



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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Program Support Center  
Division of Acquisition Management, SAS  
Room 5-101, Parklawn Building  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

February 26, 2010

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

You are invited to submit a proposal in accordance with the requirements of Solicitation OS30370. This requirement is for The Department of Health and Human Services/Program Support Center for the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC).

The Government is limiting consideration to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Information Technology Acquisition and Assessment Center (NITAAC) CIO-SP2i Task Order holders only.

Please read the attached Solicitation carefully and prepare your proposal in accordance with the solicitation requirements. The solicitation contains the following:

**SF1449**

**Attachments A: Description and Specifications**

**Attachment B: Statement of Work/Task Order Deliverables/Performance Standards and Measures**

**Attachment B-1: Instructions to Offerors & Evaluation Criteria**

**Attachment C: Non-Disclosure Agreement & Contract Administration**

Prospective offerors are requested to submit all questions and proposals through the NITAAC website. To confirm that all electronic submissions are successfully captured by the NITAAC website please e-mail Matthew Gormley at [Matthew.Gormley@psc.hhs.gov](mailto:Matthew.Gormley@psc.hhs.gov) stating that 'company has submitted questions/proposals through the NITAAC website.' Offerors must reference the solicitation number OS30370 on all correspondences.

All questions must be submitted by **Wednesday, March 4, 2010, at 12:00 PM EST**. The questions and answers will be posted through the NITAAC website.


An electronic copy of your complete proposal must be received through the NITAAC website no later than **Wednesday, March 17, 2010, at 12:00 PM EST**. All proposals shall be marked with the solicitation number OS30370.

It is the Offeror's responsibility to submit all proposals by the scheduled closing date and time and in accordance with the attached "Instructions to Offerors".

This RFP does not commit the Government to pay any costs for the preparation and submission of your proposal. It is also brought to your attention that the Contracting Officer is the only individual who can legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds in connection with the proposed requirement.

There are similar ONC solicitations that will be issued via the NITAAC vehicle. The Government is encouraging Offerors to consider responding to those solicitations as well as this one.

If any additional information is required, please contact Matthew Gormley via email at [Matthew.Gormley@psc.hhs.gov](mailto:Matthew.Gormley@psc.hhs.gov).

  
Matthew Gormley  
Contract Specialist

**Attachment A****DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFICATIONS**

1. Project Title: To Support the Standards and Interoperability Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN) Testing Infrastructure Project
2. Period of Performance: 24 Months after date of award
3. Contract Type: Time & Material
4. Place of Performance: Contractor's site
5. Purpose of Task Order: The purpose of this project is to enhance and manage testing infrastructure for Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN). NHIN is a network developed by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) and is currently in a demonstration phase. The overall purpose of the ONC projects is to facilitate and expand the secure, electronic movement and use of health information among organizations according to nationally recognized standards.

The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009 states that the National Coordinator shall perform duties in a manner consistent with the development of a nationwide health information technology infrastructure that allows for the electronic use and exchange of information that will meet several goals to include the improvement in the coordination of care and information among hospitals, laboratories, physician offices, and other entities through an effective infrastructure for the secure and authorized exchange of health care information. The information exchange cannot be effective without appropriate standards and common adoption of those standards. The HITECH Act also highlights the need for standards and interoperability specifications to support health information exchange. This program will support effective exchange of health information. Without the active exchange of health information, the United States will fail to achieve its overall goals of higher quality and more efficient health care for all Americans.

The Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN) is a program within the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) that was initiated in 2004 to improve the quality and efficiency of healthcare by enabling secure, nationwide health information exchange. The NHIN is the result of creating specialized applications and governing policies on top of a common infrastructure – the Internet – for the purpose of sharing information for health services. At the heart of the NHIN is information – the ability to securely exchange electronic health data across organizational boundaries while respecting patient privacy rights.

The NHIN is much more than a network infrastructure. It is a composite of the organizations, technologies, standards, policies, governance and regulations that must be in place to enable secure health information exchange throughout the country, in a way that is open to all. It includes communities interested in exchanging data, tools and information technology to support that exchange, and trust relationships that allow data to be exchanged.

It will be important to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in establishing information exchange capability by studying the outcome of interoperability specifications development and prioritization as well as results of the reference implementation.

The contractor selected for this program will be required to cooperate with an ONC funded contractor who will be performing a global evaluation to assess the combined impact of the HITECH programs.

