Question Number	Vendor Question	NYSED Response
1	How many grants programs does the NYSED run each year?	Refer to section '1.5.2 Grant Structure of Existing System with Counts' in the RFP published. The annual count of grant programs is around 90 to 115.
2	How many internal users will need access to the solution?	The number of internal users is approximate based on program staff, fiscal staff, executive staff that may require access to the system. As of March 2024 there are around 225 internal users. Refer to section '1.5.5 Future State Anticipated Number of Users (Estimate)' in the RFP for more details.
3	What other financial and reporting systems do you want this solution to integrate with?	The future state system will integrate with Oracle Financial System (OF), SEDREF, SEDMON, and HighQ as indicated on page 30 under 'D600 – Integration' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' of the RFP.
4	Is there any existing integration tool that will be used for this project?	By integration tool, we are assuming that the question is regarding the use of the data integration tool that will be used to extract, transform & load the data from As-is to To-be system. Answer to the question based this assumption is 'No', there is no existing integration tool used in the current As-is CAFE Grants Finance Management application.
5	Is there any existing reporting tool that will be used for this project?	EZSPEC is the reporting tool currently utilized to create adhoc reports. EZSPEC will be decommissioned with CAFE and a new reporting tool (TBD) will be utilized to perform adhoc reporting in the new system. Refer to section '1.5.4 Reports from Legacy System' in the RFP for more details.
6	Will COBOL subject matter experts from NYSED be available during the project, or will the vendor need to independently analyze the legacy code?	NYSED will have Grants Finance SME and As-is application CAFÉ SME resources available during the project. Refer to point 2 'Executive Summary' of section '3.2 Technical Proposal' in RFP for requirement of COBOL and DMS2 experience related expectation from vendor. There is a requirement from vendor to provide a staffing plan with COBOL capability, refer to point 4 'Project Schedule/Timeline and Staffing Plan' of section '3.2 Technical Proposal' in RFP.
7	What is the expected volume of concurrent users, both internal and external, on the Grants Financial Management System during peak usage periods?	It is estimated that concurrent users could be around 1,000 during peak times. Vendor should use an industry standard approach for load testing and stress testing the To-be Cloud application.
8	How many years of historical grant financial data must be migrated to the new system? What is the anticipated data volume?	Current As-is application CAFÉ has 10 years worth of historic data stored which is in-scope for migration to the new To-be application. Refer to section '1.5.2 Grant Structure of Existing System with Counts' in the RFP published.

9	What key performance indicators (KPIs) or metrics does NYSED currently track related to grant management, and what new KPIs should the system be able to generate?	There are currently no functional KPIs that are being tracked in Grant Finance, we will come up with functional KPIs before the vendor is onboarded. Refer to deliverable reference 'D800 –Deployment' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' . Vendor should come up with To-be application performance KPIs for a feature, ahead of that feature's deployment. Also, vendor should come up with KPIs for the 3 years support period, ahead of the start of the 3-year support period. Refer to milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M15' in section '2.3.1 Milestones' of RFP.
10	In order to develop a holistic solution that meets NYSED's current project goals and anticipated future state needs we would like to request additional time to respond to this RFP. Would NYSED consider extending the proposal due date by a month to support the development of complete solutions for proposal?	No, we cannot extend the bid submission deadline, as it will have ripple effect on future milestones, thus impacting the overall cost and schedule of Grants Finance Management System (GFMS) modernization.
11	Will the State consider a two-week extension of the Proposal Due Date?	No, we cannot extend the bid submission deadline, as it will have ripple effect on future milestones. Thus impacting the overall cost and schedule of Grants Finance Management System (GFMS) modernization.
12	For the each deliverable submission and review cycle, can the State clarify if they expect that to be by 'milestone', 'feature', 'deliverable reference', or 'deliverables'? As an example, for the first submission and review of the project, would submission be by 'GFMS-Milestone-M01', 'GFMS-Mod-feature-001', 'D100 Project Management Activities', or by each individual deliverable such as 'Stakeholder Register, Project Schedule, PMP, Monthly/Weekly Project Status Reports, RAID Log'?	The deliverable submission and review cycle should be completed per milestone. For the example provided in the question, all the deliverables of milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M01' should be in NYSED approved status before the milestone can be called as met. Refer to section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements', it is called out that 'All deliverables should be reviewed & approved by NYSED. Deliverables should be in 'NYSED approved' status, only then the milestone is considered complete'. Refer to tab 'Cost Proposal - Summary' in 'Attachment 1 - Cost Proposal' for details on the set of deliverables that are to be in NYSED approved status for a given milestone. For further clarity refer to section '2.3.2 Milestone Success Criteria' which states the success criteria for a milestone. Relationship and definition of the terms used in the RFP can be found in section '2.1.5 Hybrid/Agile Methodology'.
13	On Page 22, under D100-Project Management Activities, it states 'The vendor must develop DED - Deliverable Expectations Document'. Can the State elaborate on this and what is expected for the DED? Is a DED only required for D100?	A Deliverable Expectations Document (DED) is part of the project management documentation hence it is mentioned under deliverables reference 'D100 - Project Management Activities'. To clarify this requirement, we have amended the Cost Proposal to include a line for DED in milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M01'. Like all other project management deliverables under this reference, DED is applicable for the full lifecycle of the project and for all deliverables of the project.
14	Can the State confirm who is responsible for the decommission of CAFÉ?	Decommission of the As-is application CAFÉ is not in the scope of this RFP. Once the final cutover to To-be system is achieved after user training completion, current As-is system should not be used and the As-is system will become a candidate for decommission.

