

Request for Proposal

Contingent Recruiting Services for a Direct Hire for an Enterprise Solutions Architect

August 2020



SCHOOL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF OHIO

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I. INTRODUCTION

The School Employees Retirement System of Ohio (SERS) is requesting proposals for candidate profiles from vendors who can provide an IT Enterprise Solutions Architect candidate for direct hire. Only the firm that provides the accepting candidate will be eligible to enter into an agreement with SERS for compensation for their services.

II. BACKGROUND

SERS is a statewide defined benefit retirement system for non-certificated persons employed by the public schools within the state's cities, villages and counties, as well as local districts, vocational and technical schools, community colleges, and The University of Akron. SERS provides service retirement, disability and survivor benefits, and access to health care coverage for benefit recipients and their dependents. General administration and management of the plan is vested in the Retirement Board established under [Chapter 3309](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

This position will be working on the vision and strategy for the overall technical architecture, cloud strategy, and implementation of Enterprise Solutions - including O365 applications (e.g. Exchange online, SharePoint online, Teams). In addition we require a strong understanding and hands-on experience of Multi-Cloud Services (Azure, AWS, Google Cloud), and related security and compliance. The salary range for this position is \$101,602 - \$152,404. Salary will be determined based on the candidate's qualifications and experience. This position is also eligible for SERS' employee benefit package.

Links are available for the most recent [SERS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#).

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

SERS is seeking firms that can provide candidate profiles/resumes of individuals who can perform the duties of an Enterprise Solutions Architect on a full-time basis as a direct hire.

The Enterprise Solutions Architect will:

Be available to work full-time beginning on or before October 5, 2020 at the SERS office at 300 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio.

The Enterprise Solutions Architect, under the direction of the IT Infrastructure Services Manager, is responsible for providing leadership and guidance to the technology team on multiple technologies including (but not limited to) cloud or on-prem - enterprise scale applications, with a focus on information security and reliable service delivery. The Enterprise Solutions Architect provides analysis,

strategies, and solutions for all aspects of the enterprise solution infrastructure and related systems. Additional duties include researching and evaluating emerging technologies, planning technology strategies, preparing tactical road maps, and developing and improving technical processes for efficient and reliable operations. This individual will collaborate with the technology team including other Architects and Engineers to support and implement new and existing operating environments.

Required:

- Expertise of at least one major O365 application (e.g. Exchange online, SharePoint online, Teams) implementation with a proven track-record of designing and implementing enterprise O365 transformational programs.
- Strong understanding and hands-on experience of Multi-Cloud Services (Azure, AWS, Google Cloud), and related security and compliance.
- Responsible for contributing to the vision and strategy for the overall technical architecture, cloud strategy, and integrated product road map.
- Creates the comprehensive strategy and associated action plans for product life cycle management to ensure compatibility and functionality of the SMART (SERS Member and Retiree Tracking) system environment and other services within the portfolio.
- Continuously collaborates with other Architects to ensure that the application and infrastructure strategy and plans are in harmony.
- Designs complex O365 solutions, leading work-streams on transformational programs and ensuring conformance to agreed design standards, methods and tools, including prototyping new tools and applications where appropriate.
- Evaluates and recommends products relating to (cloud or on-prem) applications, related information security solutions, server/endpoint environments and other technical application software. Assists in the analysis, design, construction, implementation and support of these technologies.
- Takes ownership and is accountable for the development and continuous improvement - based on best practices to drive the optimization in service delivery and technology investment.
- Coaches, mentors, instructs, and assists technical staff in all aspects of technologies and processes, and provides thought leadership and expertise in the development of standards and architectural governance.
- Acts as a subject matter expert on the overall enterprise application software architecture and direction, as well as operational adherence to industry best practices and appropriate security protocols.
- Is responsible for related capacity planning, technology risk management, and vendor management.
- Provides guidance and leadership in the implementation and maintenance of the business continuity program.
- Provides operational support for daily business needs during non-business hours.
- Performs other responsibilities as assigned.

