



HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL
Request for Proposal (RFP)
Work-Based Learning Administrative Software
Solicitation Number: HS-WKF-YOUTHPORTAL-12-22

EVENT	DATE
ISSUED:	Monday, December 12, 2022
PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE DATE:	Tuesday, December 20, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m. CST Information on how to register for the pre-proposal meeting is on page 15.
QUESTIONS DEADLINE:	Thursday, December 22, 2022 @ NOON CST
SHAREFILE ACCESS INVITATION REQUEST DEADLINE:	Wednesday, January 11, 2023 @ NOON CST Requests made after this time will <u>not</u> be accepted.
CLOSING DATE / SUBMISSION DEADLINE:	Thursday, January 12, 2023 @ NOON CST
ESTIMATED INTERVIEW DATE:	Wednesday, January 25, 2023
WKF EST.COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE: ESTIMATED BOARD APPROVAL DATE:	Tuesday, February 07, 2023 Tuesday, March 21, 2023
ESTIMATED CONTRACT START DATE:	April 2023
FORMAT:	One (1) electronic copy in PDF format. Please combine all files being submitted into one (1) pdf. Additional files may not be reviewed.

Please read the submission instructions carefully, exceptions cannot be made if instructions are not followed:

SUBMISSION: Respondent must email the below information (1-4) to purchasing@h-gac.com to request access to the ShareFile folder where Respondent will upload the Response. **The request for access to the folder must be made before indicated deadline;** requests received after the deadline will **NOT** be accepted. SUBMISSIONS WILL **NOT** BE ACCEPTED BY EMAIL OR MAIL.

1. Company Name and Company Representative Name
2. Representative Email Address (for ShareFile folder access)
3. Subject Line: "ShareFile Folder Access Request"
4. The Solicitation Number (exactly as listed above)

If technical issues with the ShareFile System arise, preventing all Respondents from submitting a response within the two (2) hours preceding the deadline, the solicitation due date and time may be automatically extended for a period of 24 hours. Any technical issue must be with the ShareFile system and affect all respondents. H-GAC will verify the technical issue or unavailability of the ShareFile system. Technical issues localized to a single Respondent will not be considered cause for an extension. **It is strongly recommended that submissions be uploaded no later than four (4) hours prior to the deadline.** H-GAC is not responsible for attempting to resolve any technical issues occurring four (4) hours before the submission deadline, nor is H-GAC responsible for incomplete or late submissions.

Recording of submission time and date will occur via ShareFile. Submissions uploaded after the deadline will not be accepted or opened. Responses may be submitted any time prior to the submission deadline. To satisfy any required public opening, H-GAC will post only the names of the companies which submitted responses to the H-GAC website (<http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) as soon as possible after the closing date.

SIGNATURE PAGE

A signature below constitutes acknowledgement and acceptance of all the **Solicitation Terms and Conditions** located at <https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/d80790aa-ac7c-466e-9849-9a457210da6e/Solicitation-Terms-and-Conditions> and can be downloaded in .pdf for review. Respondents, their authorized representative, and their agents are responsible for obtaining, and will be deemed to have, full knowledge of the conditions, requirements, and specifications of this Solicitation at the time a response is submitted to H-GAC. This Solicitation does not commit H-GAC to award a contract, issue a Purchase Order, or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a submission to this Solicitation. The submission will become part of H-GAC’s official files without any obligation on H-GAC’s behalf. All Submissions will be held confidential from all parties other than H-GAC, until after a contract is executed; then submissions become available as public records.

<p>Note: Submission must be signed by a duly authorized representative(s) of the respondent, which must be the actual legal entity that will perform the contract if awarded and any total fixed price contained therein will remain firm for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days following the submission due date and can be further extended by mutual written agreement. Respondent is <u>REQUIRED</u> to sign this <i>Signature Page</i> and return with the submitted response. An unsigned Submission will be deemed non-responsive.</p>	
<p>Legal Name of Entity/Individual Filed with IRS for this Tax ID Number:</p>	
<p>Doing Business As (DBA) Name:</p>	
<p>Is Respondent business currently a Certified Small Business (SBA), Minority (MBE) or Disadvantaged (DBE)? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, copy of certificate must be attached.</p>	
<p>Company Mailing Address and Billing Address (if different from company address):</p>	
<p>City, State, Zip Code:</p>	
<p>Tax ID Number (EIN):</p>	<p>DUNS Number:</p>
<p>Contact Person:</p>	<p>Phone Number:</p>
<p>Email Address:</p>	
<p>Signature of the person authorized to bind Respondent company to any contract/purchase order that may result from this Solicitation and acknowledgement and acceptance of the full Solicitation Terms and Conditions located at https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/d80790aa-ac7c-466e-9849-9a457210da6e/Solicitation-Terms-and-Conditions</p>	
<p>Authorized Signature:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>Printed Name:</p>	<p>Title:</p>
<p>Email Address:</p>	