15	Additionally is it expected the As-is CAFÉ system will be decommissioned prior to or post go-live?	Refer to first 2 paragraphs of section '2.3.1 Milestones' in the RFP published. As stated in the RFP, As-is CAFÉ system will be stopped from usage after milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M12' is met. We would like to clarify the sentence in RFP, 'At this point users will be encouraged not to use the As-is system (CAFE mainframe). The As-is system will be made non-functional and will become ***in-scope for decommission*** ". By in-scope for decommission we mean that the As-is system CAFE will be a candidate for decommission, which will be done in a future date and not in-scope for this RFP.
16	On Page 34 it states, 'Application training should be provided for NYSED users, NYSED Administrators, NYSED Superusers and External users (Local Education Agencies). Training must include web-based training, reference manuals, knowledge base access and video tutorials.' Due to the number of expected Future State users stated on Page 18, will the State consider a Train-the-Trainer approach?	Refer to milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M11' in section '2.3.1 Milestones'. It is expected that vendor should complete user training for 99% of the users within the 3 months duration of the milestone. Next milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M12' is dependent on the successful completion of the user training milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M11'. The 'train-the-trainer' approach will not be considered. Deliverables that are due for the user training milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M11' can be found in tab 'Cost Proposal - Summary' in 'Attachment 1 - Cost Proposal'.
17	Additionally is the State's expectation that the Future State users will come to NYSED for in-person based training?	No, NYSED does not intend on performing "on site" training labs.
18	On Page 21 it states, 'The Grants Finance modernization project's main objective is replacing manual data entry of paper submissions in the UNISYS mainframe.' Can the State clarify where in the project milestones the scanning of documentation is expected? Additionally how many documents does the State expect will need to be scanned?	Scanning of existing non-electronic paper based documents are not in scope of this project. Information from the paper based forms are already entered in As-is CAFÉ application.
19	Can you provide us metrics on how many external non-employees (grantees) may require access to the system (if any)?	All LEA Users mentioned in section '1.5.5 Future State Anticipated Number of Users (Estimate)' in the RFP are grantees. All of the users will need access to the To-be system.
20	Does the Software as a Service (SaaS) platform have to facilitate any payments, or payment reconciliation? Or will this be an integration with existing NYSED Systems?	The To-be system is a Grant Financial Management System that manages the financial management of subrecipient grants to Local Education Agencies. The system will create financial transactions, including but not limited to vouchers that are currently bulk loaded through the Oracle Finance (OF) System to the Statewide Financial System. Although the To-be system will not directly issue payment to vendors/grantees, it will create the transaction that will be sent to the SFS.
21	D300-- Does NYSED have staff or applicable systems experts that will be available to the systems implementation team to aid in the table identification and data migration from the Unisys mainframe?	Yes, there will be SME guidance on how data is organized in As-is system, CAFÉ. Data mapping of the As-is and To-be database tables and fields are expected to be managed by the selected vendor.
22	D300-- Does NYSED require a full 1:1 migration of all attributes? Or are you open to removing historical attributes that are no longer in use with the cutover to the new platform?	NYSED will identify obsolete data fields in the current As-is database. We will complete this activity ahead of the data mapping exercise which is part of feature 'GFMS-Mod-feature-003'.

23	D300 - Data Migration : Are there documents (files, images etc.) to be migrated to the new system? If so, where are they currently housed? What are the volumes of such files?	All the data that is in-scope of migration is in the database of the As-is application CAFÉ. There are no files or images that are to be migrated.
24	D1000-Warranty Support : Can you please clarify what support the State is looking for? Is the intention to have a help desk available 24x7x365 for stakeholders to get assistance with the grant submission process or is this support more for platform bug issues?	The helpdesk telephone line and the web/mail support outlined in 'D1000 – Warranty Support' of section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' in RFP is for the warranty support of the To-be system after final deployment outlined in milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M12' is met. This helpline is not for assistance with the Grant Submission Process, which is a business as usual (BAU) functionality of Grants Finance.
25	What version of your financial management system is currently being used?	As mentioned in section '1.3 Project Background' of the RFP, the current Grants Finance Management System CAFÉ, is a proprietary software application developed in-house in NYSED.
26	Please provide the current modules that are implemented within the financial management system?	For purposes of this RFP, NYSED is currently looking for GFM solution to manage the State's financial responsibility for administering State and Federal grant funds to local education agencies. For LEAs this includes LEA submission of Expenditure Based Budget and claims management through grant project closeout. For NYSED, this includes managing the funding of the Federal award or State appropriation from initiation through grant program close-out.
27	Can you provide the expectation for the type of integration required, e.g., web services, file-based, one-way, or bi-directional data flow?	Our response is assuming that the question is regarding the connectivity with interfacing applications like SEDMON & HighQ. If that is the case, answer to this will come out during the detailed design phase working closely with the interfacing application SMEs.
28	The Technical Proposal is limited to 25 pages. Are the following included in the page count: •⬚Cover •⬚Table of Contents •⬚Project Schedule What type of information can Technical Proposal Attachments contain?	All requested information (aside from project schedule) should be included in the 25 pages. Refer to point 6 in section '3.2 Technical Proposal'. Attachment can include promotional material, Resume and Screenshots.
29	Who is your Mainframe vendor? And are you transitioning out this vendor before the new GFMS is in production/live?	Unisys is our current mainframe platform provider. The application is maintained in-house.
30	What role does the FI system play in CAFÉ's integration with the Oracle Financial System? Can you please elaborate?	FI system is used to send and receive data in the form of files between As-is application CAFÉ and OF (Oracle Financial).
31	The RFP refers to NYSED Security Policy attachments. Can you please share with us that policy so we can understand Section 7.5, electronic signature requirements as well as other referenced attachments?	Refer to page 98 onwards in the 'RFP 24-023 Attachments' PDF published along with the RFP. https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/funding-opportunities-procurements/rfp-24-023-attachments.pdf
32	Is NYSED expecting integration of the new GFMS with SEDMON and HighQ? Please elaborate on the existing capabilities of SEDMON and HighQ. And what is your expectation in terms of integrating GFMS with these two systems?	Refer to 'D600 – Integration' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' of the RFP. Detailed requirements regarding the integration with new interfaces like SEDMON and HighQ can be collated by the vendor during 'GFMS-Mod-feature-002'. This feature is for As-is system understanding and to-be system design.