**6. Background:** On February 17, 2009, the President signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). This statute includes The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009 (the HITECH Act) that sets forth a plan for advancing the appropriate use of health information technology to improve quality of care and establish a foundation for health care reform.

The HITECH Act authorizes the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to administer incentives to eligible professionals (EPs) and hospitals for meaningful use of certified electronic health records (EHRs). These incentives are anticipated to drive adoption of EHRs needed to reach the goal of all Americans having secure EHRs by 2014. To achieve the vision of a transformed health system that health information technology (health IT) can facilitate, there are four critical prerequisites:

- Clinicians and hospitals must acquire and implement certified EHRs in a way that fully integrates these tools into the care delivery process;
- Appropriate technical, legal, and financial supports are needed to enable information to flow securely to wherever it is needed to support health care and population health;
- Standards and interoperability is achievable by the providers, consumers and industry; and
- Federal government, specifically ONC provides an interoperability infrastructure for providers and consumers as necessary.

Nationwide Health Information network (NHIN) is an interoperability infrastructure that has been piloted and is in its demonstration phase at ONC. NHIN is the enabler to make the HITECH priorities achievable to improve quality care, expedite care coordination, and reduce costs.

The NHIN includes coordinated architecture of a common, secure and trusted network which enables the exchange of health information and coordination of care among private health networks and Federal health care providers; such as the Indian Health Services, Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense. As patients are seen by providers from different health systems, the NHIN allows seamless transfer and sharing of health information to make it available where and when it is needed resulting in better informed decisions and improving quality of care. The NHIN integrates specifications, implementations, compliance and interoperability verification, and network operations

along with a strong trust fabric into a harmonized set of activities that reduce the cost and time-to-market of health information technology interoperability. By integrating and streamlining the technical, policy and operational components necessary to participate in a common and secure health network, the NHIN offers a method of effective and cost efficient health information exchange, especially for the mature health information exchange or federal agency that has a need to exchange information with many entities. An operational and viable NHIN will greatly increase the demand for and success of health information exchange adoption, and enable organizations to implement approved standards and achieve meaningful use targets associated with the exchange of health information.

HITECH also authorizes the establishment of several new grant programs, contracts and studies that will address the prerequisites described above and promote wider adoption of HIT.

The priority grant programs and contracts are fundamental to realizing the promise of meaningful use of HIT that leads to improved quality, efficiency and safety of health care. Under the HITECH Act, an eligible professional or hospital is considered a "meaningful EHR user" if they use certified EHR technology (i.e., EHRs certified against the functional criteria) and standards adopted by the Secretary, including but not limited to e-prescribing and the electronic exchange of information for the purposes of quality improvement, such as care coordination. In addition, eligible professionals and hospitals must submit clinical quality and other measures to HHS.

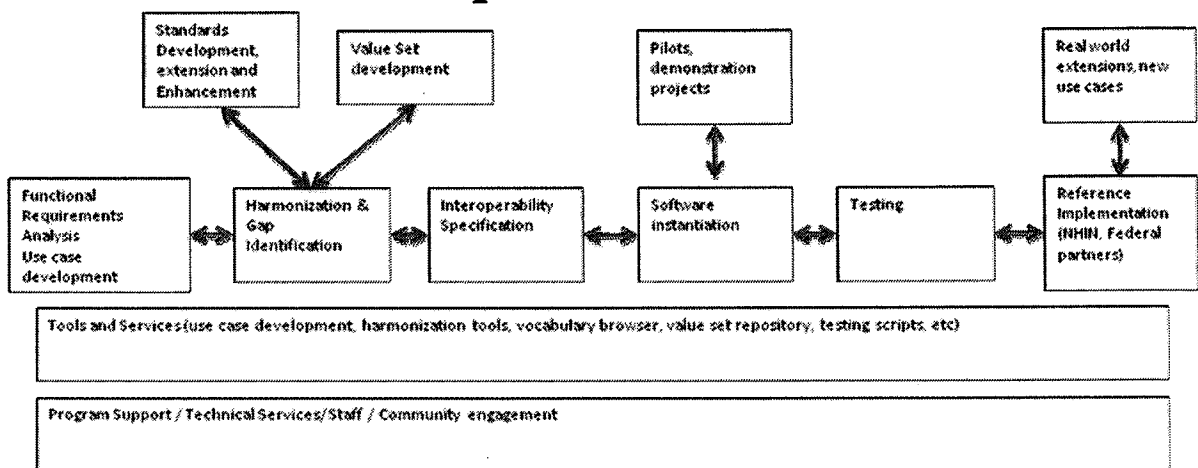
Meaningful use incentives will be available to health care providers beginning in FY 2011 based on their Medicare and Medicaid coverage status and other statutorily defined factors. This includes eligible health care professionals and acute care hospitals and takes into consideration adjustment factors for children's hospitals and critical access hospitals. The detailed criteria to qualify for meaningful use incentive payments will be established by the Secretary of HHS through the formal notice-and-comment rulemaking process.