All clarifications to this Solicitation will be in writing and identified as a Letter of Clarification. Verbal communications and other written documents intended to clarify and interpret will not legally bind the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Only information supplied by a Letter of Clarification and posted to the H-GAC website should be used in preparing submissions. Any Letter of Clarification will be posted on the H-GAC website (<http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) as soon as available. **H-GAC does not assume responsibility for the receipt of any Letters of Clarification by Respondent(s). Respondents must frequently check <http://www.h-gac.com/procurement> for updates.**

PART I –GENERAL INFORMATION

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Background

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is the region-wide voluntary association of 133 local governments and local elected officials in the 13-county Gulf Coast Planning region of Texas. Local elected officials organized H-GAC in 1966 after authorization by State enabling legislation. Its service area is 12,500 square miles and includes more than 7-million residents. H-GAC is governed by a 36-member Board of Directors composed of local elected officials, who serve on the governing bodies of member local governments. All H-GAC programs are carried out under the policy direction of its Board of Directors. H-GAC's mission is to serve as the instrument of local government cooperation, promoting the region's orderly development and the safety and welfare of its residents. H-GAC is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area-wide problems. Agency programs emphasize local government concerns, such as transportation, air and water quality, criminal justice, demographic analysis, mapping programs, and intergovernmental purchasing. H-GAC also serves its citizens through workforce development programs, services to the aging and elderly, and small business finance programs.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its operating affiliate Workforce Solutions together are the public workforce system in the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. Workforce Solutions help employers meet their human resource needs and individuals build careers, so both can compete in the global economy.

Workforce Solutions serves 300,000 to 400,000 people annually and more than 25,000 employers through 28 local career offices, an Employer Service division, and a consortium of adult education providers. Workforce Solutions offers a range of services to help employers find and hire the best candidates for their job openings, develop new or current employees, and get human resources technical advice. Workforce Solutions helps individuals get a job, keep a job, or get a better job with job search assistance, job referrals and placement, career planning, and financial assistance for those who are eligible. For more information about the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Workforce Solutions, visit <http://wrksolutions.com>. The Houston-Galveston Area Council, the fiscal agent for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, is issuing this Solicitation on behalf of the Board and Workforce Solutions.

Solicitation Background

Workforce Solutions uses multiple systems to serve thousands of young adults annually. The largest portion of these young adults are often served during the summer months through initiatives such as Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) which serves more than 500 young adults with disabilities, Hire Houston Youth, and other work-based learning opportunities.

All customers complete the Financial Aid Application located on wrksolutions.com and can use WorkinTexas.com to look for employment opportunities. We currently use an internally created SharePoint system for tracking work-based learning matches and various spreadsheets for tracking pertinent information around this process.

Additional Resources

- [Young Adult Services | Workforce Solutions](#)
- [Apply for Financial Aid Today | Workforce Solutions](#)
- [WorkInTexas](#)

Objective/Purpose

H-GAC is seeking a qualified contractor to create a customized robust, reliable, and easily configurable software solution that allows for storing, tracking, matching, and reporting on all approved work-based learning (WBL) worksites and customers across the entire Workforce Solutions system.

Contract Term

The contract will be for approximately twelve (12) months, estimated to begin April 2023. H-GAC reserves the right to extend and/or expand the scope of this contract, subject to H-GAC Board of Directors approval and/or additional funding availability.

Budget/Funding

H-GAC primarily uses federal funds, as well as several state and local sources, to fund its workforce system contracts. The Texas Workforce Commission provides the majority of revenue every fiscal year through the major revenue sources, which are by formula allocated to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board for annual operations. During a contract year, H-GAC competes for and may receive revenue from other federal, state, or private sources. 100% of the total cost of contracts authorized from this solicitation are Federal funds.

Payment for Work

Contractor will submit monthly invoices based on work completed. Completed work is defined as meeting milestone project objectives as defined in the schedule that accomplishes the Scope of Work within the appropriate time frame. All invoices must be accompanied by progress reports and backup documentation.

