

Jones County Schools



SOLICITATION NUMBER: 24-68

ELECTRONIC REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (eRFP)

FOR

ERATE DATA CENTER CORE UPGRADES

**Jones County Schools
125 Stewart Ave
Gray, GA, 31032**



Jones County School System

Facility: District Level Contract

Electronic Request for Proposals (“eRFP”)

Event Name: ERATE Data Center Core Upgrades

eRFP (Event) Number: 24-68

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of Procurement

Pursuant to the State Purchasing Act (Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§50-5-50 et seq.), this electronic Request for Proposals (“eRFP”) is being issued to establish a contract with a qualified provider for Jones County School System (hereinafter, “JCSS”) as further described in this eRFP.

JCSS seeks responsible and responsive vendors to provide a proposal to install and configure a replacement solution for our data center core chassis switch and to realign, test, and label all patch panels in the data center.

1.2. eRFP Certification

Pursuant to the provisions of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated §50-5-67(a), JCSS certifies the use of competitive sealed bidding will not be practicable or advantageous to JCSS in completing the acquisition described in this eRFP. Thus, competitive sealed proposals will be submitted in response to this eRFP. This eRFP is being sourced through an electronic sourcing tool approved by the school district and all suppliers’ responses must be submitted electronically in accordance with the instructions contained in Section 2 “Instructions to Suppliers” of this eRFP. Electronic competitive sealed proposals will be administered pursuant to the Georgia Electronic Records and Signature Act. Please note electronic competitive sealed proposals meet the sealed proposal requirements of the State of Georgia, an electronic record meets any requirements for writing, and an electronic signature meets any requirements for an original signature.

1.3. Overview of the eRFP Process

The objective of the eRFP is to select a qualified supplier to provide the goods and/or services outlined in this eRFP to JCSS. This eRFP process will be conducted to gather and evaluate responses from suppliers for potential award. All qualified suppliers are invited to participate by submitting responses, as defined below. After evaluating all suppliers’ responses received prior to the closing date of this eRFP and following negotiations (if any) and resolution of any contract exceptions, the preliminary results of the eRFP process will be publicly announced, including the names of all participating suppliers and the evaluation results. Subject to the protest process, final contract award(s) will be publicly announced thereafter.

NOTE TO SUPPLIERS: The general instructions and provisions of this document have been drafted with the expectation that JCSS will make a single award; however, please refer to Section 6.7 “Selection and Award” of this eRFP for information concerning JCSS’s actual award strategy (single, multiple, split awards, etc).

1.4. Schedule of Events

The schedule of events set out herein represents JCSS’s best estimate of the schedule that will be followed. However, delays to the procurement process may occur which may necessitate adjustments to the proposed schedule. If a component of this schedule, such as the close date, is delayed, the rest of the schedule may be shifted as appropriate. Any changes to the dates up to the closing date of the eRFP will be publicly posted prior to the closing date of this eRFP. After the close of the eRFP, JCSS reserves the

right to adjust the remainder of the proposed dates, including the dates for evaluation, negotiations, award and the contract term on an as needed basis with or without notice.

Description	Date	Time
Release of eRFP	01/03/2024	NA
Bidders/Offerors' Conference Location: MANDATORY through a ZOOM Meeting	01/11/2024	2:00 p.m. ET
Deadline for written questions sent via email to the Issuing Officer referenced in Section 1.5.	01/10/2024	4:00 p.m. ET
Responses to Written Questions	01/12/2024	4:00 p.m. ET
Proposals Due/Close Date and Time	02/05/2024	1:00 p.m. ET
Proposal Evaluation Completed (on or about)	02/08/2024	N/A
Notice of Intent to Award* [NOIA] (on or about)	02/09/2024	N/A
Notice of Award [NOA] (on or about)	10 calendar days after NOIA	N/A

*In the event the estimated value of the contract is less than \$100,000, the State Entity reserves the right to proceed directly to contract award without posting a Notice of Intent to Award.

1.5. Official Issuing Officer (Buyer)

Raymond Braziel

raymond.braziel@jones.k12.ga.us

1.6. Definition of Terms

Please review the following terms:

Supplier(s) – companies desiring to do business with Jones County School System.

Any special terms or words that are not identified in this eRFP Document may be identified separately in one or more attachments to the eRFP. Please download, save, and carefully review all documents in accordance with the instructions provided in Section 2 “Instructions to Suppliers” of this eRFP.

