



National Board of Examinations
(Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
NAMS Building, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi – 110029

Reply to Queries received during Pre-Bid Meeting

With reference to the NBE Tender Document No. NBE/Admin/Tender/Hybrid/2020 dated 6/11/2020, for Conduct of Hybrid Examinations (Offline) And Digital Evaluation of Answer Scripts (2nd Call), the reply to queries received during Pre-Bid is as follows:

Sr. No.	Page no.	Para no.	Content of the RFP requiring clarification	Query / suggestion	Response
1.	16	10. Infrastructure and Manpower Requirement	Test Data Archiving: The Bidder shall archive the Examination Data (excluding CCTV footage) for a period of One year from the conclusion of the activity for future references after specified time, as per requirement of NBE. CCTV footage will be handed over to the client within 20 days once assessment is over and this shall not be retained by the Bidder. Remaining examination related data like answers, results, logs etc. will be retained by Bidder as long as Contract is valid.	Customer data will be retained as long as contract is valid. Please confirm if it's acceptable.	No Changes
2.	19	13. Details of Clientele	Details of Clientele: Full details of past and current clientele along with their Names and addresses, Value of Contract and supporting documents to be submitted along with the Technical Bid.	Due to confidentiality agreement signed with our clients we cannot share the details as required. Specific reference can be given post selection for NBE to directly validate.	No Changes
3.	30	VIII. Type of Tender and Submission of Bid	Tender Type: Open, Single Stage Two Bid System (Two Envelope System) shall be followed by NBE to determine the successful bidder. The firm (bidder) should bifurcate their bids in two separate envelopes, (with appropriate superscriptions), and submit the same in one sealed envelope as indicated below:	We suggest to kindly change the Tender submission process from Physical to On-line Submission.	Currently etender System is not available with NBE.

4.	33	ANNEXURE- II (PART 2)	<p>DETAILS OF EVALUATIONS EXECUTED</p> <p>Column 1- SN Column 2- Designation Column 3- Total number of employees in that category Column 4- Number available for this work Column 5- Name Column 6- Qualification Column 7 - Professional experience and details of work carried out Column 8- In what capacity these would be involved in this work Column 9- Remarks</p>	<p>The Table asks for manpower details whereas the fields should be about Details of Evaluation work executed. Is our understanding ok? If yes should the correct format be in line with Annexure II, Part 1.</p> <p>Column 1- Sr. No. Column 2- Name of Work/ Project & Location Column 3 - Owner of sponsoring organization Column 4- Total Number of Answer books Evaluated Column 5- Date of commencement as per contract Column 6- Actual date of completion Column 7- Litigation/ Arbitration pending in progress with details Column 8- Name, Designation and Address/telephone number of officers to whom reference may be made Column 9- Remarks</p>	No Changes
5.	19	14	<p>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA – The bidder must have primary Data Center with DR site infrastructure for data Security. Both the Primary and Secondary Data Centers should be located in India in different Seismic zones. The Data Center must be Tier III and ISO certified and in accordance to Government of India Guidelines. The infrastructure of data centres should be preferably Owned by the bidder and Cert-in certified.</p>	<p>Our understanding is that owning the Data centre is just a preference and will not be considered as a reason for not qualifying. The software application will be Cert-In certified. Physical data Centre cannot be certified by Cert-In. However there are other Certifications such as ISO 9001, 20000 and 27001 that can be provided as certificates.</p>	No Changes
6.	35	1.1.2	<p>Scoring Model – Overall regular staff 100 – 500 – 1 point 501 – 1000 – 3 points >1000 – 5 points</p>	<p>We request that be relaxed as follows 50 -100 - 1 point 100-150 – 3 points >150 – 5 points MeritTrac has delivered large scale, high-stake exams pan-India with this strength flawlessly. We have also completed digital evaluation projects for over 8 lakh answer scripts. We request that you consider experience over manpower strength. Moreover, this clause may favour a few bidders and will not allow an even playing field to all interested parties.</p>	No Changes