No Guarantee of Usage

H-GAC makes no guarantee of volume or usage under any contract resulting from this Solicitation. Services will be requested and contracted on an as needed basis and the type and value of each assignment will vary.

Pre-Award Audit

Due to the amount and type of funding programmed for this project, H-GAC requires that a pre-award audit be conducted before the execution of a contract. The information required for this audit, in addition to a draft contract and detailed scope of work, is:

1. Detailed annual budget
2. 12-month project Schedule/Timeline
3. Itemized cost estimate by personnel job title (including hours), benefits, overhead, travel, equipment, supplies, printing and other direct expenses; and
4. Support data for the benefit and indirect rates (overhead) based on audited costs.
5. Federal OMB Form 60

Post Award Meeting

H-GAC reserves the right to require the awarded Contractor attend a post award meeting with H-GAC staff and/or other designated persons at H-GAC offices in Houston, Texas within thirty (30) calendar days after the award. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the terms and conditions and to provide additional information regarding the work tasks and requirements. Awarded Contractor and H-GAC will identify specific goals, strategies and activities planned for meeting program objectives.

Goal for Contracting with Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area firms (if subcontracts are to be let)

H-GAC has established a goal of **30%** small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm participation in its total annual third-party consulting opportunities. H-GAC's goal is to assure that small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible in providing services under a contract. In accordance with federal procurements requirements of 2 CFR §200.321, if subcontracts are to be let, the prime contractor must take the affirmative steps listed below:

1. Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists
2. Assuring that small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources
3. Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller task or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises
4. Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises
5. Using the services and assistance as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce

Nothing in this provision will be construed to require the utilization of any firm that is either unqualified or unavailable.

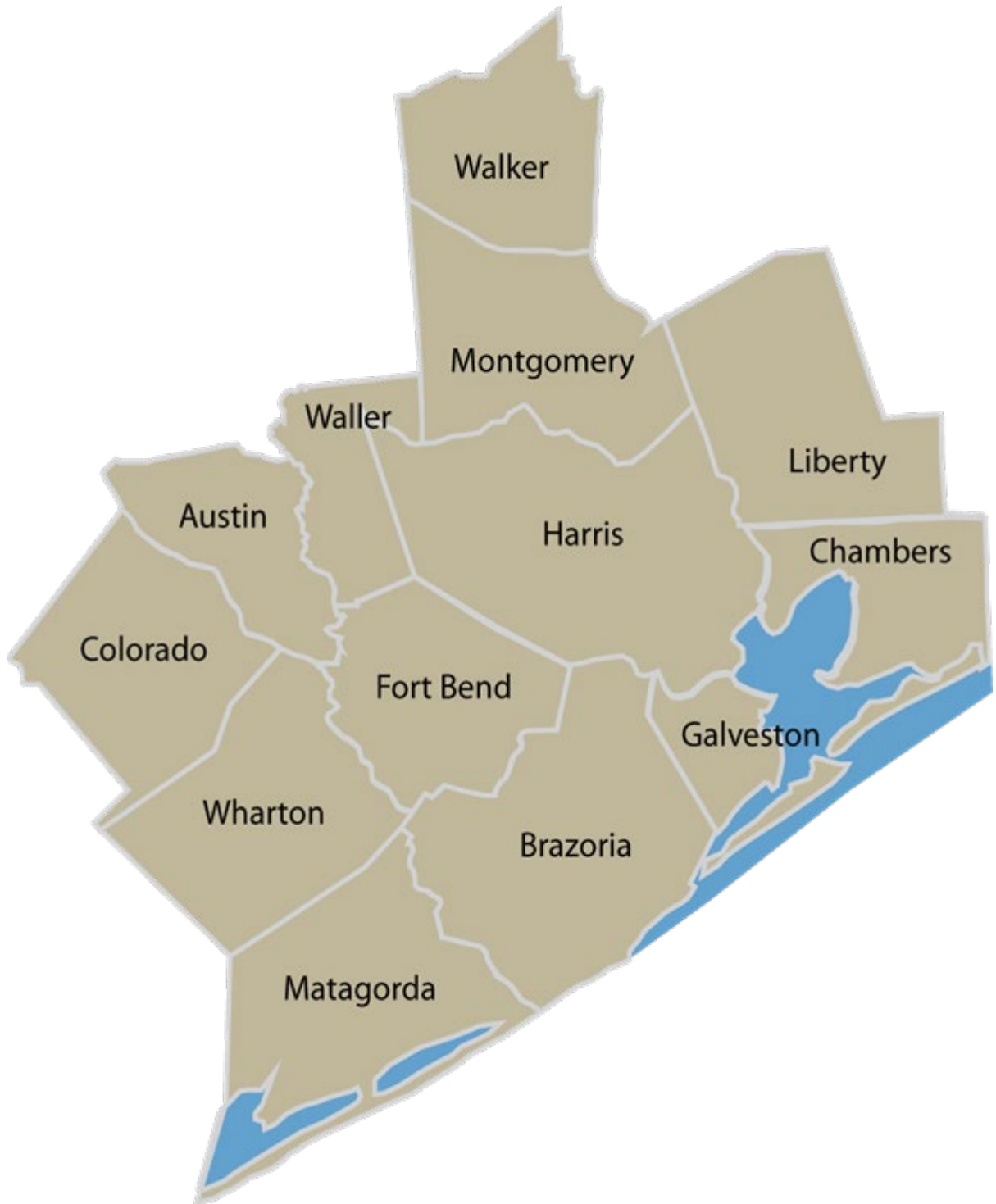
Supplemental Guidance/Requirements for Contracting with Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area firms (if subcontracts are to be let)

