

Tender Clarifications – Questions and Answers

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR THE FOR PROVISION OF CLOUD HOSTING SERVICES FOR MORDINISED SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION SYSTEMS (SA-SAMS). – NECT/2026/10/01

No.	Question	Answer
1	For a consortium or joint venture, may the B-BBEE status and preference points be claimed on a consolidated certificate for the JV, and must each partners submit the full set of mandatory documents?	For a consortium or joint venture, the B-BBEE status level and preference points may be claimed based on a consolidated B-BBEE certificate or sworn affidavit issued for the joint venture, where permitted in terms of the applicable procurement requirements. The joint venture must ensure that the consolidated certificate or affidavit complies with the relevant B-BBEE regulations and the conditions stipulated in the bid document.
2	§13(d) refers to bidders who pass functionality being invited to a "Phase 2 (submission of full and costed proposal)". Should the full pricing schedule be submitted with this bid on 26 October, or only in a later phase?	The bidder is requested to submit a pricing schedule as part of their bid submission. Please note that Clause 13(b) provides that the NECT may invite the bidder for further clarification should it deem this necessary in relation to the bid submitted.
3	May an extension to the submission deadline would be granted? If so, please advise on the revised closing date and time.	The bid closing date has been extended from 26 October 2026 at 11:00 to 2 November 2026 at 11:00, as communicated in Erratum Notice No. 01. All other submission requirements remain applicable unless formally amended.
4	In relation to the SLA, the 99.9 availability requirement. Is that for service availability or is it around the infrastructure?	It is for both. It's for the solution, but also availability. And to have that up 99.9%, the infrastructure must be working.

5	Will only GCP and Azraa or other cloud providers accepted if they meet the RFP requirements?	The RFP does not restrict bids to Google Cloud Platform or Microsoft Azure. Other cloud providers may be proposed, provided the proposed solution meets all mandatory technical, security, data-residency, availability and service-level requirements in the RFP.
6	The virtual-machine summaries in §11.4–11.11 and the compute figures in the pricing schedule (§14.3.2.2) differ. For example, production is shown as 2 application VMs and 2 database VMs with "Total 24 vCPU / 64 GB" each, while the pricing schedule shows production compute of 96 vCPU / 384 GB RAM and 16 TB storage. Please confirm whether the §11 figures are per VM or totals, and which figures bidders should price	Bidders must use the baseline infrastructure specifications provided in Section 11 of the RFP as the basis for their initial pricing. Subsequent infrastructure capacity increases must be considered in accordance with the upgrade requirements outlined in Response 3 below.
7	Please confirm the storage to be priced per environment: the §11 tables and the pricing schedule show different totals (e.g. UAT 1 TB vs 4 TB, Sandbox 1 TB vs 3 TB, Document Repository 2 TB vs 5 TB).	Bidders must use the baseline infrastructure specifications provided in Section 11 of the RFP as the basis for their initial pricing. Subsequent infrastructure capacity increases must be considered in accordance with the upgrade requirements outlined in Response 3 below.
8	For the year-2 upgrades (March, June and October 2027), should each upgrade add one third of the year-1 capacity to every environment, or to production only?	Infrastructure capacity upgrades during Year 2 will apply only to the following environments and components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Production Database 2. Data Warehouse 3. User Acceptance Testing (UAT) 4. Sandbox Document Repository
9	The cost summary asks for a 5-year contract value, while the briefing described a pilot that will later migrate to the DBE's production environment. Please confirm the intended contract term, and whether pricing for years 3–5 should assume the year-2 capacity.	The required contract duration is two (2) years. Bidders must prepare their proposals and associated pricing based on this two-year contract period.

10	Is GPU capacity for machine-learning batch jobs required during the pilot? If so, please indicate the expected GPU type and hours per month so that it can be priced.	GPU resources are not required for the proposed solution.
11	May bidders propose a managed MySQL service with high availability and automated failover within South Africa, instead of self-managed database VMs, provided all SLA, residency and recovery requirements are met? Is a specific MySQL version required (the RFP states "latest version -1")?	Bidders may propose a managed MySQL database service, including high availability and automated failover, provided the solution meets the applicable service-level, data residency and recovery requirements. The specified MySQL version is MySQL 8.4 LTS .
12	Please describe the current environment from which the first schools will be migrated: hosting provider/platform, number of databases, total data volume, and whether downtime windows are permitted during migration.	Bidders must refer to the baseline infrastructure requirements provided in the RFP.
13	What data-warehouse technology does the project intend to use (e.g. MySQL-based, a columnar database, or a managed analytics service)? This affects the platform and the price.	The technologies identified for the data warehouse environment are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MySQL 8 Microsoft SQL Server
14	Should firewall and flow logs be integrated with an existing NECT/DBE SIEM (if so, which product), or should the bidder provide the SIEM? Can the NECT share the applicable SITA MIOS standard?	The bidder is required to provide a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solution. The integration layer incorporates webhook-based integrations. The applicable SITA MIOS standards are available through SITA's official website.
15	The briefing mentioned a failover objective of less than 60 seconds of downtime, and §10 states auto-repair within 3 minutes of a health-check failure. Please confirm which target applies to which scenario (e.g. failover of a load-balanced application tier vs. replacement of a failed VM).	NECT does not prescribe a specific failover or recovery time for the scenarios described. Bidders are required to propose appropriate high-availability, failover and recovery mechanisms, including their associated service-level commitments.

16	PHP 7.4 no longer receives security updates. Is the bidder expected to provide any compensating controls (e.g. web application firewall, isolation) for the application runtime, or does this remain with the SA-SAMS application team?	Yes. Bidders are expected to provide appropriate compensating security controls to address risks associated with the PHP 7.4 application runtime.
17	is there a deadline for written clarification questions? And will all the answers be shared or posted on the NECT website once they've been responded to?	The deadline for written clarification questions is 28 October 2026. Material clarifications and amendments will be communicated through the official tender publication channels to ensure all prospective bidders have equal access to the same information.
18	Missing declaration of interest form	NECT acknowledges that the Declaration of Interest Form was omitted from the original tender pack. The form has been made available through the official tender publication channel as part of Erratum Notice No. 01. Bidders must complete and submit it in accordance with the RFP returnable-document requirements.