1.7. Contract Term

The initial term of the contract(s) shall be from the date of award until the end of JCSS’s current fiscal year. Jones County School System’s fiscal year is from July 1st through June 30th. JCSS shall possess 1 one (1) year option(s) to renew, which options shall be exercisable at the sole discretion of Jones County School System. The maximum number of renewals will be five (5). Renewal will be accomplished through the issuance of a Notice of Award Amendment. In the event that the contract(s), if any, resulting from the award of this eRFP shall terminate or be likely to terminate prior to the making of an award for a new contract for the identified products and/or services, JCSS may, with the written consent of the awarded supplier(s), extend the contract(s) for such period of time as may be necessary to permit JCSS’s continued supply of the identified products and/or services. The contract(s) may be amended in writing from time to time by mutual consent of the parties. Unless this eRFP states otherwise, the resulting award of the contract(s) does not guarantee volume or a commitment of funds.

2. Instructions to Offerors

By submitting a response to the eRFP, the supplier is acknowledging that the supplier:

1. Has read the information and instructions,
2. Agrees to comply with the information and instructions contained herein.

2.1. General Information and Instructions

2.1.1. Vendor Registry System

JCSS utilizes a web-based registration system for all quotes, bids and proposals. All companies and/or individuals interested in conducting business with JCSS can register in the System's web-based registration system, through Vendor Registry.

Vendor Registry-Registration is free and enables the supplier to gain access to several local governments and local school systems. All registering companies must agree to the terms and conditions established by Vendor Registry. There are optional and premium services should you choose to purchase them. You can register at <https://vrapp.vendorregistry.com/Vendor/Register/Index/jones-county-school-system-ga-vendor-registration>. The electronic submissions must be submitted through Vendor Registry

2.1.2. Restrictions on Communicating with Staff

From the issue date of this eRFP until the final award is announced, Offerors are not allowed to communicate for any reason with any school system staff **except through the Issuing Officer** named herein, or during the Bidders/Offerors' conference (if any), or as defined in this eRFP or as provided by existing work agreement(s). Prohibited communication includes all contact or interaction, including but not limited to telephonic communications, emails, faxes, letters, or personal meetings, such as lunch, entertainment, or otherwise. JCSS reserves the right to reject the proposal of any Offeror violating this provision.

2.1.3. Submitting Questions

All questions concerning this eRFP must be submitted in writing via email to the Issuing Officer identified in Section 1.5 "Issuing Officer" of this eRFP. No questions other than written will be accepted. No response other than written will be binding upon JCSS. All suppliers must submit questions by the deadline identified in the Schedule of Events for submitting questions. Suppliers are cautioned that JCSS may or may not elect to entertain late questions or questions submitted by any other method than as directed by this section. All questions about this eRFP must be submitted in the following format:

Company Name

Question #1 Question, *Citation of relevant section of the eRFP*

Question #2 Question, *Citation of relevant section of the eRFP*

2.1.4. Attending Bidders/Offerors' Conference

The Pre-bid meeting will be held via Zoom on 01/11/2024 at 2:00 p.m. EST. The Zoom link will be placed on the Vendor Registry website. **THE PRE-BID MEETING IS MANDATORY. Please check the link prior to the Mandatory Meeting Date to ensure that it works.**

2.1.5. JCSS's Right to Request Additional Information – Supplier's Responsibility

Prior to the contract award, JCSS must be assured that the selected supplier has all the resources to successfully perform under the contract. This includes, but is not limited to, an adequate number of personnel with required skills, availability of appropriate equipment in sufficient quantity to meet the ongoing needs of JCSS, financial resources sufficient to complete performance under the contract, and experience in similar endeavors. If, during the evaluation process, JCSS is unable to assure itself of the supplier's ability to perform, if awarded, JCSS has the option of requesting from the supplier any information deemed necessary to determine the supplier's responsibility. If such information is required, the supplier will be notified and will be permitted approximately seven business days to submit the information requested.

2.1.6. Failing to Comply with Submission Instructions

Responses received after the identified due date and time or submitted by any other means than those expressly permitted by the eRFP will not be considered. Suppliers' responses must be complete in all respects, as required in each section of this eRFP.