As a recipient and sub-recipient of Federal funds, the guidance of the appropriate funding agency supplemental regulation regarding Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) programs will be incorporated as listed below, and as may be applicable. Please refer to the applicable guidance for the indicated funding source. The Small Business Administration (SBA) is the primary reference and database for information on requirements related to Federal Subcontracting <https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide/prime-subcontracting>

Funding Source	Supplemental Regulation by Funding Agency
	U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT/FAA): Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 23 and Part 26. Only businesses listed under the Texas Unified Certification Database Diversity Management System are qualified to meet the stated goal requirement. Locate a business here: https://txdot.txdotcms.com/
	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations parts 33, Executive Order 11625, Executive Order 12138, and Executive Order 12432.
	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): HUD Acquisition Regulations (HUDAR) HUDAR, dated January 21, 2000, Parts 2419 and 2426.
X	U.S. Department of Labor (DOL): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 29, Parts 2900-2999.
	U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 13, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Energy (DOE): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 9, Subchapter D.
X	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 4, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) including FEMA: Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 30, Subchapter D.
X	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 3, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 29, Subchapter D.
	U.S. Department of the Treasury (USDT): Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 10, Subchapter D, Part 1022.
X	U.S. Department of Education (ED) Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulation, Chapter 34, Subchapter D.

Additional Resources for Socio-Economic Databases/Programs - The entities and programs linked below can also be searched or contacted for assistance in locating a small business if no funding agency is indicated above.	
City of Houston, Office of Business Opportunity	Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)
City of Austin, Small Business Development	National Women Business Owners Corporation
Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority	National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)
North Central Texas Certification Agency	U.S. Women Chamber of Commerce
South Central Texas Certification Agency	U.S. Department of Transportation DBE Program
Texas Department of Transportation	SBA Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program Certification
The Small Business Administration	

Study Area/Service Region



PART II – SCOPE OF WORK/SPECIFICATIONS

The proposed solution should focus on supporting the experience of the youth that interact with our system. It should appeal to a young adult audience, draw them in, make them want to participate in our initiatives, and make the process of applying and getting approved as quick and seamless as possible.

The software must include the ability for an individual to complete all the steps in the process for any work-based learning initiative - from application, to learning components, and paperwork requirements. The solution should also include a visual representation of where an individual is at in the series of steps required before they are able to start working.

While the focus of this solution is on young adult end users, it will be utilized by individuals in multiple roles throughout the Workforce Solutions system including, but not limited to, customers, employers, and various staff and must meet the needs of each of these groups in a robust manner. The vision for the system is to be able to match youth with employment opportunities regardless of WBL status.