7.	35	1.2.2	CMMi Level Service	CMMi Services certification is applicable for ITeS organizations who are servicing overseas clients and it is not appropriate for the purpose of this RFP. CMMi Development is more relevant since the technology product used for delivering CBT exams should have undergone a third party audit and certification processes to deliver flawless exams. Therefore we request you to consider CMMi Development certification only.	No Changes
8.	36	1.3.1	Annual Turnover More than 20 Cr to 50 Cr – 5 points 50.01 Cr and less than 100 Cr – 10 points More than 100 Cr – 15 points	We request you to change the clause so as to enable a level playing field for all bidders 20 Cr and less than 50 Cr – 5 points 50.01 Cr to 75 Cr – 10 points More than 75 Cr – 15 points	No Changes
9.	36	1.5.2	Primary and Secondary Data Centre	Request you to relax this clause completely. While we may have an outsourced data centre, the application hosted in the server will be completely under our control. We have delivered large exams in the same manner for over the last 10 years and have not had any issues. This clause will favour certain IT companies who own data centres and hire them out for other purposes. This will again favour a few selected bidders.	No Changes
10.	6	Key Information (Details of Examination)	Table	How is the value arrived for Tentative no. of total answer scripts	Data based on previous exams.
11.	6	Key Information (Details of Examination)	Table	The DNB exams will be conducted twice. The number of 1,05,000 answer scripts must be considered for both exams or will the scripts be $1,05,000 \times 2 = 2,10,000$? Please clarify	Expected Answer Script Count for Both the Exams.

12.	8	4) Exam Center Management Point (a)		How many centers are required for DNB, Fellowship and FAT exams - pls give indications separately for each.	More than 30 cities includes majority of state capitals.
13.	8	4) Exam Center Management Point (a)		In how many cities the exams are conducted - pls give inputs based on past exams data	The last exam on hybrid model was conducted at 35 centres in 32 cities.
14.	9	5) Exam day activities	a) The Bidder shall ensure checking of original documents and Admit Card of all candidates at the entry gate of each examination centre.	Original Document can be any govt issued photo ID cards like - Aadhar Card, Pan Card, Driving License, passport - Pls confirm	As per NBE's requirements. Same shall be communicated at the time of exam.
15.	11	6) Scanning of Answer Scripts Point (f)		We are the only company who has pioneered in both the methodology of scanning – Cutting Spine mode and Book scanning mode (without cutting mode). Sensitive documents can be scanned without cutting the spine there by ensuring that the original answer booklet is not altered during processing. This also gives an edge to the customers in responding to any RTIs by the candidate. Depending upon your requirement, we can propose any method however, the cost and time implication differ with each of these modes. Request your suggestions	Currently NBE is using Spine Cut Method.
16.	12 and 13	Digital evaluation of answer script Point 17 and 24		We have more secured way of logging in using OTP enabled services which is similar to banking transaction. Hope this is acceptable to the board	No Comments
17.		EMD		We request you to extend the EMD exemption to MSMEs apart from MSEs as per guidelines of Ministry of Finance	Kindly refer to Clause V (2) on page No. 29 of the Tender Document. EMD exemption is available to SMEs only

