



Request for Proposals

PREPARED BY:

Regional Income Tax Agency
10107 Brecksville Road, Brecksville, OH 44141

PROJECT TITLE:

RITA Firewall Replacement

ISSUED DATE:

November 13, 2024

RESPONSES DUE DATE:

5:00 p.m. E.D.T., Wednesday, November 27, 2024

**REGIONAL INCOME TAX AGENCY
Request for Proposal**

RITA Firewall Replacement

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
Letter from the Executive Director	3
RFP Introduction	4
RFP Requirements	5
Proposal Responses	6
Proposal Instructions	7

Letter from the Executive Director

Wednesday November 13, 2024

The Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA, the Agency) is seeking proposals to replace our existing Cisco firewalls for the Brecksville headquarters and the remote offices. In addition, spare switches will be purchased to allow a quick replacement if existing switches fail. This replacement effort will allow the Agency to enhance firewall and content filtering services and ensure network resiliency as we administer and collect municipal income tax.

Proposals are to be submitted electronically to RFP-IS@ritaohio.com no later than **Wednesday November 27, 2024**.

If your firm is interested in submitting a proposal, please execute the attached Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement and return to RFP-IS@ritaohio.com.

Upon successful execution of the attached Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement, the RFP response spreadsheet and technical addendum describing the current system will be provided.

Potential vendors may direct questions or requests for clarification to RFP-IS@ritaohio.com through **Thursday November 21, 2024**. A copy of the questions and requests received, along with RITA's responses, will be provided to each party that has executed a Non-Disclosure Agreement, without identifying the source of the question or request. To the extent possible, you are asked to compile your questions and requests and submit them all at one time.

Please be aware that the Agency reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or any part of any proposal, or to waive informalities or defects in proposals, as the Board of Trustees of the Agency deems to be in the best interest of the Agency.

Cordially,

Amy L. Arrighi
Executive Director

RFP Introduction

The Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA, the Agency) is a governmental entity established to administer and collect local income taxes for political subdivisions. As an agent for its municipalities, RITA provides substantial financial services to its members. Municipal income tax is collected from individuals and/or employers withholding on salaries, wages, commissions, fees and other forms of compensation. The tax is also collected from business entities based on net profits.

As of 2023 there are over 400 taxing jurisdictions in 80 counties served by the Agency (just over 50% of all taxing jurisdictions in Ohio with an income tax) and total annual tax collections are over \$2.0 billion.

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for the professional services (installation), hardware, software and maintenance required to replace Agency firewalls and additional network hardware to be used as hot spare backups. Contained within are the minimum requirements necessary to partner with RITA. While vendors are required to provide a response on this entire proposal, RITA reserves the right to award separate portions of the proposal to different vendors.

A contract shall be awarded to the most responsive and responsible vendor as soon as practicable after the opening of proposals. The vendor to whom the award is made shall enter into a written contract in a form acceptable to RITA within ten (10) days of notification of award.

The Regional Income Tax Agency is not responsible for any costs incurred by the respondent in preparation of a proposal. RITA reserves the right to negotiate with vendors submitting quotes in order to obtain the most favorable terms, conditions and pricing for the Agency as determined by the Agency in its sole discretion. Also, as deemed in the best interest of the Agency by the Board of Trustees, RITA reserves the right to reject any or all parts of the quotes.

Internal and External Firewall Replacement Requirements

The Agency has already worked with Cisco to determine the hardware required for this project. Listed in the technical addendum are the bill of materials that the Agency is looking to procure as part of the firewall replacement solution.

The Agency is also requiring professional services to replace the internal and external firewalls in Brecksville only. This will be an after-hours deployment with a focus on minimal downtime. The remote office firewalls and switch installations will be handled by RITA staff only. RITA Objectives for successful bids are outlined below.