33	In GFMS-Milestone-M16, the RFP states, "Please clarify During this period vendor should take up any change request from NYSED, of a pre-defined xxx without any additional cost." It seems something is missing after the word 'pre-defined'. Please elaborate on how many hours of change requests per year we should account for.	Yes the missing text is '**effort**'. Please read the statement as 'During this period vendor should take up any change request from NYSED, of a pre-defined ***effort*** without any additional cost. Unit for the effort will be Person hours. This effort will be a total sum of efforts required by the vendor's team to perform analysis/design until deployment. This effort in 'Person Hours' can be defined by the Vendor in the 'Support management plan' that has to be signed off by NYSED and is a deliverable for the previous milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M15'. To have a level playing field, we need at least a minimum of 50 Person hours of change effort for complex change, without any additional cost.
34	There are no Intellectual Property or data rights in the Terms & Conditions (Ts & Cs). Will NYSED add any at award or can we include our SaaS Ts&Cs?	NYSED does not have specific Terms & Conditions (Ts & Cs) beyond those included in the State of New York Agreement (RFP pages 65-67, Appendix A (68-71), Appendix A-1 (72-76), and Appendix R (77-81). The bidder may submit proposed additional T&C with their bid. If the bidder is selected, their T&C will be vetted through NYSED's Office of Counsel, Chief Privacy Office, and Information Security Office before being included in the contract and will also be subject to approval by the New York State Office of the Attorney General and Office of the State Comptroller.
35	Is any technical documentation available for the existing legacy CAFÉ system (e.g., any documentation that explains the existing functionality and assists with setting up ETL for Data Migration)?	Yes, the As-is application is documented in Confluence. This information will be shared with the selected vendor when the project is kicked-off.
36	Other than the Oracle Financial System (OFS) and the Statewide Financial Systems (SFS), SEDMON, and HighQ, are there any other systems or legacy applications the new GMS needs to interface with?	Yes, as indicated in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment' of the RFP, SEDREF is an important reference data repository used by the As-is application, CAFÉ. The To-be application will have to take input from SEDREF.
37	Will the integration with SFS be solely file-based using the SFS file structure layout?	A bulk load to OF is preferred but we can explore other data transfer mechanisms like RESTful API. There is no direct interface with Statewide Financial System (SFS) by the As-is system. CAFÉ interfaces with OF and OF in-turn interfaces with SFS.
38	Does data migration include migration of files/attachments?	All the data that is in-scope of migration is in the database of the As-is application CAFÉ. There are no files or images that are to be migrated.
39	D1000- Is 24x7x365 telephone and web/email support for technical issues or all user issues (how-to)?	The helpdesk telephone line and the web/mail support outlined in 'D1000 – Warranty Support' of section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' in RFP is for the warranty support of the To-be system after final deployment outlined in milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M12' is met. This helpline is not for assistance with the Grant Submission Process, which is a business as usual (BAU) functionality of Grants Finance.
40	Would the State please consider extending the due date by two weeks to allow vendors additional time to adjust response following release of responses to vendor Q&A?	No, we cannot extend the bid submission deadline, as it will have ripple effect on future milestones, thus impacting the overall cost and schedule of Grants Finance Management System (GFMS) modernization.

41	Would the State please provide the not-to-exceed budget for software and services on this contract?	The budget for this project will be determined by the best value procurement process as described in the RFP. Bidders should develop cost proposals that are consistent with the deliverables to be provided. Please keep in mind that 30 percent of the overall points awarded will be based on cost. Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost effective. NYSED does not have a benchmark for the not-to-exceed budget.
42	Does the State anticipate all services inclusive of the initial implementation and annual support thru 2029?	Yes, the cost proposal should include cost estimates for all the milestones including the 3 years support. Refer to tab 'Cost Proposal - Summary' in the 'RFP 24-023 Cost Proposal' published.
43	The State has described your deliverable timeline as "aggressive;" will the State share the motivating factor(s) driving this expedited timeline?	There are a variety of motivating factors impacting the timeline. Mainly, the need to replace the existing system and move away from reliance on paper submissions. There are also funding related constraints that have an impact on the timeline.
44	Would NYSED consider granting a 3 week extension? It will take considerable time to respond to the technical requirements while researching and teaming with companies to comply with NYSED's Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) participation goals for the Grants Finance Project.	No, we cannot extend the bid submission deadline, as it will have ripple effect on future milestones, thus impacting the overall cost and schedule of Grants Finance Management System (GFMS) modernization.
45	Are the specifications of the laptops that will be issued by NYSED to vendors available? Will vendors be permitted to download applications on the laptops?	NYSED will provide a laptop to the vendor's staff. They will not have administrator rights. Any additional software that is required will need to be pushed to the laptop by NYSED. NYSED provided Laptop Specs: Dell Latitude 5440 / i7-1355U / 16 GBB RAM.
46	The anticipated timeline includes "Preliminary Notification of Selected Vendor" projected for June 15, 2024. Does NYSED anticipate vendor interviews or demonstrations in between the proposal due date and the preliminary notification of the selected vendor?	No, the timeline does not allow for interviews or demonstrations.
47	Will NYSED permit alternate delivery schedules once our delivery team has performed a detailed analysis of the project deliverables? We are working through the deliverables and determining the team size, MBE, and WBE subcontracting goals where the project may take shorter or longer than 17 months.	As mentioned in section '2.3.2 Milestone Success Criteria' of the RFP, the success criteria of each milestone has to be met. The durations of the milestones are outlined in tab 'Cost Proposal - Summary' in the 'RFP 24-023 Cost Proposal' published. Vendor is free to come up with any number of level 2 milestones within the level 1 milestones mentioned in the RFP. The level 1 milestones outlined in the RFP and its duration if moved will have an ripple effect on the other planned activities hence will not be allowed in this RFP.
48	What are your primary Fund Sources? Fed, State, Third-Party?	The Project is being funded by a combination of Federal and State Capital funds that have been appropriated to the Department in the State's enacted budget.
49	Is the expected user count of the NYSED Users Edit/Update Internal 200, NYSED Users View Only Internal 25, LEA Users View Only External 1250, and LEA Users - Edit Access External 2500 expected to grow in the next 3 years? If yes, by what count or percentage per user group.	We anticipate a 10% increase in the next 3 year period for the external user group. In section '2.2.2 Non-Functional Requirements – Necessary to do business with NYSED' against 'Scalability & Updates', it is called out that 'Vendor must provide a scalable solution for future enhancements to the system'. One of the main advantage of going for a Cloud application is to leverage the auto-scaling capability of the cloud.