The HITECH Act also requires these meaningful use criteria to become more stringent over time. In 2015, providers are expected to have adopted and be actively utilizing an EHR in compliance with "meaningful use" or they will be subject to financial penalties under Medicare. The information exchange requirements for the meaningful use EHR incentives, as specified in the regulation currently under development, will inform a strategic framework for this program. Any goals, objectives, and corresponding measures of meaningful use that require HIE over time will be the reference point for the developers and users.

A key component of "meaningful use" is certified electronic health records and key certification criteria are that the electronic health record is interoperable and adheres to standards adopted by the Secretary. ONC has developed an interoperability and standards framework that has several key steps and NHIN is a critical component of the framework. The overview of framework is provided below.

Overview of Standards and Interoperability Framework

# Interoperability/Standards processes



This framework is meant to establish a sustainable set of tools and processes that will streamline and coordinate the development of standards and interoperable software solutions to support the goals of the ONC. The standards and interoperability framework will support all ONC programs and effort in increasing adoption of health IT across the entire health care enterprise.

For each task, there will need to be coordination with other tasks in the process. Tasks such as community engagement or architectural support may span multiple tasks.

This framework is a life cycle for the development of standards and interoperability specifications and is meant to establish a sustainable set of tools and processes that will streamline and coordinate the development of standards and interoperable software solutions to support the goals of the HITECH Act.

This framework can be effective only when each task is well coordinated with other tasks in the process i.e., the output from a task can be a critical input to another task. Some activities may focus only on a single task within the framework; whereas certain activities such as community engagement and architectural support may span multiple

**Attachment A**

tasks. Therefore it is important that all contractors working on various tasks within this framework collaborate with others.

Widespread adoption and meaningful use of HIT is one of the foundational steps in improving the quality and efficiency of health care. The appropriate and secure exchange of information is a critical enabler of a high performance health care system.

This project focuses on the NHIN Testing Infrastructure to test and validate implementations of the NHIN specification. The infrastructure and rigorous set of tools are needed to confirm that a candidate implementation conforms to the specifications and can interoperate with other conformant solutions within the NHIN architecture.

The objective of this project is to mature and develop the existing NHIN testing infrastructure to enable the emerging needs of the network supporting the planned NHIN capabilities as they are identified. The NHIN testing infrastructure must support the verification of candidate solutions conformance to NHIN specifications, and ability to interoperate with reference implementations.

The Contractor shall maintain a level of technical expertise necessary to satisfy the requirements of executed task assignments.

7. Government Furnished Information: The relevant information about the IFR can be found on the following website <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>. The relevant information about NIEM can be found on the following website <http://www.niem.gov/>. The relevant information about IEPD can be found on the following website [http://www.niem.gov/files/NIEM\\_IEPD\\_Requirements\\_v2\\_1.pdf](http://www.niem.gov/files/NIEM_IEPD_Requirements_v2_1.pdf).

8. Government Furnished Property: None.

9. Rights in Data: All data produced under this task order is the property of the Government. The Contractor agrees not to disclose, verbally or in writing, information pertaining to the results or findings of work (including data base files, analyses, draft or final papers and reports) for the period of this task order without obtaining prior written approval of the COTR. The Contractor must request approval in advance (minimum 21 days prior to release) and in writing, specifying: who or what is generating the request for advance information; when and how project results/information would be released; and what information would be released. Failure to receive response from the COTR does not constitute approval for releasing information.

## **Statement of Work**

Interoperability Standards Development – This project will focus on determining if the existing standards are sufficient to fully support priority use cases and then modifying or extending existing standards or developing new standards. This project will also include evaluation and validation of the developed standards in support of deployment. The contractor will be required to take a coordinating role and work with standards development organizations, representative bodies, or research organizations that have the requisite expertise and skills to modify or extend existing standards or develop new standards as necessary.