2.1.7. Rejection of Proposals; JCSS's Right to Waive Immaterial Deviation

Jones County School System reserves the right to reject any or all responses, to waive any irregularity or informality in a supplier's response, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items, when to do so would be to the advantage of Jones County Board of Education. It is also within the right of JCSS to reject responses **that do not contain all elements and information requested in this eRFP**. A supplier's response will be rejected if the response contains any defect or irregularity and such defect or irregularity constitutes a material deviation from the eRFP requirements, which determination will be made by JCSS on a case-by-case basis.

2.1.8. JCSS's Right to Amend and/or Cancel the eRFP

JCSS reserves the right to amend this eRFP prior to the end date and time. Amendments will be made in writing and publicly posted as one or more addenda to Vendor Registry. **EACH SUPPLIER IS INDIVIDUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEWING ADDENDA AND ANY OTHER POSTED DOCUMENTS AND MAKING ANY NECESSARY OR APPROPRIATE CHANGES AND/OR ADDITIONS TO THE SUPPLIER'S RESPONSE. ALL SUPPLIERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO FREQUENTLY CHECK THE VENDOR REGISTRY FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.** Finally, JCSS reserves the right to cancel this eRFP at any time.

2.1.9. Protest Process

A protest must be received within ten (10) calendar days after the protesting party knows or should have known of the occurrence of the action, which is protested, or the protest filing deadline located below, whichever date is earlier. JCSS will not consider untimely protest absent evidence of malfeasance or administrative error by the system that substantially impaired an interested supplier's ability to file a timely protest. In the event that the system does not provide a timely access to records as required in pursuant to (O.C.G.A) Section 50-5-67(d)(2), the interested supplier is required to file a protest within the filing period, indicating the failure of the system to provide timely access to records and reserving the right to file an amended protest upon the production of such records. If an interested supplier fails to file a protest by the applicable deadline, JCSS at its discretion deem such failure as the supplier's voluntary relinquishment of any grounds the supplier may have for protesting through JCSS' protest process or through subsequent litigation.

A protest is considered to be properly filed when it is in writing, signed by a company officer authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the supplier, and is received by JCSS within the filing period. The protest may be sent by any means outlined below:

Mail: Att: Raymond Braziel
Jones County School System
125 Stewart Ave,
Gray, GA 31032

Email: raymond.braziel@jones.k12.ga.us

Protest Filing Deadlines		
Type of Protest	Dollar Threshold	Protest Filing Deadline
Challenge to Competitive Solicitation	\$10,000 to \$249,999.99	One business day prior to the closing date and time of the solicitation as

Process		identified on the GPR
	\$250,000.00 or greater	Two business days prior to the closing date and time of the solicitation as published on the GPR.
Challenge to Sole Source Notice	N/A	Prior to closing date and time of the Sole Source Notice as published on the GPR
Challenge to Consortium/Cooperative Purchase Notice	N/A	Prior to closing date and time of the Notice of Intent to purchase from the Consortia/Cooperative as published on the GPR
Challenge to the Results of RFQC	N/A	The protest notice must be filed within ten calendar days of the date the RFQC list of Qualified Contractors is posted.

2.1.10. Costs for Preparing Proposals

Each supplier’s response should be prepared simply and economically, avoiding the use of elaborate promotional materials beyond those sufficient to provide a complete presentation. The cost for developing the response and participating in the procurement process (including the protest process) is the sole responsibility of the supplier. JCSS will not provide reimbursement for such costs.

2.1.11. ADA Guidelines

JCSS adheres to the guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Suppliers should contact the Issuing Officer at least one day in advance if they require special arrangements when attending the Bidders/Offerors’ Conference (if any). The Georgia Relay Center at 1-800-255-0056 (TDD Only) or 1-800-255-0135 (Voice) will relay messages, in strict confidence, for the speech and hearing impaired.