50	Generally, what size are documents that are used in your business processes?	If the question on the document size is based on an assumption that physical document scanning is in-scope of this RFP, note that document scanning and converting/storing on electronic format is not in scope of this RFP.
51	Does your business process require an environment compliant with PCI or HIPAA?	HIPPA and PCI requirements do not apply to this project.
52	Peak usage is normally during core business hours. How many people will be expected to be logged into the system during the business day?	It is estimated that concurrent users could be around 1,000 during peak times. Vendor should use industry standard approach for load testing and stress testing the To-be Cloud application.
53	How many fields do the records stored in the system typically have?	Current As-is application CAFÉ has a number of database tables and each table has it's own record size and fields associated with it. Refer to section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment' for details on the number of database tables and the size of the database.
54	What is expected to be the average concurrent number of users on the system, i.e. within the same hour?	It is estimated that concurrent users could be around 1,000 during peak times. Vendor should use industry standard approach for load testing and stress testing the To-be Cloud application.
55	Please ballpark the expected number of records per year? Are any other types of records to be included, and if so, how many per year?	The actual number of records is unknown, as the term "record" is subjective whether it is a business record or a transaction record in a database. The annual counts are provided in section '1.5.2 Grant Structure of Existing System with Counts'. This should provide a ballpark expected number of records per year. In section '2.2.2 Non-Functional Requirements – Necessary to do business with NYSED' against 'Scalability & Updates', it is called out that 'Vendor must provide a scalable solution for future enhancements to the system'. One of the main advantage of going for a Cloud application is to leverage the auto-scaling capability of the cloud.
56	As of now, financial files are transferred with keys. Should the future system maintain this approach or any other methods like encryption can be adopted? If encryption can be implemented, are you open to corresponding changes in Oracle Financial System to decrypt these files?	As outlined in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment' SFTP is used to transfer data from As-is application to OF. Encryption in transit should be sufficient. Future state secure transmission can be decided as part of the To-be application design and in consultation and collaboration with interfacing application SMEs.
57	Does the scope of the project only include the Mainframe system, or does the Oracle system also require adjustments to align with the future state of the system?	NYSED understands that there may be changes needed on the interfacing application when the connection to the to-be application is established. We would like to keep the changes to interfacing application to a minimum. Details of the changes to the interfacing application can be decided as part of the To-be application design and in consultation and collaboration with interfacing application SMEs. Any changes to the interfacing system will be carried out by the technology team of the interfacing system.
58	Is the Oracle database hosted in on-prem or in the cloud? Is the Oracle Golden Gate (OGG) currently in use for audit tracking?	The Oracle Financial System (OF) is hosted on the NYSED data center. **Vendor will NOT have direct access to the OF system. Data will be accessed/updated via bulk upload or REST API.**
59	Since the project must be carried out only from CONUS, please clarify if non-U.S. Citizens can be employed for this project?	Work cannot be done outside CONUS, but non-US Citizens can work on this project from CONUS.

60	Can you provide us the current state and any future state architecture diagrams?	The current state data flow diagram and the current application technical details are outlined in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment'. The vendor will propose the future state architecture during the design phase of the engagement. The proposed architecture will be subject to NYSED ITS approval.
61	Can you please provide upstream and downstream applications with tech stack like reporting needs, any models etc.?	This can not be provided as part of the RFP. The successful vendor will be provided with this information.
62	Is the requirement to create any data lake/data mesh kind of architectures on the Cloud Service Provider (CSP)? If so how many number of layers (bronze, silver, gold) need to be created?	A data lake is a centralized repository that allows one to store all their structured and unstructured data at any scale. At this point there is no plans to create a centralized repository of structured and unstructured data as part of the to-be application.
63	Has the application been performance tested prior? If Yes, (a) When was testing conducted and what tool was used? (b) Can the existing performance benchmarks be made available? (c) Confirm if performance baseline prior to migration needs to be considered	Assuming the question is related to the performance testing of the As-is application CAFÉ. Data points on the performance testing outcome of the existing application is not relevant to the RFP. As-is application has not been performance tested.
64	Can you please provide the peak hourly transaction volumes and yearly growth projections.	It is estimated that concurrent users could be around 1,000 during peak times. Vendor should use an industry standard approach for load testing and stress testing the To-be Cloud application
65	Is Accessibility WCAG 2.1/2.2 Compliance in scope of Testing?	Yes, this should be incorporated into the testing plan. Although WCAG 2.0 AA Compliance is mentioned in the RFP, the To-be application has to be compliant with the latest Web Content accessibility guidelines in effect when the application goes-live and will have to be kept compliant throughout the lifecycle of the to-be application.
66	What is the current process for creating and prioritizing user stories for NYSED workflows?	NYSED uses JIRA and Confluence.
67	Can you specify the performance levels that are expected for the maintenance of the Target system?	Performance level of the Target or To-be application can be decided in collaboration with NYSED, interfacing systems and successful vendor during the design phase.
68	Please clarify the components included in the 3-year licensing costs	Components that are to be part of the cost proposal for the 3 year support period are outlined in the RFP. Requirements for the support period is outlined in 'D1200 – 3-year support' under section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' of the RFP.
69	How frequently will the development and test environments be synced with the production environment in terms of data and code?	As outlined under milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M10' in section '2.3.1 Milestones' , vendor should set up and maintain a set of Development & Test environments that will be periodically synchronized with the production version in terms of code and data. This has to be an automated process and synch up should be possible on an as-need basis (Adhoc) and also on a pre-defined frequency which can be decided when feature 'GFMS-Mod-feature-013' is picked up for delivery.
70	Does NYSED already have physical mobile devices available or any device cloud solution for performing device testing? If yes, what are the device types?	Compatibility testing requirements are outlined under 'D700-1 Functional & Non-Functional testing' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements'. Please note NYSED does not supply mobile devices to internal and external users. Vendor should use industry benchmark for compatibility testing.

