numbering from Section 3. Is this assumption correct?
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R35.

Yes.

Q36.



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36.	5.0: Cost Proposal	62		Should the Cost Proposal be separately sealed from the Technical Proposal?
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R36.
The cost proposal need not be separately sealed from the technical proposal. It is acceptable to include it in the response under a separate tab labeled “Cost Proposal”.

Q37.

37.	Appendix A: Standard Terms and Conditions	73		<p>Will the Department agree to add the below commercially reasonable limit of liability as a new section in Appendix A: Standard Terms and Conditions?</p> <p>Placing a reasonable cap on our liability is a prudent business practice that we work with all our clients to achieve in our contracts. It does not speak to our ability to, or confidence in, completing the services successfully, however without a reasonable cap on our liability we cannot predict our potential exposure to damages which may make it challenging to enter into a contract.</p> <p>Limitation of Liability Client agrees that Contractor's total liability to Client for any and all damages whatsoever arising out of, or in any way related to, this Agreement from any cause, including but not limited to negligence, errors, omissions, strict liability, breach of contract or breach of warranty shall not, in the aggregate, exceed the total contract value.</p> <p>In no event shall Contractor be liable for indirect, special, incidental, economic, consequential or punitive damages, including but not limited to lost revenue, lost profits, replacement goods, loss of technology rights or services, loss of data, or interruption or loss of use of software or any portion thereof regardless of the legal theory under which such damages are sought even if Contractor has been advised of the likelihood of such damages, and notwithstanding any failure of essential purpose of any limited remedy.</p>
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R37.

DHR will not modify the language of Appendix A: Standard Terms and Conditions. By submitting a response to this RFP, contractors agree to accept the standard terms and conditions contained in Appendix A.

Q38.

38.	Appendix A: Standard Terms and Conditions, Hold Harmless/ Indemnification	74		<p>Will the Department agree to add/replace the bolded language below in paragraph one (1) of the Hold Harmless/Indemnification clause in Appendix A: Standard Terms and Conditions?</p> <p>Limiting our indemnification obligations to damages arising out of our negligence or willful misconduct is prudent business practice that we work with all our clients to achieve in our contracts. Again, it does not speak to our ability to, or confidence in, completing the services successfully, however without our indemnification duty being tied to our negligent actions or willful misconduct, we cannot predict our exposure to potential damages which may make it challenging to enter into a contract.</p> <p><u>HOLD HARMLESS/ INDEMNIFICATION</u> To the extent allowed by applicable Alabama law, the contractor will at all times indemnify and save harmless the Department against any and all proven direct damages, liabilities and costs (including reasonable attorneys' fees) which the Department may hereafter sustain, incur, or be required or ordered to pay: (1) by reason of any persons to be served under this Agreement suffering a loss or damage, proximately caused by the negligent actions or willful misconduct of the contractor, either while participating in or receiving from the contractor the services to be provided hereunder or while on premises owned, leased, or operated by the contractor; or (2) by reason of any person suffering personal injury, death, or property loss or damage proximately caused by the negligent actions or willful misconduct of any officer, agent,</p>
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				<p>employee or volunteer of the contractor; or (3) by reason of any officer, agent, employee or volunteer of the contractor suffering personal injury, death, or property loss or damage proximately caused by the negligent actions or willful misconduct of contractor; provided, however, that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to liabilities, losses, charges, costs, or expenses caused by or resulting from the acts or omissions of the Department or any of its officers, employees, agents or representatives.</p>
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R38.
DHR will not modify the language of Appendix A: Standard Terms and Conditions. By submitting a response to this RFP, contractors agree to accept the standard terms and conditions contained in Appendix A.

Q39.

39.	3.11.10: QA Testing Plan	38		<p>It is our understanding that according to the QA Testing Plan section, that the QA vendor will provide QA testers for the effort.</p> <p>Can ALDHR confirm that the QA vendor is expected to provide the QA testers that will execute the QA test scripts?</p> <p>Can ALDHR share an approximate number of test scripts and other test artifacts to assist with quantifying the QA test effort?</p>
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R39.
Please see response to Question 17.
The QA Contractor is responsible for the planning and execution of the QA testing phase. The QA Contractor may utilize the ten (10) DHR subject matter experts to execute the test scripts and perform the test. DHR does not have an approximate number of test scripts or artifacts to assist with quantifying the QA test effort.

Q40.