2.1.12. Public Access to Procurement Records

Solicitation opportunities will be publicly advertised as required by law and the provisions of the Georgia Procurement Manual. The State Purchasing Act delays the release of certain procurement records in the event the public disclosure of those records prior to JCSS’s public announcements of the results of a solicitation would undermine the public purpose of obtaining the best value for the System such as cost estimates, proposals/bids, evaluation criteria, supplier evaluations, negotiation documents, offers and counteroffers, and certain records revealing preparation for the procurement. The State Purchasing Act requires bids and proposals to be available for public inspection, upon request, within one business day of JCSS’s posting of the Notice of Intent to Award (or the Notice of Award in the event JCSS does not issue the Notice of Intent to Award). Audited financial statements not otherwise publicly available but required to be submitted as part of the supplier’s response shall not be subject to public disclosure. JCSS is allowed to assess a reasonable charge to defray the cost of reproducing documents. A system employee should be present during the time of onsite inspection of documents. PLEASE NOTE: Even though information (financial or other information) submitted by a supplier may be marked as "confidential", "proprietary", etc., JCSS will make its own determination regarding what information may or may not be withheld from disclosure.

2.1.13. Registered Lobbyists

By submitting a response to this eRFP, the supplier hereby certifies that the supplier and its lobbyists are in compliance with the Lobbyist Registration Requirements in accordance with the *Georgia Procurement Manual*.

2.2. Submittal Instructions

Vendor will be submitting proposals/quotes through Vendor Registry. Suppliers will use the link within the notice of the solicitation to access the submittal process through Vendor Registry.

Suppliers will select the appropriate eRFP. Suppliers will then click "Submit Bid" and suppliers will be prompted to log in. Please note suppliers must be registered with Jones County Schools in Vendor Registry in order to submit a bid.

Suppliers will then upload their documents and click submit. Suppliers will see a running total of their documents under "Files Added." This screen will hold these files, and if they ever come back, they'll log in and see these same files there. Once they submit their bid, they will receive a confirmation email. For technical assistance with the program, contact Vendor Registry at 844-802-9202.

2.2.1. eRFP Released

The release of this eRFP is formally communicated through the posting of this eRFP on the Georgia Procurement Registry, which is accessible online as follows:

http://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/PRSapp/PR_index.jsp and

Vendor Registry, which is accessible online as follows:

<https://vrapp.vendorregistry.com/Bids/View/BidsList?BuyerId=ad16585e-b7f4-461b-8503-b02a1d79915b>

2.2.2. eRFP Review

The eRFP consists of the following:

1. This document, entitled "eRFP 24-68 Data Center Core Upgrade", and
2. Any and all documents provided by JCSS as attachments to the RFP or links contained within the eRFP or its attached documents. A list will be provided at the end of this document.

Please carefully review all information contained in the eRFP, including all documents available as attachments or available through links. Any difficulty accessing the eRFP or opening provided links or documents should be reported immediately to the Issuing Officer (See Section 1.5).

2.2.3. Preparing a Response

When preparing a response, the supplier must consider the following instructions:

1. Use company documents to submit the cost portion of the response. Please provide as much detail regarding cost as possible.
2. Answer each question in sufficient detail for evaluation while using judgment with regards to the length of response.
3. Proofread your response and make sure it is accurate and readily understandable.
4. Label all files using the corresponding section numbers of the eRFP or any other logical name so that JCSS can easily organize and navigate the supplier's response.

2.2.4. Packaging the Response

The supplier's proposal, in response to this eRFP, must be divided into two (2) appropriately labeled and sealed documents - a **Technical Proposal** and a **Cost Proposal**.

The contents of each package will include:

1. Technical Proposal **(Vendors are to create an appendix in the Technical Proposal to include the required documents that are in bold below.)**
 - **Certificate of non-collusion**
 - **Contractor Affidavit**
 - **District Certification Form**
 - **General Information Worksheet**
 - **Immigration and reform act affidavit**
 - **JCSS Standard Terms and Conditions (Only the last page of this document should be submitted.)**

- **Mandatory Response Checklist**
- Mandatory Scored Questions
- **Tax Compliance Form**
- **W9**
- Technical Proposal; and
- Contract Exceptions (if any).

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY COST INFORMATION IN YOUR TECHNICAL SUBMISSION.

2. Cost Proposal

- The supplier must use document 22-33 ERATE 2022 CLOSET UPGRADES.
- **All cost information should be listed in the cost proposal.**

2.2.5. “Hard Copy” and Electronic Copies Required

No hard copies are required. All responses must be uploaded to the Vendor Registry posting for this solicitation. No emailed or written responses will be accepted.

3. General Business Requirements

This section contains general business requirements. By submitting a response, the supplier is certifying its agreement to comply with all of the identified requirements of this section and that all costs for complying with these general business requirements are included in the supplier’s submitted pricing.