Technical Requirements

Provide detailed descriptions of the following technical requirements:

- Minimum hardware and software requirements;
- Mobile device compatibility – mobile enabled out of the box on any device (no custom coding or programming required);
- Availability of content both online and offline;
- Availability of content regardless of device or platform used for access;
- Ability to utilize open APIs that allow seamless integration with legacy applications, third-party solutions, and/or an external cloud-based service;
- Ability to utilize Cloud Platform SaaS products that are natively integrated with no special integration required to connect or sync data;
- Availability of release updates that are included without any re-configuration, customization, or additional costs and with minimal to no downtime;
- Access to an online application library of pre-built apps that can be added on demand to rapidly implement new capabilities using clicks and not code;
- Ability to rapidly expand functionality as well as develop additional apps with point and click tools;
- Ability to access solution through a web browser with no software to download or hardware to install;
- Ability to provide a collaborative enterprise platform supporting portals and multiple communities;
- Availability of single click deployments from Sandbox to production and auto refresh capabilities;
- Capability for collaboration in context of accounts, contacts, cases, etc.;
- Availability to access content in languages other than English;
- Ability to provide pre-built processes, integrations, and user hierarchies to minimize configuration. Includes low code and no code application development capabilities to limit customization and enable rapid application development and deployment;
- The process to continuously monitor the deliverables to ensure the project's overall objectives are being met.

Data Security

The proposed solution must abide, at a minimum, by the security measures stated in H-GAC Secure Application and System Development Guidelines (Attachment 1).

Provide detailed descriptions of the following additional security requirements:

- Protection of information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction to help ensure integrity, confidentiality, and availability;
- End-to-end security features ensuring data privacy;
- Malware/Spyware/Anti-virus integration within the software;
- Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and other data security compliance certifications;
- Information on the following privacy/security information: authenticity, access control, confidentiality, integrity, availability, and non-repudiation;
- Platform performance and security statistics are openly available in real time online including details of any future planned down time.

Functional Requirements

Provide detailed descriptions of the following functional requirements:

- Availability of built-in as well as on demand, interactive training curriculum, and modules for upskilling staff and customers thus speeding user adoption;
- Ability to confidentially track customer information including but not limited to name, social security number, DOB, address, phone number, email, emergency contact, registration date, school, counselor, needed accommodations;
- Ability to upload and store supporting documents;
- Ability to enter worksite locations and the number of available openings;
- Ability to match customers to worksite locations based on location and/or skills and have the number of available openings reduced after a match is confirmed;
- Ability to track completion of various steps in the “pre-work” process including but not limited to Work Readiness training and completion of onboarding paperwork;
- Ability to send text messages and emails;
- Ability to pull reports on various components of data within the system.

Customer User Experience

The proposed solution should include the ability for an individual to complete all the steps in the process for any work-based learning initiative – from application, to learning components, and paperwork requirements. The solution should also include a visual representation of where an individual is at in the series of steps required before they are able to start working. Provide a process map which describes, at a minimum:

- Cross device and browser compatibility;
- Tools to access skill building activities;
- Methods to report time worked;
- Access to virtual help on demand.

Staff/Administrator Experience

The proposed solution should include the ability for storing, tracking, matching, and reporting on all approved work-based learning worksites and all eligible work-based learning customers across the entire Workforce Solutions system. The solution should also include a visual representation of where an individual is at in the series of steps required before they are able to start working. Provide a process map which describes, at a minimum:

- Any functionality that is only available to administrators;
- Maximum number of administrators that can be assigned;
- Maximum number of concurrent users;
- Ability to utilize system integration with Active Directory for single sign-on;
- Ability to assign specific content to a customer;
- Ability to access reports on customer progress;
- Ability to download all available user data and generated reports.

Accessibility/Assistive Technology

Indicate any integrated accessibility features including compliance with ADA requirements and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These features may include, but are not limited to:

- Compatibility with screen reader software;
- Availability of captions;
- Availability of audio descriptions;
- Ease of use for individuals with intellectual, developmental, and/or learning disabilities;
- Any other tools/features that make the platform usable by individuals with various types of disabilities.

User and Admin Support

Provide detailed descriptions for the following support requirements:

- Assistance provided during implementation;
- Availability of on-going support/technical assistance and process to contact or submit help request, including, and not limited to, responders to indicate their uptime statistics, service ticket resolution process and times, and escalation processes;
- Access to Subject Matter Experts (SMEs);
- Service level commitment about uptime expectations, ticket resolution timelines, availability for credits towards service agreement due to interruptions in operations.

PART III –SUBMISSION CONTENTS

Submissions must include the information described below. Staff resumes, and any additional forms, can be included as an appendix to the submittal and do not count towards any section page limits noted below.