The contractor shall provide strategic, technical, and programmatic support and expertise to the ONC in the areas of health information technology interoperability standards. The contractor shall leverage artifacts developed in other steps of the framework where the use cases will be developed and prioritized. This project will include collection of standards requirements based upon the prioritized use cases, determining the adequacy of current available standards, assessing whether current standards can be extended or new standards need to be developed and then developing a standards development plan with assignment of responsibilities for the extension or development to appropriate organizations. It will also include management of the process. Inherent in this task is coordination with multiple stakeholders, communities and governance groups throughout the framework steps.

The Contractor shall furnish all personnel, materials, services, facilities, etc. necessary for the performance of the work as described below:

The contractor shall complete the following tasks. These tasks include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Contract-Level and Task Order (TO) Management
- 2) Test Planning
- 3) Conformance Testing
- 4) Integration Testing

### **Specification of Tasks**

#### **Task 1 Contract-Level and Task Order (TO) Management**

The contractor shall provide expert contract and task order management services.

##### **1.1 Post Award Meeting**

- Meet with the Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) and other ONC staff, in a face to face meeting, to discuss the objectives of the contract and any related project issues. A written agenda for the meeting shall be prepared by the contractor and sent to the COTR three (3) days prior to the meeting.



### **1.2 Contract-Level Program Management**

- Provide the technical and functional activities at the contract level needed for program management of this SOW including productivity and management methods such as quality assurance, configuration, work breakdown structure and resource management.
- Coordinate organizational requirements, manage projects and schedules, and report progress/issues to COTR.
- Provide the centralized administrative, clerical, documentation and other related functions.

### **1.3 - Task Order Management Plan**

- Prepare a Task Order Management Plan describing the technical approach, organizational resources and management controls to be employed to meet the cost, performance and schedule requirements throughout task order execution.

### **1.4 - Monthly Progress Review Report**

- Provide a monthly progress report monitoring the task management, quality assurance, and configuration management applied to the task order.

### **1.5 – Project Work Plan**

- The contractor shall submit an electronic copy of a draft project work plan of not more than ten (10) single-spaced pages for the review and approval of the COTR. The work plan shall reflect preliminary discussions and decisions reached during the post-award meeting. The work plan shall include at a minimum, a communication plan and a chart with the timeframe for draft and final deliverables with specific dates identified.
- The contractor shall modify the draft work plan in accordance with comments provided by the COTR. The revised work plan is due no later than two (2) weeks after receiving comments from the COTR and shall be considered final upon approval by the COTR.

### **Task 2 – Test Planning**

The contractor shall develop the planning and coordination of NHIN testing activities. The NHIN production and test plan will define how the testing will occur to support the NHIN technical validation efforts. Plan will document the required test components and the process for conducting testing. The contractor shall also update the existing NHIN validation document reflecting enhancements to validation processes and infrastructure. The contractor shall complete several activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Provide technical lead and guidance in the development of the NHIN test infrastructure.
- Plan the NHIN Testing Infrastructure processes and artifacts so meet the verification needs of the program

### **Task 3 – Conformance Testing**

The contractor shall facilitate conformance testing with NIST and develop conformance testing assets. The contractor shall develop NHIN test cases, test scripts and test data for testing purposes as well as production test cases test scripts and test data for the initial NHIN production services. Test data will include, at a minimum, synthesized, but clinically valid data. It is critical that the process of testing a candidate solution for conformance to NHIN specifications is made as easy and straightforward as possible for candidates. The contractor shall complete several activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Develop Conformance Test Cases that are traceable to the NHIN use case requirements.
- b. Develop Test Data for use in conformance testing with the test cases
- c. Coordinate with NIST on the use of their test tools in concert with the test cases and data to provide a conformance test platform for NHIN candidate solutions.

### **Task 4 – Integration Testing**

The contractor shall develop and maintain integration test laboratory. The current test laboratory consists of two hosted reference implementations of a NHIN conformant gateway and a candidate solution operating over the Internet to validate interoperability of exchange between all three. The test laboratory, developed under this project, will build upon the existing functionality and will have the ability to orchestrate automated testing and audit logs of testing between gateways using approved test scenarios and data in an automated fashion. The contractor shall establish NHIN Interoperability test platform components including:

- A web interface through which a candidate NHIN participant can register and indicate the type of testing to be performed.
- A hosted reference implementations backed by a testing infrastructure, configured for interoperability testing and mountable by NHIN test candidates.
- A testing infrastructure behind the NHIN reference implementation, to provide test patient information, documents, and other test data.

