



## ***SCHOOL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF OHIO***

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### **Request for Proposal – IT Recruiting Services Questions Submitted to SERS**

**Question 1: What is the estimated budget for this contract?**

Answer: The RFP is for contingent IT Recruitment Services only. There is no dedicated budget, as the number of open positions fluctuates and therefore budget numbers are not set.

**Question 2: What would be the number of awards you intend to give (approximate number)?**

Answer: Minimum of one vendor will be selected with the option to select an additional. No more than two vendors will be selected.

**Question 3: Is this a new requirement, or is it a recompetes?**

Answer: It is a recompetes.

**Question 4: Could you please share the list of positions required under the three categories given in this proposal?**

Answer: There are no required positions at this time or in the future. The need for positions will be based on available openings in IT for the duration of the contract. SERS' IT Department leads and manages all information technology needs and capabilities at SERS. A description of the three areas follows:

IT Services supports the SERS business units with business analysis services to help make their processes more efficient and effective using SERS Member Administration Retirement Technology (SMART). They also perform quality assurance services to ensure the quality of impending changes to SMART. This team also manages IT service demands by collaborating with the business partners on the prioritization of IT requests. This section also develops and supports the technical aspects of SERS' intranet.

Application Development manages and accomplishes projects for enhancing SERS' line of business application for pension administration, resolving issues within or related to SMART. The application developers rely upon Microsoft based software development tools and associated software development methodologies to implement new enhancements and resolve issues.

IT Operations is responsible for delivering highly reliable, available, and secure technical infrastructure systems. These systems include, but are not limited to, the hardware, software, networking, cloud technology, and other devices needed for SERS employees to conduct SERS business. The section also provides Service Desk support and telecommunication services, administers the databases containing member and retiree information, and collaborates with the Information Security (IS) team to implement security policies and techniques to protect SERS data.

**Question 5:**     **Is the work expected to be performed onsite, remotely, or in a hybrid manner?**

Answer:           SERS employees enjoy a hybrid work environment. 2-days remote, 3-days onsite, after 30 days of successful employment.

**Question 6:**     **What is the work location of the proposed candidates?**

Answer:           Columbus, Ohio. Employees are eligible to request a hybrid work schedule after 30 days of employment.

**Question 7:**     **Could you please provide the list of holidays?**

Answer:

- New Years Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

**Question 8:**     **Are there any mandated Paid Time Off, Vacation, etc.?**

Answer:           SERS offers a variety of leave-time options for employees including paid vacation, sick, personal and floating time. SERS employees also enjoy paid parental leave for up to 2 weeks. SERS does require employees to take five consecutive days off each calendar year.

**Question 9:**     **What is the average annual recruitment volume for SERS?**

Answer:           Over the last 5 years, SERS has averaged a total of 19 open positions a year across all business units.

**Question 10:** How many full-time IT positions are filled using recruiting firms each year?

Answer: The number of open IT positions fluctuates each year. In the last five years, two placements were made using contracted IT recruiting firms.

**Question 11:** What is the average salary of the IT roles being filled by recruiting firms?

Answer: Salary depends on position and experience of candidate. The average salary of roles filled by IT recruiting firms over the last 5 years is \$125,000.

**Question 12:** Do you require a separate cost proposal for this RFP?

Answer: Yes, provide the vendor's fee for the proposed services including any additional expenses associated with, but not included in the fee, if applicable. Fee schedule will be subject to the term of the contract.

**Question 13:** Do you prefer the pricing as hourly rate for each position /or a markup for the given categories will suffice?

Answer: This RFP is for permanent placement and we would expect a placement fee vs. pricing for services at an hourly rate fee.

**Question 14:** Can we provide hourly rate ranges in the price proposal?

Answer: Yes. However, this RFP is for permanent placement and we would expect a placement fee vs. Pricing for services at an hourly rate fee.

**Question 15:** Is there any incumbent for this contract? If yes, please let us know the incumbent's name, hourly rate, and historical spend?

Answer: Yes. SERS has partners with two vendors: VACO and Star Six Seven (formerly Sedgewick). There is not an hourly rate fee with either vendor. Over the life of both contracts, SERS has spent \$47,800.

**Question 16:** Are the incumbents eligible to submit the proposal again?

Answer: Yes. There are incumbents. Yes, they are eligible to resubmit.

**Question 17:** Are there any known challenges or areas for improvement with the current vendor or arrangement?

Answer: No known challenges exist with current vendors or arrangements

between SERS and current vendors.

**Question 18:** What is the preferred channel of communication (e-mail or portal) for sharing your requirements once awarded?

Answer: The preferred method is email.

**Question 19:** Is subcontracting mandatory? If so, are there any mandatory goals?

Answer: No.

**Question 20:** On page 05 of the RFP, Section IV, D ('Response Documents'), item no. 03 asks about the required response to Appendix B – General Terms and Conditions. Please confirm whether a brief narrative is required or if a simple statement of agreement will suffice. A similar question appears on page 11, Section 06, under Appendix A—please confirm if the same response approach applies to both sections

Answer: Item 3 in Section IV.D asks only that the vendor review the terms and conditions included in Appendix B. The response to Question 6(a) in the Questionnaire requires only a simple statement of agreement; if there are any concerns with the terms and conditions in Appendix B they should be detailed as requested in Question 6(a)(1).