The incumbent is required to:

- Carry a cell phone with text messaging capabilities to respond to daily business needs.

Education and Skills/Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree (B.S.) in computer science or related field; or
- Three to five years related experience and/or training; or
- Equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Proven ability to:
 - Understand the long-term ("big picture") and short-term perspectives of situations
 - Translate business needs into enterprise solution architecture requirements
 - Estimate the financial impact of solution architecture alternatives
 - Define multiple solution options to business problems
 - Quickly comprehend the functions and capabilities of new and emerging technologies
- Fundamental knowledgeable in all aspects of enterprise architecture and security.
- Proven track record for:
 - Remaining unbiased toward any specific technology or vendor, and for being more interested in results than personal preferences
 - Thinking about more than technology issues, and for integrating the technical with the business and information aspects rendering complete solutions

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

SERS will consider only proposals for the services as described above. **Responses submitted for other services will not be considered.**

IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

A. Response Deadline

The completed Response must be received by **Friday, September 11, 2020 6:00 p.m., Eastern Time**. Responses received after the Response deadline will not be considered.

B. Delivery

Contact person for all responses, and communications:

HR Department
School Employees Retirement System
300 East Broad Street, Suite 100
Columbus, OH 43215
HRProcure@ohsers.org

The Responses should be sent in PDF file format by email to the contact email address identified in this Section IV.B.

Faxed transmissions are not acceptable and will not be considered.

C. Response Documents

All of the following documents must be submitted together and in the order listed.

1. A Cover Letter submitting the vendor's Response on the vendor's letterhead signed by at least one individual who is authorized to bind the vendor contractually. This cover letter may be an electronic image contained within the PDF file.
2. The Questionnaire in Appendix A. with the question and/or request duplicated in the Response before the answer or response.

D. Submitted Responses

Any Response submitted will become the property of SERS. SERS reserves the right to retain all Responses submitted, and use any information contained in a Response except as otherwise prohibited by law. **All Responses and the contents thereof will be deemed to be a public record which is open to public inspection after a vendor has been selected and contract has been executed, if any.** A vendor may include one additional copy of its Response with any proprietary trade secret information redacted and marked as such with a brief written basis as to why it believes the information is protected from disclosure. In the event that SERS receives a public records request to which, in SERS' sole discretion, any of a vendor's materials are responsive, SERS may release the vendor's redacted materials, or in the event no redacted materials are submitted, the vendor's unredacted materials without notice to the vendor. In the event any of the vendor's redactions are challenged, the vendor shall have sole responsibility to defend such redactions at its cost and expense. SERS will not institute any legal action to defend any of vendor's redactions, but will notify the vendor of such challenges.

E. Communications with SERS

Vendors which intend to submit a Response should not contact any member

of SERS Staff or members of the Retirement Board. An exception to this rule applies to vendors who currently do business with SERS, but any contact made by such vendor(s) with persons should be limited to that business, and should not relate to this RFP.

F. Questions Relating to this RFP

All questions concerning this RFP must be received in writing by fax or email by the Contact person by **Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time**. Answers to only faxed or emailed questions received by this deadline will be available to all vendors by a posting at www.ohsers.org. Questions submitted after 4 p.m. or other than by fax or email will not be considered.

V. SELECTION PROCESS

SERS staff will evaluate all timely and complete Responses. SERS reserves the right to request that any Response be clarified or supplemented.

VI. TENTATIVE TIME TABLE

The following is the tentative time schedule for SERS' search for vendors to provide the requested services. All dates are subject to modification by SERS without prior notice.

Issuance of RFP: Monday, August 17, 2020

Question Deadline: Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 4 p.m. EDT

Response to Written Questions: Wednesday, September 2, 2020, 4 p.m. EDT

RFP Response Deadline: Friday, September 11, 2020, 6:00 p.m. EDT

Candidate Interviews: Following RFP submittal

Start Date: Upon execution of contract, selected candidate to start on or before October 5, 2020.