18.	Page 33	Evaluation Criteria Clause 3.a	Evaluation and Comparison of Bids • 80 % weightage will be awarded for Technical Evaluation and 20 % weightage will be awarded for Financial Evaluation.	We request you to keep weightage as 60:40. Therefore request to amend the clause as: Evaluation and Comparison of Bids • 60 % weightage will be awarded for Technical Evaluation and 40 % weightage will be awarded for Financial Evaluation.	No Changes
19.	Page 34	Scoring Model Clause 1.1.2	Overall regular staff strength (Project Management/ Development / Quality Assurance / Implementation / Operations) =100 - 500 1 =501 - 1000 3 >1000 5	In order to deliver examination of 1 Lac candidates or even more, it would not require a regular staff strength of more than 200 employees. Therefore, we request you to amend the clause as: Overall regular staff strength (Project Management/ Development/ Quality Assurance /Implementation/ Operations) =100 - 200 1 =200 - 300 3 >300 5	No Changes
20.	Page 34	Scoring Model Clause 1.2.1&1.2.2	1.2.1 CMMi level Development 10 CMMi level 3 Development 2 CMMi level 4 Development 5 CMMi level 5 Development 10 1.2.2 CMMi level Service 10 CMMi level 3 Service 2 CMMi level 4 Service 5 CMMi level 5 Service 10	Tender is for conduct of offline examination & digital evaluation and not for any software development work. Moreover, these certifications act as a hindrance to wider tender participation thereby limiting bidder process. We request you to amend the clause as: Organization must have authorized and globally accepted software certifications i.e. ISO-27001, ISO 9001, ISO 20000 and SEI CMMi Level 3 (desirable) or higher for the Software/ Services and PCMMi level 3 or higher for people maturity 15 • CMMi Level 3 and Above - 5 Marks • PCMMi Level 3 and Above - 5 Marks • ISO 27001 and ISO 9001 - 3 Marks • ISO 20000-1 - 2 Marks	No Changes

21.	Page 35	Scoring Model Clause 1.3	Average annual turnover from examination service for the period 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018 – 19 15 20 Crore to 50 Crore INR 5 50.01Crore to 100 Crore INR 10 More than 100 Crore INR 15	Since the project value is approx. 7.5 Crores over a period of 3 years, hence considering GFR guidelines the minimum turnover of the bidding company can be estimated at 10 times. There is no requirement of such a high turnover. Therefore, we request you to amend the clause as: Average annual turnover from examination service for the period 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018 – 19 - 15 Marks • 20 Crore to 30 Crore INR - 5 Marks • 30.01 Crore to 40 Crore INR - 10 Marks • More than 40 Crore INR - 15 Marks	No Changes
22.	Page 35	Scoring Model Clause 1.4.1	Maximum no of candidates appeared in computer-based examination in single shift completed in India in last three financial years (as on date of bid submission) 10 15,000 - 20,000 Candidates 2 20,001 - 30,000 Candidates 5 >30,000 Candidate 10	The RFP is for offline examination and not for computer based examination. Therefore request you to amend the clause as: Maximum no of candidates appeared in OMR based examination in single shift completed in India in last three financial years (as on date of bid submission) • 1,00,000- 2,00,000 Candidates 2 • 2,00,001 – 3,00,000 Candidates 5 • >3,00,000 Candidate 10	No Changes
23.	Page 35	Scoring Model Clause 1.4.2	No of Answer scripts evaluated through computers per year for any government project in India for Indian Govt. University/ School Board/ Public Service Commission 10 1,50,000 – 4,00,000 answer scripts 2 4,00,001 – 7,50,000 answer scripts 5 >7,50,000 answer scripts 10	We request you to amend the clause as: No of Answer scripts evaluated through computer based evaluation in a single project for any Indian Govt. University/ School Board/ Public Service Commission 15 • 1,50,000 – 3,00,000 answer scripts 5 • 3,00,001 – 5,00,000 answer scripts 10 • >5,00,000 answer scripts 15	No Changes
24.	Page 35	Scoring Model Clause 1.5.2	Primary Data Center with Secondary DC site to be managed by the bidder for data Security. 10 • Tier III DC infrastructure with Secondary DC outsourced by the bidder. 2	It is informed that most organisations in this domain utilize the services of specialised data center service providers who have expertise in hosting services and provide high level of security and redundancy. Hence it is suggested to use TIER IV data center. Therefore, we request you to amend the clause as:	No Changes