**Question 21:** Are Exhibits A and B required to be submitted as part of the proposal, or will they be required post-award?

Answer: Exhibits A and B are required post-award.

**Question 22:** Is it sufficient to acknowledge Appendix B, or should it be included as part of the proposal submission?

Answer: Acknowledgement is sufficient.

**Question 23:** If we submit our standard agreement along with proposed redlines to Appendices B and C, which document will take precedence in the event of a conflict (our agreement or the terms and conditions in Appendices B and C)?

Answer: Once a vendor is selected, SERS will negotiate a formal agreement with the vendor and the terms of that agreement will take precedence.

**Question 24:** Should our standard agreement be accepted, would the terms and conditions in Appendices B and C be considered null and

**void, or would they continue to apply in whole or in part?**

Answer: See answer to Question 23 above

**Question 25:** If both our agreement and Appendices B and C are intended to govern the engagement, how should conflicts between the documents be interpreted and resolved?

Answer: See answer to Question 23 above.

**Question 28:** Does SERS prefer that the terms in Appendices B and C be incorporated directly into our standard agreement, or is it acceptable to submit a separate agreement with any deviations clearly identified?

Answer: See answer to Question 23 above.

**Question 29:** Is there a preferred format or defined process for submitting proposed redlines to Appendices B and C in conjunction with our sample contract?

Answer: There is no preferred format. Any deviations to Appendix B and/or C should be detailed in the response to Question 6 and 7 of the Questionnaire (Appendix A), respectfully.

**Question 30:** What level of detail for professional profiles would suffice?

Answer: Professional profiles of the firm's principals and all proposed team members who would be assigned to SERS may include, but not limited to name, number of years' experience, description of relevant experience in recruiting and placing candidates, and types of roles.

**Question 31:** What type of technical resources are expected for recruitment?

Answer: See answer to Question 4 above.

**Question 32:** What is the production SERS platform(s) that will be used by the recruiters? (Microsoft, etc.)?

Answer: Microsoft.

**Question 33:** Could SERS please clarify whether this preference carries any formal evaluation weighting or scoring consideration, and whether it would have any impact on vendors that do not maintain a physical presence in Central Ohio?

Answer: Preference will be given to vendors who maintain a local presence

in Central Ohio. Most employees are sourced from Central Ohio.

**Question 34: Is it mandatory to have an office location in Ohio?**

Answer: No. However, preference will be given to vendors who maintain a local presence in Central Ohio.

**Question 35: Are commercial (non-public sector) client references acceptable?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question 36: Do we provide the sample contract as a part of the RFP response or do we submit post award?**

Answer: Question 3 of Appendix A requests that the responding vendor provide a sample contract.

**Question 37: Is there a format to provide the pricing?**

Answer: No specific format for pricing is required.

**Question 38: Is digital signature acceptable?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question 39: Are there defined labor categories, leveling structures, or rate card requirements that vendors should align pricing to?**

Answer: No.

**Question 40: Are there any geographic considerations (onsite, hybrid, or remote) that may impact pricing?**

Answer: No.

**Question 41: On page four, Section III. Scope of Services, the RFP states, "Direct hire arrangements are preferred. However, SERS will consider contract to hire candidates."**

- a. To confirm, does this translate to SERS preferring all roles to be contingent and then have the option to onboard/hire a resource if/when desired?**
- b. Approximately how many contingent roles are converted to full-time employees each year?**

Answer: No. SERS prefers candidates to be available for direct hire, not on

contingent basis. Therefore, SERS would not expect to convert any employees in a year.

**Question 42:** What is the average number of days-to-fill for SERS self-recruitment/hiring?

Answer: 60 days in FY2025.

**Question 43:** What is the average number of days-to-fill for recruiting firms?

Answer: We do not separately track this information. It is included in the SERS self-recruitment metric.

**Question 44:** By how much would you like to see these numbers improve?

Answer: 60 days is our benchmark. There is no requirement for improvement.

**Question 45:** Are there any other objectives or service-level-agreements, SERS would like recruitment firms to address and support?

Answer: No.

**Question 46:** Please share how the evaluation criterion for selecting vendors is weighted or prioritized?

Answer: The criteria for selection are outlined in the RFP. We can provide a scoring matrix with the applicable weights for each category post-selection.

**Question 47:** If the resources we provide at the time of proposal submission are not available at the time of a potential contract award could vendors replace them with equally qualified resources?

Answer: Yes

**Question 48:** Will the County allow mid-contract price adjustments (e.g., for agency fees or wage rates) during the three-year term, and if so, under what conditions?

Answer: SERS is not a county or state agency. Price adjustments must be listed as part of the proposal for consideration, and must be agreed to as part of the contract.

**Question 49:** If adjustments are permitted, is there a specified mechanism (e.g., annual review, CPI-based increase, or mutual

**negotiation) that governs such changes?**

Answer: No.

**Question 50:** Should the initial proposal reflect fixed pricing for the entire term, or can adjustments be proposed in advance as part of the contract?

Answer: SERS prefers fixed pricing, but would consider adjustments on an agreed upon schedule.

**Question 51:** Are resumes required at the time of proposal submission? If yes, Do we need to submit the actual resumes for proposed candidates or can we submit the sample resumes?

Answer: No, resumes are not due until a contract is executed and SERS has notified the vendor of an opening.