40.	3.1: Statement of Work	23		<p>Can the state provide a copy of the IAPD submitted (and approved) by FNS?</p>
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R40.
DHR will not provide a copy of the IAPD submitted to FNS.

Q41.

41.	4.2.5.3.2: Start-up Plan	59		Is a high-level milestone schedule for the DDI project available to allow the QA work plan to be specific for phases such as User Acceptance Testing? If so, can the state provide a copy?
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R41.
No high-level milestone schedule is available at this point. Contractors are encouraged to refer to Section 3.8 for the estimated dates of the DDI period and Stabilization M&O period for the project.

Q42.

42.	1.8.1: Required Copies and deadline for Receipt of Proposals	10		Would ALDHR consider waiving the requirement that we submit hard copies of our proposal and instead allow electronic (email) submission?
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R42.
No.

Q43.

43.	3.7.2: Work Location	28		Would ALDHR consider allowing respondents to perform some or most of the project work remotely, or is it a requirement that project work be conducted exclusively onsite in Montgomery?
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R43.
All QA Contractor key staff must work onsite at the project worksite in Montgomery. Non key staff members who do not need frequent interaction with DHR project team staff may work remotely. Respondents must clearly delineate which staff it proposes to work remotely in their response.

Q44.

44.	3.7.3: Project Staff Resumes	29		Must respondents include contact information for all proposed team members' relevant project experience,
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				or is it acceptable to only include contact information for one or two relevant projects?
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R44.
Respondents should include any relevant project experience that they feel best illustrates the capabilities of their proposed team members.

Q45.

45.	3.7.4: QA Contractor Key Staff/ 4.2.5.1: Contractor Qualifying Information	29 & 57		Will the State accept experience providing Program and Project Management Office (PMO) Services that included a significant amount of quality assurance oversight activities to meet the required years of contractor and contractor staff experience?
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R45.
Respondents should include any relevant project experience that they feel best illustrates the capabilities of their proposed team members.

Q46.

46.	4.2.5.2: Contractor Financial Stability	59	Contractors must submit an audited financial statement for year 2020 and letters from the auditor(s) who performed the 2019 and 2018 financial audits. Contractors of newly formed organizations, who have been in business less than one (1) year must submit copies of any official quarterly financial statements (from a financial institution) that have been prepared since the end of the period reported by your most recent annual report.	States that audited financial statements for the year 2020 is required. We are a private company and as such we do not have any audited financial statements. Would our financial statements generated by our financial software be acceptable to the State?
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R46.
No. Vendors must provide a copy of the audited financial statements.

Q47.

47.	6.0: Evaluation Scoring	64		Table 3 – Proposal Evaluation Criteria Lessons learned of a successful similar project like the STIS QA project requires relevant and depth of experience from project staff. Would the State be open to changing
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				evaluation criteria to 30/70 % allocation between A. Contactor profile and experience and E, Staff Performances Evaluation and Training?
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R47.
No.

The following questions were asked by contractors during the June 16, 2022, Pre-Proposal Conference.

Q48.

48.	General			Is a company required to be registered to do business in Alabama in order to submit a response to the QA RFP?
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R48.
Yes.

Q49.

49.	Section 3.7.4 Table 1	31-32	<p>The Change Readiness/ Communications/ Training QA Specialist must have the following experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Previous experience developing training, communications, and change readiness programs for social services-oriented implementation projects b. Five years of experience managing training, communications or change readiness on projects of similar scope and complexity c. Formal training in communications, change readiness methodologies and training techniques d. Experience in the development of business process change methodologies e. Excellent written and communication skills f. Demonstrated ability to manage team members and work with customers g. Experience and proficiency in mentoring staff <p>The following additional experience is preferred:</p>	<p>It appears that the years of experience, qualifications, and other details are missing for the Change Readiness / Communications / Training QA Specialist position.</p>
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			<p>a. Previous experience developing change readiness/management programs for SNAP and/or TANF systems implementation projects</p> <p>b. Experience developing change readiness campaigns for bringing together multiple independent program staff into an integrated enterprise collaborative workforce</p> <p>c. Experience in dealing with a diverse set of people and ideas and demonstrating a spirit of openness, adaptability, and willingness to work toward compromise when needed</p>	
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R49.
The details are actually provided in Table 1 for the Change Readiness/ Communications/ Training QA Specialist position on page 31 and 32. The table row breaks on page 31 and the detail in question is continued in the row on page 32.