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier III DC infrastructure with Secondary DC owned by the bidder 5 • Tier III DC infrastructure with Secondary DC owned by the bidder with Cert-in Certified infrastructure 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Data Center with Secondary DC site for data Security 10 • Tier 4 DC Infrastructure with DR Site with ISO Certificates and Cert-IN Certified. 10 • Tier 4 DC Infrastructure with DR Site with ISO Certificates 5 • Tier 3 DC Infrastructure with DR Site 3 	
25.		Eligibility Criteria	We request you to include the clause with Eligibility Criteria.	<p>New Clause: The bidder should have proven capability of computer based evaluation (evaluation of scanned answer booklets using computer) of more than 10 Lac answer scripts including setting up scanning centre in more than 50 locations for any govt. department or Govt. education body.</p>	No Changes
26.	5	Tender Document A. Background Information 1) Project Background	NBE intends to implement a system that will manage various office examinations processes	<p>In reference to the solution design for system to manage various office examination processes mentioned in the RFP, its recommended to have an enterprise wide Document Management System (DMS) with robust security features to manage entire lifecycle of documents and thus requesting NBE to incorporate following functional attributes of DMS as well. There we recommend that the proposed DMS should have the below mentioned features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMS should be COTS based readily available to put to use • Categorization of documents in folders-subfolders just like windows interface. There should not be any limit on the number of folder and levels of sub folder. • Web based rights management for granting user/group/role based access to various functionalities. • Server based Inbuilt Document Image Viewer for displaying image document without native viewer and stamping annotations on the documents like highlighting, marking text, underlining putting sticky notes on documents, and support for text and image stamps etc. 	<p>No Changes.</p> <p>Tender Pertains to Conduct of Hybrid Examination (offline) and Digital Evaluation of Answer Script.</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic stamping of annotations with user name, date and time of putting annotations • Securing annotations for selective users Please confirm.	
27.	10	Tender Document B. Scope of Work/ Services 6) Scanning of Answer Scripts	Scanned Answer Scripts are to be securely uploaded to the Bidder's Data Center and then made available to the Evaluator at the evaluation center for Digital Evaluation.	The proposed Document Management System should ensure best of breed solution to store and manage millions of scanned answer scripts and this will also enhance the scalability of proposed Content & document management module along with Scanning & Digitization solution: The system should store only index information in database while images should be stored in separate file server. DMS should be designed for storing high volumes. DMS should store image and binary document in a separate file server and not in RDBMS. Please confirm.	No Changes
28.	15	"Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services 10) Infrastructure and Manpower requirement"	Test Data Archiving: The Bidder shall archive the Examination Data (excluding CCTV footage) for a period of One year from the conclusion of the activity for future references after specified time, as per requirement of NBE.	So with respect to the requirement, we suggest that the department should look out for a proven solution wrt to the scalability and the volume. So the department should look for a Document Management System which has at least one live implementation site in India in Govt/PSU with more than 10 crores document archived in document management repository with more than 5000 users using this Document Management System	No Changes
29.	5	"Tender Document A. Background Information 1) Project Background"	NBE intends to implement a system that will manage various office examinations processes	It is recommended that the required system should be built on low code BPM platform which is COTS and readily available, which is easy to deploy and should have configuration capability as per the requirement of NBE. Please confirm.	No Changes
30.	10	Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services 7) Digital evaluation of answer scripts	Bidder should ensure encrypted transfer/export of the data including raw scores data from local computers to Central Data Center.	As per our understanding from the requirement mentioned in the RFP, for standardization and uniformity of data and document in scenarios like transferring/exporting it to Central Data Centre from local system, web based scanning solution is recommended. Following are some features of the web scanning solution:	No Changes