A. Summary Letter

This letter must include a summary of key aspects of the contractor's qualifications and must indicate the Respondent's commitment to provide the services proposed and certify that all statements and information prepared and submitted in the response to this Solicitation are current, complete, and accurate; and that the proposed solution for the project meets all the requirements of this Solicitation. (Maximum 1 page)

B. Signature Page and all Forms as Listed on last page of this Solicitation

Submit completed and signed Signature Page (located on page 2) and all required/applicable forms of the checklist provided on the last page of this solicitation. **Submission will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for evaluation if the submission is not signed.**

C. Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form

Complete and sign the applicable section (A, B, or C) of the Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form. Respondent must identify the small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms' participation level and the role that each small and minority business, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm will have in the project implementation. Since small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms' proposed are considered part of the team, the Respondent must include all relevant information necessary to effectively perform the evaluation of the response as it relates to the submission requirements listed in this section. Nothing in this provision will be construed to require the utilization of any small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm that is either unqualified or unavailable. **The applicable section of this form must be completed, signed and returned with the submission, failure to return this signed form and any applicable required good faith effort documentation may result in the submission being deemed non-responsive.**

D. Key Components/Features

Provide detailed descriptions for all requirements listed in Part II of this Solicitation. Submit process maps for customer user experience and staff/administrator experience.

E. Project Work Program and Schedule

Submit details regarding approach to undertaking the tasks listed in this Solicitation. A recommended methodology for performance of each task identified in the scope of work must be included, along with a timeline for completion. Joint submissions must describe how the partners will support each other in ensuring a successful outcome. The timeline must illustrate key milestones and anticipate necessary meetings with H-GAC staff.

F. Responsibility and Qualifications

Submit detail outlining the project manager and key staff members and a clear indication as to their involvement in the project. Brief resumes of staff members, including field staff, must be included. Substitutions for essential personnel involved will not be allowed without H-GAC's prior approval and resulting delays will be the responsibility of the Contractor. H-GAC retains the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in H-GAC's opinion, to be unqualified to perform the work.

G. Readiness and Capacity to Perform

Provide satisfactory evidence of ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation and to produce the specified products or services on time. Provide a statement about the availability and commitment of the firm and its principal(s) and key professionals to undertake the project.

H. Contract Price and Detailed Budget

Submit the total contract price and provide a detailed budget with regards to proposed methodology and approach, including personnel costs. Any travel associated expenses that may be incurred for additional offered services must be priced separately and cannot exceed current U.S. General Services Administration established rates. For more information please visit: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources> (Maximum 1 page)

I. Past Performance and References

Submit Past Performance Questionnaire (Attachment 2).

J. Additional Information (10-page maximum)

Submit additional information Respondent deems pertinent to demonstrating qualifications and/or experience to perform the services being requested such as memberships in any professional associations, documents, examples, and others. (Maximum 10 pages)

PART IV – EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD

Evaluation

An evaluation committee may consist of representatives from H-GAC and other stakeholders. The committee members will individually evaluate and numerically score each submission in accordance with the evaluation criteria section of this Solicitation.

Selection/Award Recommendation

Submissions will be evaluated on the basis of meeting the minimum qualifications and selection criteria listed in the Evaluation Criteria section of this Solicitation. Each criterion is given a weight totaling 100%, submissions are scored on a scale of 0-5, and are then ranked on the total of the weighted score.

The evaluation will be conducted in a two-step process. The first step involves scoring of the written submission to the Solicitation. The second step involves interviews with the short-listed Respondents. At the end of the oral presentation, demonstration and/or interview, the evaluation of the short-listed Respondent(s) will be completed, and the evaluation committee will rank each submission on the total combined score of the written and oral interview.

Upon review of all information provided by Respondents, the evaluation committee will rank each submission. H-GAC intends to select the submission(s) that best meets the needs of H-GAC, and other stakeholders to be determined.

Approval and Final Award

A recommendation is made to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board for approval. A recommendation will then be presented to the H-GAC Board of Directors for approval to negotiate, and execute, a contract with the ranked Contractors in descending order. H-GAC reserves the right to award based on the best interests of H-GAC, whether that be single or multiple awards. However, the final approval and selection of award lies with the Board of Directors. H-GAC reserves the right to delay that date as needed and to reject any and all submissions as deemed in its interest.

Debriefing

Requests for a debriefing must be made in writing to purchasing@h-gac.com within five (5) working days after notification of non-selection. H-GAC reserves the right to not conduct debriefings if requests are made after that time. This procedure is NOT available to Respondents who did not participate in the selected Solicitation, to non-responsive or non-timely Respondents, or when all submissions are rejected.