3.1. Standard Insurance Requirements

If awarded a contract, the supplier shall procure and maintain insurance which shall protect the supplier and Jones County School System (as an additional insured) from any claims for bodily injury, property damage, or personal injury covered by the indemnification obligations set forth in the contract attached to this solicitation throughout the duration of the contract. The supplier shall procure and maintain the insurance policies described below at the supplier’s own expense and shall furnish JCSS an insurance certificate listing Jones County School System as certificate holder and as an additional insured. The insurance certificate must document that the Commercial General Liability insurance coverage purchased by the supplier includes contractual liability coverage applicable to the contract. In addition, the insurance certificate must provide the following information: the name and address of the insured; name, address, telephone number and signature of the authorized agent; name of the insurance company (authorized to operate in Georgia); a description of coverage in detailed standard terminology (including policy period, policy number, limits of liability, exclusions and endorsements); and an acknowledgment of notice of cancellation to Jones County School System.

The supplier is required to maintain the following insurance coverage’s during the term of the contract:

- 1) Workers Compensation Insurance (Occurrence) in the amounts of the statutory limits established by the General Assembly of the State of Georgia (A self-insurer must submit a certificate from the Georgia Board of Workers Compensation stating that the supplier qualifies to pay its own workers compensation claims.) In addition, the supplier shall require all subcontractors occupying the premises or performing work under the contract to obtain an insurance certificate showing proof of Workers Compensation Coverage with the following minimum coverage:

Bodily injury by accident - per employee	\$100,000;
Bodily injury by disease - per employee	\$100,000;
Bodily injury by disease – policy limit	\$500,000.
- 2) Commercial General Liability Policy with the following minimum coverage:

Each Occurrence Limit	\$1,000,000
Personal & Advertising Injury Limit	\$1,000,000
General Aggregate Limit	\$ 2,000,000
Products/Completed Ops. Aggregate Limit	\$ 2,000,000

3)	Automobile Liability Combined Single Limit	\$1,000,000
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The foregoing policies shall contain a provision that coverage afforded under the policies will not be canceled, or not renewed or allowed to lapse for any reason until at least thirty (30) days prior written notice has been given to JCSS. Certificates of Insurance showing such coverage to be in force shall be filed with JCSS prior to commencement of any work under the contract. The foregoing policies shall be obtained from insurance companies licensed to do business in Georgia and shall be with companies acceptable to JCSS, which must have a minimum A.M. Best rating of A-. All such coverage shall remain in full force and effect during the term and any renewal or extension thereof.

Within ten (10) business days of award, the awarded supplier must procure the required insurance and provide JCSS with a of Certificates of Insurance. Certificates must reference the contract number. The supplier's submitted pricing must include the cost of the required insurance. No contract performance shall occur unless and until the required insurance certificates are provided.

It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure any and all subcontractors have sufficient insurance to cover themselves.

3.2. Bonds and/or Letter of Credit

Bid Bond

There is no Bid Bond required.

Performance Bond/Letter of Credit

There is no Performance Bond/Letter of Credit required.

Payment Bond

There is not a payment bond requirement.

4. eRFP Proposal Factors

This section contains the detailed technical requirements and related services for this Sourcing Event. Suppliers are required to include information requested in the attached documents as well as Mandatory Scored Worksheet. Although many solicitations will contain all of the worksheets noted above, it is possible that a solicitation will not contain all of the worksheets. In the event that documents are not available as downloadable forms to this eRFP, please confirm with the Issuing Officer that all four worksheets are not required.

JCSS has determined that it is best to define its own needs, desired operating objectives, and desired operating environment. JCSS will not tailor these needs to fit particular solutions suppliers may have available; rather, the suppliers shall propose to meet JCSS's needs as defined in this eRFP. All claims shall be subject to demonstration. Suppliers are cautioned that conditional proposals, based upon assumptions, may be deemed non-responsive.

4.1. Technical Proposal Introduction

All of the items described in this section are service levels and/or terms and conditions that JCSS expects to be satisfied by the selected Offeror. Each Offeror must indicate its willingness and ability to satisfy these requirements in the appropriate worksheets.

4.2. Supplier General Information

Each supplier must complete all of the requested information in the attached file entitled **Supplier's General Information Worksheet**.

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY COST/PRICING INFORMATION IN YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS WORKSHEET.