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should have capability of scanning on Linux platform as well - Solution should have browser based scanning capability - The proposed solution should provide for automatic correction of parameters like compression not proper, skew, orientation etc during scanning <p>Kindly confirm on our understanding.</p>	
31.	9	Tender Document B. Scope of Work/ Services 6) Scanning of Answer Scripts	Scanning center will be established in the Office of National Board of Examinations at New Delhi. Bidder to ensure sufficient number of scanners and required expertise manpower should be available to complete the entire work within 7 days of receipt of the Answer Scripts at the Scanning Centre.	In reference to the mentioned RFP requirement, requesting NBE to confirm the number of Scanning Users and Scanning Workstations.	No Changes
32.	9	Tender Document B. Scope of Work/ Services 6) Scanning of Answer Scripts	Scanning center will be established in the Office of National Board of Examinations at New Delhi. Bidder to ensure sufficient number of scanners and required expertise manpower should be available to complete the entire work within 7 days of receipt of the Answer Scripts at the Scanning Centre.	As per our understanding from the RFP, NBE requires an integrated scanning engine with capability for centralized and decentralized Scanning & Document Capturing. The scanning and document management solution should be from same OEM so as to provide an integrated solution right from capture to archival of documents, answer scripts etc. Should be able to support the capture of digital records of at least the following formats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails and attachments - Images - .tiff, jpeg, gif, PDF etc. Should support all the special image enhancement functionality offered by the scanner through the driver interface. Should have capability of automatic segregation of documents/records based on Barcode, Blank page, Fixed page and auto Form recognition. Please confirm.	No Changes

33.	5	"Tender Document A. Background Information 1) Project Background"	NBE intends to implement a system that will manage various office examinations processes	As per our experience of working with the Government Organisations and considering the requirement mentioned in the RFP, along with DMS, there should be provision for long term archival of answer scripts, question papers, other documents in case of rechecking answer scripts, disputes or court cases, the system should have the capability of centrally controlled auditing, expiration & retention policies, archival, retention and regulatory compliances. So with this our understanding is that the department requires the integrated Records Management System which has the below mentioned capabilities: a. Capability to define retention policy, disposition policy etc b. Capability to capture details about the electronic as well physical records including warehouse location, box no etc. c. Capability to track Physical records movement d. Compliance with standards like DoD 5015.2, ISO 15489, VERS etc. Please confirm our understanding.	No Changes
34.	10, 14	Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services7) Digital Evaluation of Answer ScriptsTender Document B. Scope of Work/ Services9) Security Measures	The evaluation software should have role base Security MechanismsBidder to maintain complete log of all activities of evaluators during the course of evaluation to enable complete Audit the Evaluation process.➤ Complete Security management processes (Physical and IT forscanning center and Evaluation Centers etc.)➤ Evaluator handling processes.➤ Click by Click Audit processes.➤ Other related processes involved for evaluation	As per our understanding, the system should be a secured robust support web-based administration module for the complete management of system.- The system shall support integration with PKI infrastructure as well as bio-metric solution for enhanced security.- The system shall support secure login id and passwords for each user and passwords shall be stored in encrypted format in database- The Admin module shall provide interface for purging old audit trail and do selective logging i.e. select the system or application features for, which the audit trails have to be generated.- The system shall support complete Audit trail history for documents or folders such aswhen created in the system, modified or when accessed time, owner etc.- The System shall provide	No Changes

				<p>facility to index folders, files and documents on user-defined indexes like department, examination type, centres, file number, year etc.- The System shall support Automatic full text indexing for Text search.- The system should have the capability to set automatic reminders and alarms to concerned evaluators to evaluate in the prescribed time. Kindly confirm.</p>	
35.	7	<p>Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services 3) Secured question paper authoring software</p>	<p>The bidder shall provide a secured question paper authoring platform for secured question paper creation by NBE.</p>	<p>As per the solution requirement mentioned in the RFP, our submission is that NBE requires a BPM based Workflow Management System, which is COTS based solution to cater required authoring platform that will come up with following mandatory functionalities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposed BPM/Workflow Solution should have the capabilities such as graphically modeling the processes or workflows for digital evaluation of answer scripts, integrated rules engine for merit list generation, inbuilt form designer to design questions digitally, reports/dashboard tool for providing MIS and integrated Document Management System for storing all the documents. 2. The BPM solution should come with an inbuilt Business Activity Monitoring System to facilitate users by providing a privilege based DashBoard view, to configure dashboard for individuals as per User Role or Group 3. The system shall facilitate re-engineering of processes and act as a platform for building specific application and have a workflow engine to support different types of document routing mechanism including Sequential, Parallel, Rule Based & Ad-Hoc Routing. 4. The interface shall be easy to use so that Process owners can change the business process as and when required without any programming knowledge. 	<p>No Changes</p>