Presentation/Demonstration/Interview

The evaluation committee reserves the right to request and require that each Respondent provide a final presentation/demonstration/interview regarding submission at a scheduled date and time. No Respondent is entitled to this opportunity, and no Respondent will be entitled to attend the presentation/demonstration/interview of any other Respondent. The purpose of the presentation/demonstration/interview is to inform the work of the evaluation committee. If necessary, Respondents may be required to make more than one presentation/demonstration/interview. Interviews can incorporate clarifying questions of the evaluation committee and H-GAC reserves the right to utilize the information to complete final scoring of proposals after the presentation/demonstration/interview. During this process, the proposer cannot incorporate, or present new information not contained in the original submitted proposal.

Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

H-GAC reserves the right to request a Best and Final Offer from finalist Respondent(s), if it deems such an approach necessary. In general, BAFO would consist of updated costs and answers to specific questions that were identified during the evaluation. If H-GAC chooses to invoke this option, Submissions would be re-evaluated by incorporating the information requested in the BAFO document, including costs, and answers to specific questions presented in the document. The specific format for the BAFO would be determined during evaluation discussions. Turnaround time for responding to a BAFO is usually brief (i.e., five (5) business days).

PART V – EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responsiveness (Pass/Fail)

Submission must be responsive to all material requirements that will enable the evaluation committee to evaluate submissions in accordance with the evaluation criteria to make a recommendation to H-GAC officials. This includes a signed signature page by a person authorized to bind the company to any contract/purchase order that may result from this Solicitation; if subcontracting, may include the completed Small and Minority Business Affirmation Form.

Key Components/Features (35%)

Key components and features including technical and functional requirements, data security, customer and staff experience, assistive technology, and user/admin support are identified in detail and acceptable. Consideration of other value-added components will be given where these may be of value to H-GAC.

Project Work Program and Schedule (20%)

Contractor demonstrates a clear understanding of the intent of the project and the work to be performed; acceptable overall approach to the project, acceptable level of effort, and required deliverables as outlined in the Solicitation. Acceptable timeline submitted.

Responsibility and Qualifications (20%)

Demonstrated experience, qualifications and capability of the proposed team, key team members and other personnel as evidenced by statement of experience and resumes. Demonstrated effective organizational structure and relevant experience on similar projects. Satisfactory evidence of respondent ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this Solicitation and to produce the specified products or services on time.

Contract Price and Detailed Budget (15%)

Demonstrated ability to deliver services at a reasonable cost and all elements of cost detail are provided. Budget narrative clearly reflects the cost for providing the services, is detailed and includes all costs required for successful project completion.

Past Performance and References (10%)

Completed Past Performance Questionnaire (Attachment 2). Demonstrated record of timely performance, quality and integrity as evidenced by a list of client references for similar projects and budgets and relevant samples of work provided. Demonstrated ability to complete work without change orders, extensions, and/or budget revisions.

PART VI – INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

Pre-Proposal/Response Conference

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on **Tuesday, December 20, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.** The virtual meeting will be held using Zoom, registration is required. Once registered, applicants will receive notification and a direct link for participation. Click on the following link to register:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYkceupqj8iG9wENAxrPybajxKZDAsfU-gz>

It will be assumed that Respondents attending any conference have reviewed the Solicitation in detail and are prepared to raise any substantive questions which have not already been addressed by H-GAC in this Solicitation.

Inquiries and Additional Information

Respondents must submit questions by e-mail to Purchasing@h-gac.com by the Questions deadline, any questions received after the deadline will not be answered. Telephone inquiries will not be accepted. H-GAC will respond as completely as possible to each question. Questions and answers will be posted on the H-GAC website (<http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) as soon as available. The names of respondents who submit questions will not be disclosed.

Letter(s) of Clarification

All clarifications to this Solicitation will be in writing and identified as a Letter of Clarification. Verbal communications and other written documents intended to clarify and interpret will not legally bind H-GAC. Only information supplied by a Letter of Clarification posted at <http://www.h-gac.com/procurement>) should be used in preparing a response. **H-GAC does not assume responsibility for the receipt of any Letters of Clarification by Respondent(s). Respondents must periodically check the website for updates.**

Examination of Documents and Requirements

Each Respondent must carefully examine all Solicitation documents and become thoroughly familiar with all requirements prior to submission to ensure the response meets the intent of this Solicitation. Respondent is responsible for making all investigations and examinations that are necessary to ascertain conditions affecting the requirements of this Solicitation. Failure to make such investigations and examinations will not relieve the Respondent from obligation to comply, in every detail, with all provisions and requirements of the Solicitation.