The contractor shall complete several activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Develop and maintain Integration Test Cases that are traceable to the NHIN use case requirements.
- Develop and maintain Test Data for use in integration testing with the test cases
- Maintain and mature the NHIN integration test platform to allow interoperability test of all NHIN services.

### **Technical Direction Letters (TLD)**

Clarification of specific performance requirements and technical direction will be provided by the COTR to the contractor in multiple written Technical Direction Letters (TDLs) to be issued to the contractor Project Manager as needed over the period of performance. The TDLs will serve to clarify and supplement detailed technical

requirements; specify deliverable content; details regarding meeting dates, etc. described in this SOW. The TDLs, upon issuance, will supplement this task order SOW. The contractor responsibilities, due dates, performance requirements and deliverables stated in the TDLs will become a binding part of the task order and will have the same force and effect as if they had been a part of this original task order SOW. In no case shall a TDL require work outside the scope of this SOW or direct work that will cause the contractor to exceed the total not to exceed price for either labor or other direct costs in the task order. In no case shall a TDL require the contractor to incur costs over and above the incrementally funded amount of the task order. In the event the contractor believes a TDL exceeds the scope, price or funding of the task order, he shall immediately bring this to the attention of both the CO and COTR.

### **Standards & Regulations**

1. All activities, work products and tasks outlined in this SOW shall comply fully with Federal and HHS regulations, standards, and guidance with regard to IT security, usability, accessibility under Section 508, the HHS domain name policy, OMB data collection and “cookie” policies, and other Web policies. Section 508 requires that all Web site content be equally accessible to people with disabilities. This applies to Web applications, Web pages and all attachment files. The Contractor shall conduct Section 508 compliance check on all materials developed that are intended for electronic distribution. PDF files shall be verified with the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Professional or other software as directed by the ASPA Web Communication Division. Guidance on Section 508 is available at [www.hhs.gov/web/508](http://www.hhs.gov/web/508)
2. All messages and materials developed under this contract must meet clear communication standards and be assessed by audiences as appropriate for their needs. These standards include using plain language guidelines ([www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/bigdoc/TOC.cfm](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/bigdoc/TOC.cfm)), conducting user testing and following usability guidelines ([www.usability.gov](http://www.usability.gov)), and making messages and materials available in multiple formats and languages and consistent with cultural beliefs and values. All campaign products must be accessible to persons with disabilities and limited English proficiency. Materials shall be offered in multiple languages and alternative formats such as Braille, large print, and electronic versions. Multimedia productions shall be captioned and the video described.

### **Schedule of Deliverables**

All deliverables must be provided to the COTR in electronic format, unless otherwise specified, according to the appropriate schedule. Items specified for delivery are subject to the review and approval of the COTR before final acceptance. The COTR will respond to submitted deliverables within 2 weeks of their receipt. The contractor shall make revisions as deemed necessary by the COTR.

**Deliverables Schedule**

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Completion Date – time after award</b>
<b>TASK 1: Contract and Task-Order Management</b>	
Task Order Management Plan	Within 6 weeks after award
Monthly Reports	Monthly on the 10 <sup>th</sup> day of the month
Project Work Plan	Draft within 2 weeks and final within 3 weeks after award
<b>TASK 2: Test Planning</b>	
NHIN Test Plan	Draft within 1 month after award; Final within 6 weeks after award; updates as required; at least every 2 months
Validation Document:	Quarterly Releases
<b>TASK 3: Conformance Testing</b>	
NHIN Test Cases, Test Scripts and Test Data: for testing as well as production purposes	Quarterly Releases
<b>TASK 4: Integration Testing</b>	
NHIN Interoperability Test Platform Components	Quarterly Releases

**Performance Requirements**

The Performance Requirements Summary (PRS) below lists requirements that the Government will evaluate. The absence of any task order requirement from the PRS shall not detract from its enforceability nor limit the rights or remedies of the Government under any other provision of the contract, including the clauses entitled "Inspection of Services" and "Default".