				5. The system shall provide facility to define custom triggers like Emails, Word template or launching executable etc. on predefined conditions. The above are very few specification of a standard BPM based Workflow Solution through which an organization can achieve an out of box process automation solution with a very strong integration capability with multiple other application and having a very easy change management system.	
36.	7	Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services 3) Secured question paper authoring software	The bidder shall provide a secured question paper authoring platform for secured question paper creation by NBE.	The required workflow management solution should comply to various open workflow standards such as BPMN, BPEL, WFMC. It is suggested to add this standards to establish the quality, best of breed solution and best industry practices of the workflow management application. Kindly confirm.	No Changes
37.	12	Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services 7) Digital evaluation of answer scripts	After scanning of answer scripts, the delivery of digitized answer scripts to the Evaluators can be by any secured mode.	With respect to the mentioned requirement in the RFP, the scanned answer scripts can be directly uploaded into the centralized repository i.e., DMS at the backend and basis strict Access control rights, they can be made available to relevant evaluators following all security parameters and standards. Kindly confirm if our understanding is correct.	No Changes
38.	NA	Tender Document A. Background Information1) Project Background	User Count	Referring to the end users who would eventually be accessing the system, required application should have a total as well as concurrent user base. Accordingly please confirm on the following, 1. Total user volume of DMS & Workflow Processes 2. Concurrent user volume of DMS & Workflow	No Changes
39.	16	Tender Document B. Scope of Work/ Services11) Platform level requirements	The bidder should have all the necessary components and dependency of source code of the proposed software in place so that any change required in any of the components of the software can be undertaken by their in-house technical team.	As per our understanding, the department requires the source code of the Custom development done for this project. However if Source Code of COTS based solution is required then same can be kept under the Escrow Agreement. Please confirm our understanding.	No Changes

40.	18	Tender Document C. Eligibility Criteria	The bidder must have primary Data Center with DR site infrastructure for data Security	"As understood from the RFP Statement, that NBE requires the workflow for authoring question papers/ evaluation along with DMS Solution with the following environment, 1. Production 2. DR (what percent of DC) 3. Test / UAT / Development Environment Please confirm about the environment and its type."	No Changes
41.	NA	General	Integration	"The system should be based on open standards and have API support for data import & export. The System shall provide fully functional APIs for Integration. We assume that below are the mentioned systems, with which proposed system (Workflow & Document management) shall be integrated: 1. LDAP 2. Video Recording application 4. Email/ SMS Gateway 8. Digital Certificate Services 9. Any other Third party software applications (if required) In case of integration with any other system, please let us know system details & integration touchpoints. Please specify any other integration touchpoints apart from these."	No Changes
42.	NA	General	System Specifications	It is suggested to add following for platform agnostic feature "The System should be platform independent and should support both Linux and Windows for application server - Solution should have been built using server side java and J2EE technologies. - Solution should be multi-tier, web-based solution (having web-based front-end for users and as well as for system administrative functions) having centralized database, web and application server with support for clustering	No Changes

				<p>- The system should store only index information in database while images should be stored in separate file server.</p> <p>- Solution should be compliant to CMIS open source standards. Our system supports multiple data bases such as Oracle, POSTGRESQL, MSSQL. Please confirm.</p>	
43.	12	Tender Document B. Scope of Work /Services 7) Digital evaluation of answer scripts	Provision for configuration of multi-lingual question paper.	Please confirm whether NBE intends to have a unicode complaint solution with support also in Hindi language.	No Changes



NBE