4.3. Mandatory Requirements

As specified with each requirement listed in the **Mandatory Response Worksheet**, the supplier must provide the information requested in the Mandatory Response Worksheet. A Pass/Fail evaluation will be utilized for all mandatory requirements by whether the information was provided (YES) or not provided (NO). Ordinarily, to be considered responsive, responsible and eligible for award, all questions identified as mandatory must be marked "YES" to pass and required documents uploaded. There may be rare instances in which a response of "NO" is the correct and logical response in order to meet the mandatory requirement (e.g. responding "NO" that the supplier does not possess any conflicts of interest). Otherwise, any mandatory questions marked "NO" will fail the technical requirements and will result in disqualification of the proposal.

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY COST/PRICING INFORMATION IN YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS WORKSHEET.

4.4. Mandatory Scored Response

As specified with each requirement listed in the **Mandatory Scored Response**, the supplier must indicate whether it will meet the individual requirement (if any) and provide a supporting narrative on company letterhead. To be considered responsive, responsible and eligible for award, any and all requirements identified in the Mandatory Scored Response Worksheet must be met. There may be rare instances in which an item within the Mandatory Scored Response Worksheet does not create an individual requirement which must be met, but, instead, merely requires a response. All requirements labeled "Mandatory Scored" must be met by the supplier. Failure to meet any mandatory scored requirements may result in disqualification of the proposals. The narrative description, along with any required supporting materials, will be evaluated and awarded points in accordance with Section 6 "Proposal Evaluation, Negotiations and Award" of this eRFP.

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY COST INFORMATION IN YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS WORKSHEET.

4.5. Additional Information

Please access and review all of the attachments provided by JCSS with this eRFP to ensure you have responded to all requests for information.

5. Cost Proposal

5.1. Cost Proposal

Each supplier is required to submit a cost proposal as part of its response. **YOU MUST USE THE COST WORKSHEET.** The cost proposal will be evaluated and scored in accordance with Section 6 "Proposal Evaluation, Negotiations and Award". By submitting a response, the supplier agrees that it has read, understood, and will abide by the following instructions/rules:

1. The submitted cost proposal must include all costs of performing pursuant to the resulting contract; and
2. Cost proposals containing a minimum order/ship quantity or dollar value, unless otherwise called for in the eRFP, will be treated as non-responsive and may not be considered for award; and
3. In the event there is discrepancy between the supplier's unit price and extended price, the unit price shall govern; and
4. The prices quoted and listed in the cost proposal shall be firm throughout the term of the resulting contract, unless otherwise noted in the eRFP or contract.

5.2. Cost Structure and Additional Instructions

JCSS's intent is to structure the cost format in order to facilitate comparison among all suppliers and foster competition to obtain the best market pricing. Consequently, JCSS requires that each supplier's cost be in the format outlined below. Additional alternative cost structures may be considered if they are in the best interest of the System. Each supplier is cautioned that failure to comply with the instructions listed below, submission of an incomplete offer, or submission of an offer in a different format than the one requested may result in the rejection of the supplier's proposal.

Quote responses must be placed on the Cost Proposal Worksheet.

6. Proposal Evaluation, Negotiations and Award

All timely proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the following steps. Suppliers who pass the responsive/responsible portion of evaluation may be invited to present their products to the evaluation team for final technical scoring. The objective of the evaluation process is to identify the proposal which represents the best value to Jones County Schools based on a combination of technical and cost factors. Based on the results of the initial evaluation, JCSS may or may not elect to negotiate technical and/or cost factors as further described in the eRFP. In the event negotiations of the technical and/or cost factors occur, the revised proposals will be reevaluated in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.4 "Scoring Criteria" of this eRFP. Once the evaluation process has been completed (and any negotiations JCSS desires to conduct have occurred), the apparent successful supplier(s) will be required to enter into discussions with JCSS to resolve any exceptions to JCSS's contract. JCSS will announce the results of the eRFP as described further in 6.9 "Public Award Announcement" of this eRFP.

6.1. Administrative/Preliminary Review

First, the proposals will be reviewed by the Issuing Officer to determine the proposal's compliance with the following requirements:

1. Proposal was received by deadline
2. Proposal is complete and contains all required documents
3. Technical Proposal does not include any pricing from the Cost Proposal

6.2. Evaluating Proposal Factors (Section 4)

If the supplier's proposal passes the Administrative/Preliminary Review, the supplier's responses to Section 4 "eRFP Proposal Factors" will be submitted to the Evaluation Team for evaluation.