71	Is there any Automation framework already available for test validation of applications? If yes then which applications are utilizing automation with the framework, ex. Web, devices, API etc.	There is no recommendation from NYSED on the framework for test automation.
72	Is Test Data Management in-scope of this RFP? If Yes, what is the current process followed for Test Data Management?	Any testing of the to-be application features developed by the vendor is in scope for vendor to manage. There is no recommendation from NYSED for the test data management approach that the vendor follows for the to-be application. This will be decided collaboratively with the vendor and NYSED during the test strategy creation stage while staying compliant with the data privacy regulations and NYSED security policies.
73	Are there any integrations with mobile interfaces/other platforms for reports?	Compatibility testing requirements are outlined under 'D700-1 Functional & Non-Functional testing' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements'. Please note NYSED does not supply mobile devices to internal and external users, vendor should use industry benchmark for compatibility testing.
74	What is total approximate count of UI screens\pages in Grant Financial Management system & workflows to be considered? If can give break down as below that would be great. -Grant Application Review and Award process -Grant Financial Management -Reporting -Dashboards -Reconciliations	This will be determined during the design phase but to get a view, the vendor can look at the As-is application screens and reports provided in the RFP attachments.
75	Does the application need to have ability to do an OCR conversion of paper financial documents? if yes, are these documents in a standard format ?	OCR conversion of paper documents are not in scope of this project. Information from the paper based forms are already entered in As-is CAFÉ application.
76	Is there any specific cloud based low code development platform in consideration already viz. Mendix, Out systems, Unqork etc.	No.
77	Will platform licensing, subscription and manageability / availability of low code platform be completely managed by Supplier?	Yes. If the proposed solution is an existing product then the cost for the 3 year period in Milestone M16 of the Cost Proposal should include software licensing/subscription fees along with any other support cost . Alternatively, if the proposed solution is a custom build specifically for the NYSED Grants Finance Management requirements, then the cost for the 3 year period in Milestone M16 of the Cost Proposal should include all support costs including but not limited to low code platform subscription costs, vendor support costs, hardware/software costs, if any.
78	Are there complex integrations that need to be completed in real time besides SFTP?	SFTP and REST API are the only integrations.
79	Do you see a need for separate document management system in centralized manner or should it be part of the application? Is there a need of document collaboration feature?	No, NYSED does not anticipate the need for a separate document management system. The application should allow for uploads & retrieval of documents. But there is no need for a collaboration feature.
80	Where will hierarchical relationship of data be generated for UI to display it?	Assuming the reference to the question is related to 'D400-2 Grant Funding', the RFP states 'The system must allow for hierarchical relationship between data components to easily drill down to transactional data (lowest level) Refer to 1.5.2 Grant Structure of Existing System with Counts.'
81	Is there any available email service provider to integrate notifications?	No.

82	What type of online help mechanism is expected for assisting users? Chatbot based or ticket based support or any others?	The vendor must develop Online Help / Self-Services to assist users in understanding, usage, troubleshooting independently. There is no need for a chatbot based help, but a ticketing system can be utilized to support user issues.
83	Where is the analytics data to be collected and stored? Does Low code app be needed to integrate with analytics system for generating reports?	The analytics/dashboard capability mentioned in section 'D200 – As-is system understanding & To-be system design' of the RFP has to be identified in collaboration with selected vendor and NYSED during the design phase of the To-be application and as part of feature 'GFMS-Mod-feature-002'.
84	Please list all (internal/external) sources feeding data to mainframe	All Interfacing systems are called out in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment' of the RFP. The direction of the data flow whether it is uni-directional or bi-directional is called out under 'D600 – Integration' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements' of the RFP.
85	What are the different types of formats expected for document submission - grant project expenditure-based budgets, budget modifications/amendments, requests for payment, and final expenditure reports?	These are the types of forms that will be transformed in the To-be system.
86	Is this app external facing or accessible only to NYSED staff via SSO?	The new GFMS (To-be) will be both internal and external facing. There will be a separate Identity and Access Management for the To-be application. Whether the sign on will be Single Sign on (SSO) or not will be part of the To-be application design.
87	What will be used for the New York State Financial System's (SFS) file layout structure for daily processing?	Either a batch file upload to/from target system or a REST API interface.
88	Federal or State Awards, Grant Programs (Initiatives), Grant Project*, Voucher - Do these represent number of row records in the system or something else? As it's a 10-year data migration, count in the table is not matching logically	This is the hierarchy of data elements in the As-is system. One Federal or state award will have multiple grant programs mapped to it. Each grant program will have several grant projects mapped to it. There will be a number of vouchers associated with each grant project.
89	OFS - Is it a Oracle Database Server as diagram represents OSC table? Will other systems like FI, SEDREF, OFS and SFS systems be retained as-is? Are you open to changes in these systems if required? Existing batch job processing running between OFS and SFS systems remains the same without any changes. Is this understanding correct?	These systems will not be changed. Either a file layout will be provided for batch/bulk upload or a REST API interface to these systems will be provided.
90	What are the list of browsers to be considered for testing?	NYSED will not be able to control the browsers that will be used both External & internal users of the To-be application. Vendor should follow industry standards and test for compatibility of the application with all popular browsers.
91	What are the functionalities around these two systems SEDMON, HighQ ? Unable to find any requirements around these systems. Is it out of scope from this RFP ?	Refer to section 2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements. Deliverable D600 Integration states that the vendor must define and document requirements for new system interfaces in the new environment for SEDMON and High Q. The requirements for these systems has not been documented by NYSED.

