

Questions 1/20/2025

1. What are the next steps after this RFI process? Will there be an RFP stage, or will the selected vendor proceed directly to implementation?

This RFI + Addendum process is the final stage of this selection process for a new technology platform to operate the SFAA Regional Marketplace.

2. Could you elaborate on the primary drivers for this platform and why it is being prioritized at this time?

The primary driver for this platform is to enhance economic opportunities for local, small, and minority-owned businesses by increasing access to procurement opportunities from participating anchor institutions. The platform is being prioritized now as the pilot has concluded and the participating Anchors would like to build on the pilot by improving data integration, reporting, scalability and sustainability of the initiative. The ultimate goal is to create a more inclusive local economy, leveraging the \$10 billion annual spend of anchor institutions.

3. Can you provide an estimated budget range for this project, including anticipated recurring costs such as hosting and licensing?

The RFI + Addendum does not specify a budget range. Respondents are encouraged to propose cost-effective solutions that are fast to implement and detail their pricing models, including initial implementation costs and recurring expenses such as hosting, maintenance, and licensing.

4. The RFI mentions a two-year pilot program. Are there key milestone dates or deadlines we should consider, including the ideal launch date for the pilot?

Yes, key dates include:

- **Selection of Top Three Applicants:** February 10, 2025
- **Presentations:** February 2025
- **Final Selection:** Late March/Early April 2025

Assuming selection and implementation are completed on schedule, Phase 2 could launch by mid-2025. A detailed implementation plan linked to this timeline should be part of the response.

5. Do you have a group of pilot users identified for the testing phase, and how much support will you need with your launch plan?

Yes, 10 anchor institutions across Miami-Dade and Broward Counties participated in the SFAA Regional Marketplace pilot project. It's expected that the selected technology partner will

provide significant support, including vendor engagement, system configuration, and technical assistance to enhance the onboarding process.

6. The RFI states you are seeking a technology partner to operate the Marketplace. Does this include an ongoing support contract after the initial delivery, or will your internal team handle operations post-launch?

Respondents should provide a plan for providing ongoing support. This includes managing bugs, outages, customer support for administrators and users, and potential system feature enhancements. The partner will need to offer robust post-implementation maintenance to ensure sustainability.

7. Will there be a single point of contact or a review team responsible for approving deliverables? Would they be open to in-person workshops?

A Technology Review Committee will oversee the selection process as well as provide guidance post selection and into implementation. Communication and deliverable oversight processes will be developed post-award with the technology partner. In-person workshops are not explicitly mentioned but could be proposed to facilitate effective collaboration and alignment on deliverables. Virtual workshops are welcome as well.

8. How much user research and engagement have you conducted so far? Will the selected vendor have access to your user base during the Discovery phase?

There have been several phases of user research and information-gathering through the pilot stage of the project. During the two years of this program, SFAA members and vendors shared detailed feedback on their needs. Summaries of this feedback will be made available to the selected vendor. The RFI document summarizes recent additional user research conducted through surveys of participating anchors. The selected vendor will be given access to the survey data and the user base (via the Technology Committee) for further research during the Discovery phase if needed.

9. Have you explored existing SaaS solutions, and is there a specific platform or product already under consideration?

We anticipate receiving responses to this RFI that propose utilizing an existing SaaS product, as well as responses that propose custom development. The decision criteria for which option the organization will select will prioritize cost-effectiveness, scalability, and the ability to meet program objectives in a timely manner.