TOPIC	REQUIRED TASK	TASK STANDARD	METHOD OF SURVEILLANCE	STANDARD TO BE MEET
TASK 1. Overall Contract Management	Detailed information that addresses  Technical approach Resources Contractor organization structure, staffing plan; company and staff emergency escalation roster Management controls and support procedures	No more than one valid complaint during the contract period of performance.	COTR will review and provide comments.	No more than 1 valid complaint is received.
Monthly invoices		Invoices are accurate and submitted on time.	Reviews reports and invoices to ensure accuracy.	All invoices are accurate and complete

<p>Monthly Progress Reports</p>	<p>Each progress report shall set forth concise statements concerning activities relevant to providing support services and shall include, as a minimum the following:</p> <p>A brief review of the work identified and accomplished during the reporting period, including a summary listing of task assignments completed, assignments in progress, any backlogged assignments, potential assignments and a high-level timeline;          Current and cumulative costs expended;          Current and cumulative person-hours expended by labor category during the reporting period;          Summary of</p>	<p>Submit progress report to COTR for review and comment, if applicable</p>	<p>COTR reviews report and provides feedback</p>	<p>Report is provided by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month following the reporting period</p>
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	performance-statistics and service availability			
Project Work Plan	The work plan shall reflect preliminary discussions and decisions reached during the post-award meeting. The work plan shall include at a minimum, a plan to carry out each of the tasks below, a communication plan to include outreach and updates to all key stakeholders, and a chart with the timeframe for draft and final deliverables with specific dates identified	Project Work Plan is provided to COTR for review and comment	COTR provides feedback to Contractor  Comments incorporated into final	Draft submitted 2 weeks after award  Final submitted 3 weeks after award  Updates provided as required

<p>TASK 2. NHIN Test Plan</p>	<p>NHIN test plan defines how the testing will occur to support the NHIN technical validation efforts. Plan will document the required test components and the process for conducting testing</p>	<p>Plan provided to COTR for review and comment</p>	<p>COTR reviews report and provides comments to Contractor</p>	<p>Initial plan submitted within 1 month of award  Final within 6 weeks after award  Updated every 2 months</p>
<p>Validation Document</p>	<p>Update the existing NHIN Validation document reflecting enhancements to validation processes and infrastructure</p>	<p>Submit Report to the COTR document for review and comment</p>	<p>COTR reviews and provides comments to the Contractor</p>	<p>Submitted quarterly</p>
<p>TASK 3. Conformance Testing</p>	<p>Develop test cases, test scripts, and test data for the initial NHIN production services. Test Data will include synthesized (not real), but clinically valid data to be used for conformance testing purposes</p>	<p>Data submitted to COTR for review and comment</p>	<p>COTR provides input to the Contractor</p>	<p>Data incorporates COTR input and is submitted quarterly</p>



<p>TASK 4. NHIN Interoperability Test Platform Components</p>	<p>Components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Web interface through which a candidate NHIN participant can register indicate the type of testing to be performed including:</li> <li>- A pair of hosted reference implementations backed by a testing infrastructure, configured for interoperability testing and mountable by NHIN test candidates</li> <li>- A testing infrastructure behind the NHIN reference implementation, to provide test patient information, documents, and other test data</li> </ul>	<p>Components submitted to COTR for review and comment</p>	<p>COTR provides input to the Contractor</p>	<p>Components incorporate COTR input and is submitted quarterly</p>
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## INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS

The Government intends to award a task order using National Institutes of Health (NIH) Information Technology Acquisition and Assessment Center's (NITAAC) contracting vehicle.

This is American Recovery and Reinvestment Act procurement. Pursuant to FAR 52.204-11, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - Reporting Requirements. Contractors are required to register by April 1, 2010 and file their first report by April 10, 2010, at [www.FederalReporting.gov](http://www.FederalReporting.gov).

### **THIS OPPORTUNITY IS AVAILABLE ONLY TO NITAAC CONTRACT HOLDERS**

The offeror is expected to show a thorough understanding of the proposed tasks as specified in the Statement of Work (SOW). The proposal should address the specifications in the SOW, not simply repeat the language.

Technical proposals must be limited to a maximum of 25 single-spaced pages using font sizes no smaller than 12-point for volume text and no smaller than 8-point, single-spaced for text within graphics, tables, headers, and footer. The pitch shall be Times New Roman in Word format. All pages should be numbered. Any pages over 25 will not be considered. The page limit excludes resumes and past performance references and can be single-spaced. Resumes or CVs are only required for key personnel. Brief biographical sketches of other personnel may be provided and do not count against the 25 page limit.