92	What will be the frequency for sending data from existing CAFÉ system to OFS systems ? Is it a nightly cycle batch job or real time push to OFS via FI system from CAFE ?	We receive updates from OFS/SFS daily. Updates to OFS/SFS can either be processed in bulk daily or pushed ad-hoc via REST API. There is currently a limited REST API available and the current system leverages batch file processing.
93	How long should we keep the records in the new app? [Purge Interval]	This will be discussed during project initiation.
94	Will Contract Administration Unit (CAU) team access the replaced CAFE app, as observed in flow diagram. Pls confirm.	This relates to the anticipated integration with the HighQ system.
95	Can you please confirm the preferred technology stack, cloud platform, database, reporting & other tools by NYSED for mainframe modernization & data replication?	This is part of the To-be application design that the selected vendor will come up with during feature 'GFMS-Mod-feature-002: As-is system understanding and to-be system design'
96	Since it is mentioned that some of the reports may not be required post modernization, please let us know the approximate number of reports that will not be required.	This will be determined during project initiation.
97	Apart from (18 - 20) Datasets mentioned in the RFP document "rfp-24-023-attachments.pdf" such as ALLOCATION, CONTRACT, LEDGER… Are there any other Tables/entities which will be part of mainframe modernization	The As-is system database table count is mentioned in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment' of the RFP.
98	Can you confirm if the Historical data migration is 40GB ? Please specify for any changes in Data volume (in GB/TB)	No, the historical data migration will not be 40GB. The current size of the database is 4GB and only 10 years of data is expected to be migrated where as the current database has more than 10 years data (which by nature is smaller than 4GB but the extract size is unknown at this time). Requirements for the data migration is outlined in 'D300 – Data Migration' in section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements'.
99	Can you please confirm if the current migration involves complete re-modelling in the target cloud platform? If Yes, Please share estimated source file formats & file types, # of Entities, ETL processes in CAFE system involved? # of entities in Semantic layer which supports reporting & analytics? # of Standard data quality rules (business rules & technical rules) ? # of custom processes & stored procedures involved?	The As-is application is in UNISYS Mainframe and the to-be application is expected to be a SaaS Cloud Low code application. If there will be a complete re-modelling of the data from CAFE data store to the to-be data store it will be determined during the data mapping exercise which is part of feature 'GFMS-Mod-feature-003'.
100	Can you please share Average Lines of Code (LOC) for ~20 COBOL programs shared.	This will be shared with the selected vendor during project initiation, if needed.
101	All orange blocks in the flow diagram state that its managed by other team. Are those functionalities in RFP scope ?	All functionalities in the 'Attachment 1 - To-Be Flows' shown in orange and green color are not in scope of the To-be system.
102	Any other personas other than 1. LEA 2. Program Office (PO) 3. Grants Finance / Grants Financial Management System (GFMS)/NYSED 4. Contract Administration Unit (CAU) need to be considered ? Do we have the list of user groups associated within these systems?	All major personas in the To-be application are shown in the 'Attachment 1 - To-Be Flows', published along with the RFP. Refer to https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/funding-opportunities-procurements/rfp-24-023-attachments.pdf

103	Is there any location preference to host the applications? If in the public cloud, is there a preference among the Cloud Service Providers E.g. AWS, Azure or GCP?	There is no preference among the Cloud Service providers. Both Internal and external users are expected to access the to-be application from in and around New York state. However note that the data must stay within CONUS location. Based on this guidance, the vendor can decide on the best primary and back up sites for the application.
104	Please list key locations from where users will access the applications	Assuming the question is related to physical location, all users are located in and around New York State. However the To-be application should not restrict users from accessing the system if they are outside of NY state and within CONUS.
105	What are the Availability SLA requirements?	The To-be system is expected to available 99.9%.
106	Details on heavy usage period and the corresponding load when auto-scaling is required.	It is estimated that concurrent users could be around 1,000 during peak times. Vendor should use industry standard approach for load testing and stress testing the To-be Cloud application.
107	What are the DR (Disaster Recovery) requirements? Also list the expected RTO/RPO.	The To-be solution should be SaaS Cloud application, being a cloud application we assume that the DR will be Active: Active. At this point we do not have the RTO/RPO for the To-be application. This can be decided during the design phase ahead of milestone 'GFMS-Milestone-M02'
108	What are the backup requirements? Please provide details on current backup solution.	In section '1.5.2 Grant Structure of Existing System with Counts' it is called out that 10 years worth of data has to be migrated to the To-be application. The 10 years data should be readily available for users if needed. There are grant awards that span for 6 years or more. The back up solution currently used is a standard UNISYS mainframe back up solution.
109	Please provide the capacity of the database to be hosted on cloud (Expected YoY data growth)	Capacity of the As-is application's database is mentioned in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment'. At this point we do not have the details of the capacity that may be required for the To-be application. As it is a SaaS Cloud application, which will have auto-scaling capability, capacity of the database is expected to be scalable based on volumes.
110	Please share any integration requirements (with third party applications, on-premise systems, tools, other clouds). Please list all the systems to which integration is expected apart from SFTP	Details on all interfacing systems are mentioned in section '1.5.1 Existing Application Environment' and 'D600 – Integration' under section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements'.
111	Please provide the details on infrastructure and application support coverage.	The question is not clear, therefore NYSED cannot provide an accurate response.
112	What are the data bandwidth requirements?	We do not have a data bandwidth requirement defined at this point. Vendor should be guided by the industry standard for SaaS Cloud applications.
113	What are the CI/CD tools to be used in the pipeline?	Currently there are no CI/CD tools used in the As-is application CAFÉ. Vendor can recommend a CI/CD tool for the To-be application, which can be decided based on discussion with NYSED IT.
114	What are the Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tools in NYSED? Is the Vendor expected to create automated testing environment using IaC?	Requirements for the development and test environments are outlined in 'D1100 – Environment' under section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements'. Yes, vendor is expected to have a set up to perform automated testing. Vendor can use Infrastructure as Code or any automate testing framework like Selenium and test scripts written in programming language like Python. Note, this is just an example for illustration, vendor is free to use any testing framework.