Modification of Submission (Before Deadline)

Respondents may modify submissions that have already been submitted by providing a written modification to H-GAC. However, no submissions may be modified after the deadline.

Non-Responders to Solicitation

If unable to submit a response, please email Purchasing@h-gac.com and advise the reason.

Resolution of Protested Solicitations and Awards

Any Respondent who is aggrieved in connection with a purchase transaction may file a grievance. The grievance may be filed at any phase of the procurement, and up to five (5) days after the H-GAC Board of Directors public agenda is posted for action regarding the questioned item. Grievances filed more than five (5) working days after action by the H-GAC Board of Directors will not be deemed timely and will not be considered. In order for a Respondent to enter the grievance process, a written complaint must be sent to the Deputy Assistant Director of H-GAC by certified mail and sent to 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas 77027, which includes the following:

1. Name, mailing address and business phone number of the complainant.
2. Appropriate identification of the procurement being questioned.
3. A precise statement of the reasons for the protest.
4. Supporting exhibits, evidence, or documents to substantiate any claims.

The grievance must be based on an alleged violation of H-GAC's Procurement Procedures, a violation of State or Federal Law (if applicable), or a violation of applicable grant or contract agreements to which H-GAC is a party. Failure to receive a procurement award from H-GAC in and of itself does not constitute a valid grievance. Upon receipt of grievance, the Deputy Executive Director will initiate the informal resolution process.

The Procurement and Contracts Department will contact the complainant and all interested parties and attempt to resolve the allegations informally within ten (10) working days from the date of complaint. If the allegations are successfully resolved by mutual agreement, documentation will be forwarded to the Deputy Executive Director of the resolution with specifics on each point addressed in the original complaint.

If the Procurement and Contracts Department is not successful in resolving the allegations, the complaint, along with the comments, will be forwarded to the Deputy Executive Director immediately. The Deputy Executive Director will review all documentation. All interested parties will be given written notice of the date, time, and place of hearing and an opportunity to present evidence. A written decision will be issued within five (5) working days after the hearing along with notice of appeal rights.

The complainant may appeal the Deputy Executive Director's decision by submitting a written appeal, within five (5) working days, to the Executive Director of H-GAC. The Executive Director, upon receipt of a written notice of appeal, will contact the complainant and schedule a hearing within ten (10) working days. The Executive Director of H-GAC has the option of appointing a Hearing Officer to preside over the hearing. If appointed, the Hearing Officer will conduct a hearing and forward a summary and recommended resolution to the Executive Director.

The decision reached by the Executive Director or his designee will be final and conclusive. This decision will be forwarded to the complainant in writing within thirty (30) working days.

The Respondent may, if it elects to do so, appeal the final and conclusive decision of the Executive Director to a court of competent jurisdiction.

Resolution of Protested Solicitations and Awards for Workforce Solicitations

Following the final decision by the H-GAC Board of Directors, a respondent may file a protest with the Texas Workforce Commission. The Commission reviews protests only after H-GAC's process has been exhausted. Protests filed with the Commission are limited to the following issues: (a) violation of federal law and regulation, and/or (b) violation of protest procedures or failure to review a protest. To file a protest on this level, write to Workforce Quality Assurance Manager, Houston-Galveston Area Council, Post Office Box 22777, Houston, Texas, 77227-2777, 713-627-3200.

PART VII – REQUIRED FORMS TO SUBMIT WITH RESPONSE

	Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Affirmation Form (if subcontracts are to be let)
	Signed Signature Page (located on Page 2)
	Attachment 1 – H-GAC Secure Application and System Development Guidelines
	Attachment 2 – Past Performance Questionnaire

PART VIII - REQUIRED FORMS IF AWARDED A CONTRACT

	Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Ineligibility
	(External Form) Conflict of Interest Form CIQ (if a conflict exists) (refer to link Part VII, DD)
	(External Form) Certificate of Interested Parties – Form 1295 (refer to link Part VII, DD)
	Certification Regarding Lobbying
	Copy of W-9

Download Forms: <https://www.h-gac.com/procurement>

PART IX – SOLICITATION TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a response to this Solicitation, respondent agrees that it has read and fully intends to comply with the terms and conditions of this solicitation as applicable to any subsequent contract or funding agency requirements or agreements. Exceptions to these Terms and Conditions are not permitted. Please view the full Terms and Conditions located here: <https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/d80790aa-ac7c-466e-9849-9a457210da6e/Solicitation-Terms-and-Conditions>