**In preparing their technical proposal and business proposal offerors are requested to follow the proposal format and content suggestions detailed below:**

**A. Organization of Proposal:** Each offer shall consist of two separately packaged proposals:

1) A technical proposal (to include at least five past performance references) and 2) a business proposal. All information necessary to judge the technical soundness and management capabilities of the offeror will be contained in the technical proposal. The business proposal will contain all information related to the determination of the costs associated with each of the project tasks. The technical proposal shall not contain any reference to specific costs, but resource information (e.g., staff hours) may be included so that the offeror's understanding of the scope of the work may be evaluated.

Before providing further instructions, special note is in order to clarify what is expected in the offeror's technical proposal. The tasks and suggestions presented herein are intended as a guide to prospective offerors. The successful contractor is expected to be innovative in the approach recommended. The information presented is not intended to restrict an offeror's proposal or to stifle creativity.

**A.1. Organization of the Technical Proposal:** The technical proposal shall contain:

1. Cover Page – Including the name of the proposing organization, author(s) of the technical proposal, the RFP number, and the title of the RFP should appear on the cover. (Excluded from the 25 page limit)
2. Table of Contents: Provide sufficient detail so that all important elements of the proposal can be located readily. (Excluded from the 25 page limit)
3. Introduction: The introduction should be a one or two page summary outlining the proposed work, the Offeror's interest in submitting a proposal, and the importance of this effort in relation to Offeror's overall operation. (Excluded from the 25 page limit)
4. Technical/Management Approach
5. Personnel Qualifications and Expertise
6. Discussion and Understanding of the Project
7. Past Performance (Excluded from 25 page limit)

**A.2. Organization of Business Proposal**

The Offeror shall submit a Business Proposal using a format that provides: Pricing of the proposed labor categories; hours, rates, and pricing for all proposed materials, and necessary travel (if applicable). The text portions of the Business Proposal should be single-spaced.

**B. Technical Evaluation Criteria (Technical Merit).**

The evaluation will be based on the completeness, thoroughness and demonstrated capabilities of the prospective Offeror in relation to the needs of the project as set forth in the RFP. Each proposal must document the feasibility of successful implementation of the requirements of the RFP. The Offeror should show that the objectives stated in the RFP are understood and offer a logical program for their achievement. Offeror's must submit information sufficient to evaluate their proposals based on the detailed criteria listed below. Specific evaluation factors, together with the relative weights of importance are listed below. Offeror's should provide information on all of the following criteria.

1. Technical/Management Approach – 35 points maximum
2. Personnel Qualification and Expertise – 35 points maximum
3. Discussion and Understanding of the Project – 30 points maximum

MAXIMUM TECHNICAL SCORE = 100 POINTS

4. Past Performance–

The past performance will not be included in the Technical score of 100 possible points and will be given a separate rating of up to 10 possible points. Past performance references shall be included as part of the technical proposal. Past performance references will not count towards page limit.

The past performance will not be included in the Technical score and will be given a rating as listed in the evaluation scheme. Past performance references shall be included as part of the technical proposal. Past performance references will not count towards page limit.

**C. Organization of the Business Proposal**

It is anticipated that this task order shall be awarded as a Performance-Based Time and Material type task order. The staff-loading chart included in the technical proposal should be consistent with the information provided in the business proposal.

Offerors, at a minimum, shall submit business proposals in sufficient detail for the Government to determine that the estimated cost is realistic and consistent with the proposed technical approach.

Cost Information

The Offeror shall prepare a business proposal that contains all information necessary to allow for a comprehensive evaluation of the costs proposed. The business proposal shall consist of pricing discounts with the proposed labor categories and hours and an accompanying narrative that fully describes all assumptions made by the Offeror.

The pricing shall identify each category of labor proposed for performance mapped to the applicable CIO-SP2i master contract labor category, provide the price, show the proposed discounts for the rate, and the rate proposed for the particular labor category inclusive of the discount.

EXAMPLE:

<b>Labor Category:</b>	<b>CIO-SP2i</b>	<b>Discount%:</b>	<b>HHS Rate:</b>	<b>Gov't</b>	<b>Total:</b>
	<b>Rate:</b>			<b>Est. Hours</b>	
Program Manager	\$80.00	10%	\$72.00	1,920	\$138,240

The pricing information shall include a completed Pricing Table with a breakdown of estimated costs for accomplishing each task/objective in the SOW.