115	Does CI/CD pipeline exist in NYSD? What is expected from Vendor on Readiness report of integrated test environment with connectivity to interfacing application?	There is no CI/CD pipeline existing for the current Grants Finance Management System. The readiness report of the integrated test environment should showcase the availability of interface systems in the environment, availability of the interfacing system SMEs for support during the System Integration testing (SIT) activity, and test data readiness which can be used seamlessly with the interfacing applications. Shakedown of the integrated test environment including connectivity with Interfaces should be completed ahead of the SIT start.
116	Should testing be part of CICD pipeline or this has to be as a standalone activity?	Requirements for the development and test environments are outlined in 'D1100 – Environment' under section '2.2.1 Deliverables and Implementation Requirements'.
117	Currently there is an ask to integrate with existing systems, are these systems also planned to be moved to cloud or does the interaction need to happen between On-Prem & Cloud platform?	At this time, we are not aware of any Cloud migration plans for interfacing systems like SEDREF and OF.
118	Is there any need to consider external sources while modernizing the mainframe in cloud environment?	At this point, there are no external sources for the As-is application CAFÉ and we are not aware of any external data source other that the ones mentioned in the RFP.
119	What type of penetration testing is supplier expected to perform (Infrastructure/Application)? Can you share Volumetrics and Penetration testing frequency? Do you have any existing tools in place?	The current As-is application CAFÉ is on the UNISYS Mainframe and is not exposed to the internet via Firewall. There is no penetration testing or Vulnerability scanning in place for the As-is application. The To-be application is external facing, hence should adhere to the security policy of NYSED called out in attachment 'RFP 24-023 Attachments'.
120	Can you confirm scope of Vulnerability assessments (Infra VM,SAST,DAST,API)? Can you share volumetrics and frequency of scans? Do you have any existing tools?	The current As-is application CAFÉ is on the UNISYS Mainframe and is not exposed to the internet via Firewall. There is no penetration testing or Vulnerability scanning in place for the As-is application. The To-be application is external facing, hence should adhere to the security policy of NYSED called out in attachment 'RFP 24-023 Attachments'.
121	Do you have any ITSM integration with existing security tools?	We currently do not have this data point.
122	Can you share current vulnerability backlog of vulnerabilities?	The current As-is application CAFÉ is on the UNISYS Mainframe and is not exposed to the internet via Firewall. There is no penetration testing or Vulnerability scanning in place for the As-is application.
123	Please confirm if supplier is expected to bring its own security monitoring solution as part of the proposal or supplier can leverage the existing Security Monitoring/SIEM solution in place at NYSED ?	The to-be solution has to comply with the Cybersecurity Incident Response Standard – (NYSED_SECS1-V1_CIR) refer to Attachment 7.2. The To-be system which is a SaaS low code solution, will be hosted in the public cloud. Vendor should use their own security monitoring solution which has to be compliant with the policy mentioned above.
124	Where will SEDMON & HighQ fit in the future state architecture?	Both SEDMON and HighQ will be new interfaces that are under development right now and will be linked to the To-Be application. Detailed design can be finalized based on future discussion with the interfacing application.
125	What database is leveraged for FI, SEDREF, SFS? Also confirm if Oracle EBS R12 (On-Premise) vs Oracle Fusion (On Cloud) is leveraged for Oracle Financial System.	There is file based communication with FI and SEDREF on the UNISYS Mainframe. With OF there is SFTP communication. The databases of interfacing systems are not accessed by the As-is application. We encourage the To-be application design also to limit their access to the databases of the interfacing applications.

126	We noticed the Responsive web design is in scope, are you also looking for any native mobile application development?	NYSED does not control the type of mobile devices that will be used by Internal and external users. Hence, the to-be application should be compatible with major mobile Operating systems available in the market.
127	We are assuming the future application will be in English language only. If multilingual, please confirm the languages.	Current As-is application CAFÉ is in English, the to-be application is also expected to be in English language only.
128	Have you executed any user research activities and can you share those artifacts if you have them?	No, NYSED has not done any UX design or user research activities for Grants Finance Management System.
129	Please share the list of existing security controls for following security domains areas: 1. Network security (Firewall, VPN, WAF, DDoS, etc.) 2. Endpoint Security (Antivirus, EDR, Email Security, Proxy, etc.) 3. Identity & Access Management (SSO, MFA, etc.) 4. Data Protection (Encryption, Certificate Management, etc.) 5. Security Monitoring (SIEM, EDR, Threat Intel, etc.) 6. Vulnerability Management (VA Scanning, SAST/DAST, etc.)	Refer to page 98 onwards in the 'RFP 24-023 Attachments' PDF published along with the RFP. https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/funding-opportunities-procurements/rfp-24-023-attachments.pdf
130	Kindly confirm the tools, from the existing security software/hardware that can be extended by NYSED to Vendor for securing the application .	Bidders should assume that NYSED will not provide any security software/hardware to vendor.
131	How many audit (external and internal) service provider need to support annually and provide list of audits service provider need to support.	The question is not clear so we are unable to provide an answer.
132	Can the State amend the Cost Proposal to include sections for vendors to provide pricing on software, licensing, subscription fees, etc.?	If the proposed solution is an existing product then the cost for the 3 year period in Milestone M16 of the Cost Proposal should include software licensing/subscription fees along with any other support cost . Alternatively, if the proposed solution is a custom build specifically for the NYSED Grants Finance Management requirements, then the cost for the 3 year period in Milestone M16 of the Cost Proposal should include all support costs including but not limited to low code platform subscription costs, vendor support costs, hardware/software costs, if any.
133	On Page 21 it states, 'Note: the deliverable reference is not linked to payments. All payments are driven off the Milestones and the fulfillment of its associated success criteria.' Can the State clarify that even though the deliverable reference is not linked to payments, that it is expected all deliverables are to be completed and approved prior to issuance of payments for a given milestone?	Yes. Refer to tab 'Cost Proposal - Summary' in 'Attachment 1 - Cost Proposal' for details on the set of deliverables that are to be in NYSED approved status, for a given milestone. For further clarity refer to section '2.3.2 Milestone Success Criteria' which states the success criteria for a milestone.
134	Does NYSED have an approved budget for this new Grants Management System? If yes, can you provide that budget information to guide vendor bidding decision-making? If the budget is too low, it does not support bid preparation.	The budget for this project will be determined by the best value procurement process as described in the RFP. Bidders should develop cost proposals that are consistent with the deliverables to be provided. Please keep in mind that 30 percent of the overall points awarded will be based on cost. Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost effective. NYSED has sufficient funds to support this engagement and the necessary licensing fees for the duration of the contract.

