

TO: All Interested Parties

FROM: Rhowell Ruiz, Election Support Services Section Head

SUBJECT: Request for Information for a Voting and Vote Counting System with Ancillary Support Services

The State of Hawaii Office of Elections is seeking information to create a formal Request for Proposal to lease a statewide voting and vote counting system with ancillary support services. The contract for the next voting and vote counting system will be implemented beginning after the 2020 General Election on Tuesday, November 3.

The ancillary services, have included, but were not limited to, project management, voting system maintenance, testing, deployment, and storage; election setup including ballot creation; ballot printing and delivery; election day official training and educational materials; election day support such as troubleshooting by phone and in the field, operating the vote counting system, and tabulation of results; and post-election support. These services typically resulted in an on-site presence of the voting system vendor from May to the end of November in even numbered years, when a regularly scheduled Primary Election and a General Election are held. This on-site presence consisted of a mixture of subject matter experts from the vendor and seasonal staff that they hired locally to support the use of the voting system.

The purpose of the request is to assist the Office of Election in making a determination as to the specific elements that should be included in the next procurement for a voting and vote counting system. This Request for Information is solely for informational and planning purposes and does not constitute a formal solicitation for a product or services and may not directly result in an award or contract.

Background

Elections in the State of Hawaii are scheduled for federal, state, and county offices in even-numbered years. The primary election is scheduled on the second Saturday in August and the general election is on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Special elections may be scheduled for certain vacancies that cannot be held in conjunction with a regularly scheduled primary or general election. Additionally, special elections not held in conjunction with a primary or general election may be conducted by mail. The 2020 Elections calendar is available at <https://elections.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/FS100BO006-Election-Calendar.pdf>.

The Office of Elections is responsible for the operation of election day polling places as well as the printing and counting of ballots. We work collaboratively and collegiately with the County Elections Division who are responsible for voter registration and absentee voting, such as early walk-in voting locations and voting by mail. There are four (4) County Elections Division – County of Hawaii, County of Maui, County of Kauai, and the City and County of Honolulu.

As of the 2018 General Election, there were approximately 756,000 registered voters, statewide, placed in 249 district/precincts. Of the 249 district/precincts, there were 235 election day polling places established as 14 precincts followed an elections-by-mail model. Voters in the State of Hawaii may choose to cast their ballot at an early walk-in voting location, by mail, or at their assigned polling place on election day.

The voting system vendor has been responsible for storing, maintaining, testing, and deploying the equipment for the polling places, absentee walk sites, and counting centers. Additionally, the vendor created, produced, and printed the ballots for each election. The vendor also developed and conducted training for approximately 4,000 election day workers starting in June through November of the election year.

We currently use the Hart Voting System including the eScan and eSlate Disabled Access Unit (DAU) for in-person voting and Ballot Now for central count. For in-person voting, there is one (1) eScan and one (1) eSlate DAU at each polling place as well as multiple eScans and eSlate DAUs at each early walk-in voting location. For the 2018 General Election, there were nine (9) early walk-in voting locations. There are four (4) counting centers, one in each county, to process and count voted mail ballots and transmit results. Results are transmitted and tabulated to the counting center in the City and County of Honolulu to produce and disseminate result reports.

Election results showing overall voter turnout and separately a statewide precinct detail breaking down results by absentee mail, absentee walk, and election day voting are available at <https://elections.hawaii.gov/election-results/>.

Requirements

Any voting and vote counting system must meet federal and state requirements such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Help America Vote Act of 2003, Voluntary Voting System Guidelines, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR). For example, pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 16, any electronic voting system

must provide a voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT). Hawaii election laws are available at <https://elections.hawaii.gov/resources/election-laws/>.

The State is required to provide ballots and voter materials in Cantonese and Ilocano, pursuant to the Voting Rights Act. Additionally, ballots and voting materials must be capable of providing Hawaiian as an official language of the State.

Responses

All vendors interested in providing information about potential approaches and solutions are invited to submit a response. Vendors are also encouraged to submit responses that identify system or component alternatives not identified in this request for the consideration of the Office of Elections. Responses should include the following to address solutions and ancillary services, as well as cost estimates as available:

- **Cover Letter:** Cover letters should include a brief description and background of the interested party's key personnel and their credentials, and all contact information. Additionally, the cover letter should include an overview narrative on what could be considered or done to address the previously mentioned needs of the State (in its entirety or in sequential incremental portions) with a conceptual project budget breakdown.
- **Capabilities:** Provide a brief summary of the vendors capabilities in addressing any or all of the requested information listed in this RFI, with a listing of completed comparable project developments.
- **Client List:** Include a list of clients where your services have been implemented.
- **Attachments:** Include any attachments that you believe are responsive to the RFI and that will assist the State in developing its procurement.

The Office of Elections may invite organizations to make oral presentations, participate in individual question and answer sessions, or participate in other fact-finding activities the State may determine to be necessary concerning their responses. Vendors may also be asked to participate in such follow up activities by telephone, video conference, or similar electronic means. Vendors should indicate in their responses whether they are willing to participate in these sessions.

Respondents are responsible for all expenses associated with responding to the request. The Office of Elections is under no obligation to pay for any information or ideas submitted in response to the Request for Information or for any costs incurred by any party as a result of this request. After evaluation of responses, a formal Request for Proposals will be issued.

Questions concerning this Request for Information must be submitted by emailing Rhowell Ruiz at rhowell.l.ruiz@hawaii.gov. **All responses to the request will be accepted through March 29, 2019 at 4:30 p.m., Hawaii Standard Time.** Responses may be sent via email or by mailing eight (8) copies to the contact listed below:

Rhowell Ruiz
Office of Elections
802 Lehua Avenue
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
808-453-8683
rhowell.l.ruiz@hawaii.gov

A vendor shall request in writing nondisclosure of designated trade secrets or other proprietary data considered confidential. Such data shall accompany the response, shall be clearly marked, and shall be readily separable from the response in order to facilitate eventual public inspection of the nonconfidential portion of the response, to the extent provided by law. As such, vendors should also include a redacted version of their response for this purpose. This copy should be clearly marked "For Public Inspection."

This RFI is for planning purposes only. It is neither a solicitation notice nor a Request for Proposals RFP. Responses to the RFI are not offers and cannot be accepted by the State of Hawaii to form a binding contract. This RFI shall not limit any rights of the State, and the State reserves all its rights including but not limited to its right to elect not to procure the goods and/or services that are the subject of this RFI and its right to procure them from a vendor that has not responded to this RFI. The State shall not provide any reimbursement for the cost of developing, presenting, submitting, or reviewing any information in response to this RFI.