6.2.1. Review of Mandatory & Mandatory Scored Questions

The Evaluation Team will review each proposal in detail to determine its compliance with mandatory eRFP requirements. Responses to both "Mandatory" and "Mandatory Scored" Questions will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis. If a proposal fails to meet a mandatory and/or mandatory scored eRFP requirement, JCSS will determine if the deviation is material. A material deviation will be cause for rejection of the proposal. An immaterial deviation will be processed as if no deviation had occurred. All proposals which meet the requirements of the "Mandatory" and "Mandatory Scored" Questions are considered "Responsive Proposals" at this point in time and will be scored in accordance with the point allocation in Section 6.4 "Scoring Criteria" of this eRFP.

The supplier will receive a total technical score at the conclusion of the evaluation of the eRFP Proposal Factors.

6.3. Evaluating Cost Proposal and Total Combined Score

The cost proposals will be reviewed and scored in accordance with Section 6.4 "Scoring Criteria." To expedite the evaluation process, JCSS reserves the right to analyze the cost proposals independently, but at the same time the Evaluation Team is analyzing the technical proposals, provided neither the cost

proposals nor the cost analysis is disclosed to the Evaluation Team until the Evaluation Team completes its initial evaluation and scoring of the eRFP Proposal Factors.

6.3.1. Cost Scoring

JCSS may utilize lowest cost, lowest total cost, and total cost of ownership (TCO) or greatest savings to determine the most competitive cost proposal. The cost proposal may be scored on an overall basis or at the category/subcategory/line level (as applicable) relative to other proposals. The supplier deemed to have the most competitive cost proposal overall, as determined by JCSS, will receive the maximum score for the cost criteria. In the alternative, in the event the cost proposal is scored at the category, subcategory or line level, JCSS may assign the maximum score per category/subcategory/line for the most competitive proposal at that level. Other proposals will receive a percentage of the maximum score based on the percentage differential between the most competitive cost proposal and the specific proposal in question.

6.3.2. Total Score

The supplier’s cost score will be combined with the supplier’s technical score to determine the supplier’s overall score (or “total combined score”).

6.4. Scoring Criteria

The evaluation is comprised of the following:

Category	Criteria	Points
Cost	Cost of proposed products and/or services	40%
Technical/Proposal Factors	"Mandatory" Requirements	Pass/Fail
Technical/Proposal Factors	Quality of Solution	30%
Technical/Proposal Factors	Certifications and Capabilities	15%
Technical/Proposal Factors	Prior Experience	15%

6.5. Georgia Based Business/Reciprocal Preference Law O.C.G.A. §50-5-60(b)

For the purposes of evaluation only, suppliers resident in the State of Georgia will be granted the same preference over suppliers resident in another state in the same manner, on the same basis, and to the same extent that preference is granted in awarding bids for the same goods or services by such other state to suppliers resident therein over suppliers resident in the State of Georgia. NOTE: For the purposes of this law, the definition of a resident supplier is a supplier who is domiciled in the State of Georgia.

6.6. Negotiations of Proposals and/or Cost Factors

JCSS possesses discretionary authority to conduct one or more rounds of negotiations of technical proposal and/or cost factors as permitted by Georgia law and DOAS’ established procurement policy.

6.7. Selection and Award

The responsive and responsible supplier receiving the highest Total Combined Score and with whom JCSS is able to reach agreement as to contract terms will be selected for award.

6.8. Site Visits and Oral Presentations

JCSS reserves the right to conduct site visits or to invite suppliers to present their proposal factors/technical solutions to the Evaluation Team. Cost proposals and related cost information must not be discussed during the oral presentation of the supplier’s technical solution. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the Negotiation Team from discussing both proposal factors and cost information during the negotiation process defined by Section 6.6 “Negotiations of Proposals and/or Cost Factors”.