135	Has NYSED previously entertained any system demonstrations and/or presentations from vendors? If so, which systems were seen and when?	Over two years ago, NYSED staff participated in demos of Grants Management Systems from REI and Salesforce.
136	Did NYSED utilize any vendor / SME consultants in defining the sought-after functionality and/or scope of work enumerated in the RFP? If yes, please provide the name of the vendor/consultant.	No, NYSED's internal project team worked collaboratively on the RFP development.
137	What dollar volume of the $3.5 billion grants are pass-through grants to recipients?	The $3.5B approximation referenced in the RFP is disbursed to Local Education Agencies annually.
138	Of 11,000 grant recipients, are those recipients agencies or individuals?	The 11,000 grant projects are awarded to approx. 2,500 different grant recipients (local education agencies).
139	What is the maximum budget allocated for this Grants Financial Management System project?	The budget for this project will be determined by the best value procurement process as described in the RFP. Bidders should develop cost proposals that are consistent with the deliverables to be provided. Please keep in mind that 30 percent of the overall points awarded will be based on cost. Bidders are encouraged to submit budgets that are cost effective. NYSED has sufficient funds to support this engagement and the necessary licensing fees for the duration of the contract.
140	Will NYSED consider alternative milestone payment schedules proposed by the vendor?	No
141	We understand the deliverable payment schedule for project implementation. Please specify where in the cost sheet we will be including pricing for the 3 YR software licensing term.	All bidders should include software licensing/subscription fees for the 3 year period in Milestone M16 of the Cost Proposal.
142	In case of Partial Participation or No Participation on the M/WBE goals, is there any deduction in points during the Technical Evaluation?	M/WBE participation is not scored as part of the technical evaluation. However, the selected vendor must be in compliance with the M/WBE goals (either through 30% participation or with an approved waiver) before the resulting contract will be issued. NYSED reserves the right to reject any bid for failure to document "good faith efforts" to comply with the stated M/WBE goals.
143	The RFP sets an overall 30% M/WBE participation goal (17% MBE, 13% WBE) and suggests a 6% SDVOB utilization rate, but it also caps subcontracting at 30% of the total budget. Since the combined M/WBE and SDVOB goals (36%) exceed the 30% subcontracting limit, can NYSED clarify how bidders should reconcile these seemingly conflicting requirements? Would NYSED consider raising the subcontracting limit to align with the total M/WBE and SDVOB participation targets?	M/WBE and SDVOB utilization is not limited to the use of subcontractors. Utilization includes all spending with M/WBE and SDVOB firms, including the purchase of services, supplies, or materials. Only direct personal services and related incidental expenses count toward the subcontracting limit.
144	NYSED states that subcontracting is limited to 30% of the total contract budget. Is this 30% cap only for the M/WBE participation goal? Would NYSED consider allowing for additional subcontracting percentage exceeding 30% while maintaining the M/WBE goals?	The subcontracting limit and M/WBE participation goal are separate. M/WBE utilization does not count toward the subcontracting limit unless it is for direct personal services.
145	If a firm holds both Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE) certificates from New York State, will they receive a total of 30% M/WBE participation overall?	A firm that is dual certified can be used to satisfy either the MBE or the WBE goal, or spending with that vendor can be divided between the two. If a dual-certified firm is utilized for 30% of the total contract value, the bid will be deemed in full compliance.

146	Can you consider references collaboratively with both Prime and Subcontractors?	Subcontractor experience can be applied toward the experience and staffing expectations of the RFP. In that case, it would be appropriate to include references for the subcontractor.
147	Will NYSED accept M/WBE participation from companies certified by NYC? NYC is a partner agency to NYS and the certification process for NYS takes at least 90-120 days.	M/WBE participation goals are only met through the use of New York State certified vendors. Use of NYC certified vendors will not be counted toward the goal.
148	If we are working with a MBE that is also a WBE, can the same firm satisfy the MWBE participation goals or do separate firms need to be engaged per designation?	A firm that is dual certified can be used to satisfy either the MBE or the WBE goal, or spending with that vendor can be divided between the two. If a dual-certified firm is utilized for 30% of the total contract value, the bid will be deemed in full compliance.
149	Can the M/WBE and SDVOB contracting goals be clarified? The RFP states the maximum subcontracting goal is 30% suggesting 17% for MBE and 13% for a WBE. However, there is mention of 6% preferred contracting to a SDVOB. Are the percentages listed only suggestions where vendors can allocate more or less to a MBE, WBE or SDVOB as long as 30% is obtained? Or, must vendors at minimum subcontract to a MBE and a WBE while the SVDBE is not necessary?	The subcontracting limit, M/WBE participation goals, and SDVOB participation goals are three different items and will be considered separately. Vendors may, but are not required to, subcontract for up to 30% of the contract value. Subcontracting is defined as non-employee direct personal services and related incidental expenses. Subcontracting is not limited to M/WBE or SVDOB firms. Vendors must utilize M/WBE certified firms for 30% of the contract value, or they may apply for a waiver if needed. M/WBE utilization is not limited to subcontracting, but also includes any other purchases. Vendors are also strongly encouraged to utilize SDVOB firms for 6% of the contract value. A waiver is not required if the vendor is unable to meet the SDVOB goal.
150	Can the 30% subcontracting limit be clarified? We are the software manufacturer who intends to deliver most of the project using our internal implementation team. We typically submit and contract with agencies through a distributor or reseller. In this scenario, although we are transacting through a distributor, we would be performing the majority of the work. Is the 30% subcontracting limit intended to be for 30% towards subcontracting to a MBE or WBE?	The subcontracting limit applies to all direct personal services performed by individuals who are not employees of the contractor. If the bid is submitted by, and resulting contract is in the name of, a distributer or reseller, then subcontracting will include all personal services performed by individuals not employed by the distributer or reseller. The subcontracting limit is not specific to utilization of M/WBE firms.
151	We'd like to know if you could share a list of prime vendors participating, we'd like to help them meet their MWBE goals.	MWBE-certified firms interested in serving as partners can reach out to MWBE@nysed.gov to provide your contact information.
152	Wondering if you will be distributing a list of interested MWBE vendors to the Prime Bidders as part of the Q&A responses or other communication.	MWBE-certified firms interested in serving as partners can reach out to MWBE@nysed.gov to provide your contact information.
153	We would like to place a request for an extension of the 5/14 due date. Please let me know if you need any additional support information.	No, we cannot extend the bid submission deadline, as it will have ripple effect on future milestones. Thus impacting the overall cost and schedule of Grants Finance Management System (GFMS) modernization.
154	We request clarification in regards to "D. Order of Precedence" located on page 76	The appendix D referenced in order of precedence will be created using the text of the RFP and the vendor's response.