The vendor(s) selected must enter into a contract.

VII. CRITERIA

The criteria for selection of the Enterprise Solutions Architect will include, but are not limited to, the candidate's qualifications, experience, and the firm's recruitment fees.

VIII. QUESTIONNAIRE

Vendors must complete the Questionnaire appearing in Appendix A. Responses to the questions should repeat the question and be answered in order. Limit each

response to no more than one-half page.

IX. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

SERS makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information in the RFP and nothing contained herein is or shall be relied upon as a promise or representation, whether as to the past or the future. The RFP does not purport to contain all of the information that may be required to evaluate the RFP and any recipient hereof should conduct its own independent analysis of SERS and the data contained or referenced herein. SERS does not anticipate updating or otherwise revising the RFP. However, this RFP may be withdrawn, modified, or re-circulated at any time at the sole discretion of SERS.

SERS reserves the right, at its sole discretion and without giving reasons or notice, at any time and in any respect, to alter these procedures, to change and alter any and all criteria, to terminate discussions, to accept or reject any Response, in whole or in part, to negotiate modifications or revisions to a Response and to negotiate with any one or more respondents to the RFP.

SERS is not and will not be under any obligation to accept, review or consider any Response to the RFP, and is not and will not be under any obligation to accept the lowest offer submitted or any offer at all. SERS is not and will not be under any obligation to any recipient of, or any respondent to, the RFP except as expressly stated in any binding agreement ultimately entered into with one or more parties, either as part of this RFP process, or otherwise. Any decision to enter into a binding agreement with a respondent to this RFP is in SERS' sole discretion.

This RFP is not an offer but a request to receive a Response. SERS will consider a Response as an offer to develop an agreement based upon the contents of the Response. Respondents agree that the contents of their Responses are valid for one year from the date of submission. SERS will not be liable for any cost incurred in the preparation of a Response and will not reimburse any respondents for their submission. Expenses related to the production of a Response are the sole responsibility of the respondent.

Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Responses to the following questions should repeat the question and be answered in order. Limit each response to no more than one-half page.

A. Vendor

1. Provide the vendor's name and the principal office's address, telephone number, and website.
2. Provide the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the vendor's primary contact for this proposal.
3. Describe the vendor's primary business focus.
4. Specify how many years the vendor has been in business.

B. Proposed Candidate

1. List the name of each individual that the firm is proposing as an Enterprise Solutions Architect candidate and attach their resume/candidate profile.
2. Is the candidate legally authorized to work in the United States?
3. Does the candidate now or will the candidate in the future require sponsorship for employment visa status (e.g. H-1B visa status)?
4. Does the proposed candidate meet the criteria in Section III of the RFP, and can the candidate perform the required essential duties and responsibilities of the position?

C. Standards of Conduct

1. Does the vendor have a written code of conduct or set of standards for professional behavior?
2. How does the vendor identify and manage conflicts of interest?
3. Are there any potential conflicts of interest that the vendor would have in providing the requested services to SERS? If yes, explain.
4. List and describe any relationships and/or contacts that the vendor or its officers or employees have had with any SERS Retirement Board member and/or staff member within the last 12 months. Board member information is available at the www.ohsers.org website.
5. Has the vendor or any officer or employee given any remuneration or anything of value directly or indirectly to SERS or any of its Retirement Board members, officers, or employees? If yes, identify the recipient and

remuneration or thing of value. Additional information on the Ohio ethics law in this area may be found at:

http://www.ethics.ohio.gov/Retirement_System_Information_Sheet.html.

6. Within the last five (5) years:
 - i. Has the vendor, or any officer or employee of the vendor been a defending party in a legal proceeding before a court related to the provision of the services?
 - ii. If yes to any of the above, describe the event and the current status or resolution; include any case citation.

D. Fees

1. Provide the vendor's fee for the proposed contingent recruiting services that includes exercising option to hire a candidate as an employee of SERS.
2. Include any travel expenses associated with the fee.