6.9. Public Award Announcement

The preliminary results of the evaluation will be announced through the public posting of a Notice of Intent to Award (in the event the value of the contract(s) is estimated to be \$100,000 or more in the first year) to the Georgia Procurement Registry. The Notice of Intent to Award (“NOIA”) is not notice of an actual contract award; instead, the NOIA is notice of the State Entity’s expected contract award(s) pending resolution of the protest process. The NOIA (if any) will identify the apparent successful supplier(s), unsuccessful supplier(s), and the reasons why any unsuccessful suppliers were not selected for contract award. **NO SUPPLIER SHOULD ASSUME PERSONAL NOTICE OF THE NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD (“NOIA”) WILL BE PROVIDED BY JCSS. INSTEAD, ALL SUPPLIERS SHOULD FREQUENTLY CHECK THE GEORGIA PROCUREMENT REGISTRY FOR NOTICE OF THE NOIA.**

The Notice of Award (“NOA”) is JCSS’s public notice of actual contract award(s). The NOA will be publicly posted to the Georgia Procurement Registry.

7. Contract Terms and Conditions

The contract that JCSS expects to award as a result of this eRFP will be based upon the eRFP, the successful supplier’s final response as accepted by JCSS and the contract terms and conditions, which terms and conditions can be downloaded from the Sourcing Event. The “successful supplier’s final response as accepted by JCSS” shall mean: the final cost and technical proposals submitted by the awarded supplier and any subsequent revisions to the awarded supplier’s cost and technical proposals and the contract terms and conditions due to negotiations, written clarifications or changes made in accordance with the provisions of the eRFP, and any other terms deemed necessary by JCSS, except that no objection or amendment by the supplier to the eRFP requirements or the contract terms and conditions shall be incorporated by reference into the contract unless JCSS has explicitly accepted the supplier’s objection or amendment in writing.

Please review JCSS’s contract terms and conditions prior to submitting a response to this eRFP. Suppliers should plan on the contract terms and conditions contained in this eRFP being included in any award as a result of this eRFP. Therefore, all costs associated with complying with these requirements should be included in any pricing quoted by the suppliers. The contract terms and conditions may be supplemented or revised before contract execution and are provided to enable suppliers to better evaluate the costs associated with the eRFP and the potential resulting contract.

Exception to Contract

By submitting a proposal, each supplier acknowledges its acceptance of the eRFP specifications and the contract terms and conditions without change except as otherwise expressly stated in the submitted proposal. If a supplier takes exception to a contract provision, the supplier must state the reason for the exception and state the specific contract language it proposes to include in place of the provision. Any exceptions to the contract must be submitted as an attachment to the supplier’s response. Proposed exceptions must not conflict with or attempt to preempt mandatory requirements specified in the eRFP.

In the event the supplier is selected for potential award, the supplier will be required to enter into discussions with JCSS to resolve any contractual differences before an award is made. These discussions are to be finalized and all exceptions resolved within the period of time identified in the schedule of events. Failure to resolve any contractual issues will lead to rejection of the supplier. JCSS reserves the right to proceed to discussions with the next best ranked supplier.

JCSS reserves the right to modify the contract to be consistent with the apparent successful offer, and to negotiate other modifications with the apparent successful supplier. Exceptions that materially change the terms or the requirements of the eRFP may be deemed non-responsive by JCSS, in its sole discretion, and rejected. Contract exceptions which grant the supplier an impermissible competitive advantage, as determined by JCSS, in its sole discretion, will be rejected. If there is any question whether a particular contract exception would be permissible, the supplier is strongly encouraged to inquire via written question submitted to the Issuing Officer prior to the deadline for submitting written questions as defined by the Schedule of Events.

8. List of eRFP Attachments

The following documents make up this eRFP. Please see Section 2.2.2 “eRFP Review” for instructions about how to access the following documents. Any difficulty locating or accessing the following documents should be immediately reported to the Issuing Officer.

- A. JCSS eRFP (this document)
- B. 24-68 JCSS Data Center Core Upgrade Requirements
- C. 24-68 ERATE Data Center Core Upgrades COST WORKSHEET
- D. SPD-SP012 Certificate of Non-Collusion
- E. Contract Affidavit
- F. District Certification Form
- G. SPD-SP054 Immigration and Security Form
- H. Supplier’s General Information Worksheet from Section 4.2 of this eRFP
- I. Mandatory Responses Checklist Information from Section 4.3 of this eRFP
- J. Mandatory Scored Responses Worksheet Information from Section 4.4 of this eRFP
- K. JCSS Standard Terms and Conditions from Section 7 “Contract Terms and Conditions” of this eRFP
- L. Tax Compliance Form
- M. W9
- N. Pre-Bid Meeting Zoom Link Information