RITA Objectives	Required Feature	Optional Feature
1. Replace existing ASA rules on internal and external firewalls with NGFW rules.	Yes	
2. Replace existing web content filter with NGFW firewall, including SSL content filtering.	Yes	
3. VPN endpoint for remote office ASA/NGFW firewalls	Yes	
4. Creation of DMZ by using external and internal firewalls	Yes	
5. Replicate existing segmented networks	Yes	
6. 5-year software and hardware maintenance	Yes	
7. External firewall to be deployed in a failover pair	Yes	
8. Internal firewall to be deployed in a failover pair	Yes	
9. Move from a copper based to a fiber-based connection to main switch stack	Yes	
10. Migrate existing Cisco IPS functionality currently running on separate existing Cisco NGFW's so that this IPS functionality can be collapsed onto the new NGFW's	Yes	
11. User and Administrator authentication against existing Active Directory and/or ISE server	Yes	
12. Ensure access controls are in place to restrict access to only desired public facing endpoints externally	Yes	
13. Ensure access controls are in place to restrict access internally to desired endpoints for RITA employees and contractors	Yes	
14. Configured device logging to internal Syslog server	Yes	
15. Ensuring approved levels of encryption are employed (AES 256 or higher)	Yes	

Proposal Responses

Proposals must be submitted in the format and order outlined below. All proposals should present all information in a concise manner, neatly arranged, legible, and in terms understandable for evaluation. All information requested is to be addressed directly and completely.

It is more desirable to give additional information than less when the answer could be misinterpreted. There should be no additional attachments, enclosures, or exhibits other than those considered by the proposer to be essential to a complete understanding of the proposal submitted.

Section I – Company Background, Qualifications, Experience

The following items must be provided in narrative format

- Provide an overview of your company, including your history, mission, and core values.
- Describe your firm's experience in providing firewall solutions to organizations similar to ours.
- Provide a list of customers/references.
- Provide case studies or success stories that demonstrate the effectiveness of your products.

Section II – Complete Vendor Response Worksheet

The vendor response worksheet (Vendor Response Worksheet.xls) is provided to prospective vendors who have an executed mutual non-disclosure agreement on file with the Agency. This document will assist RITA in evaluating how well the solution being recommended by the vendor matches the Agency's needs.

- Vendors will be expected to identify their solution capability (y/n) and describe how their solution meets each question in detail. Rita will use the following rating scale to score:
 1. Poor
 2. Below Average
 3. Average
 4. Good
 5. Excellent

Section III – Project Plan

Provide a Project Plan based on RFP requirements.

- Include Milestones, High Level Tasks, Duration (Estimated start/end dates of Project and start/end dates of Milestones), Owner of Tasks (Vendor or Rita).
- When assembling the project plan, responding vendors should consider RITA's production freeze period. RITA typically does not deploy major system upgrades during the time frames from March 1st through April 30th and from September 15th through October 15th each calendar year.

Section IV – Cost/Pricing

Provide a pricing sheet as a separate Microsoft Excel document that contains the following information.

- A breakdown of the costs (separate line items) by hardware, software, hardware maintenance, software maintenance, licensing and professional services.
- For any professional services costs, please provide the number of man hours by skill set (if more than one) that are required to complete the upgrade and an explanation of why each skill is required for the project.
- List any costs outside of the required resource hours as separate line items with an explanation.
- All pricing provided must be valid for 60 days.
- Where applicable, indicate whether pricing is at or below Ohio State Term Schedule (STS) pricing.

Proposal Instructions

RITA requires a signed mutual Nondisclosure Agreement (MNDA) on file prior to providing the Vendor Response Questionnaire (Vendor Response Worksheet_Firewall Project.xls) and the Technical Addendum (Vendor Respose Worksheet_Firewall Project) explaining the Agency's Infrastructure.

All proposals must be submitted in the format and order outlined in the Proposal Responses section and submitted electronically to RFP-IS@ritaohio.com.

All proposals must be received by the Executive Director, Regional Income Tax Agency, **by 5:00 p.m. E.D.T., Wednesday November 27, 2024**. All Proposals shall be emailed to RFP-IS@ritaohio.com.

It is RITA's intention to enter into a contract as soon as practical after the proposals are evaluated and Board approval is received. The successful vendor shall enter into a contract with the Regional Income Tax Agency within ten (10) days of the notification of award or as soon as practical thereafter as determined by RITA. Implementation work is expected to begin no earlier than the first business day of the month following the execution of the contract.

Proposals will be evaluated on several factors including the degree of fit to the requirements and cost.

The Agency reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or any part of any proposal, or to waive informalities or defects in proposals, as the Board of Trustees of the Agency shall deem to be in the best interest of the Agency. By submitting a proposal, each respondent is ensuring that complete confidentiality of all Agency information will be maintained by all vendor personnel.

By submitting a proposal, each respondent is ensuring that the vendor is an Equal Opportunity Employer and that their employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of their race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, military status or sexual orientation. By signing a contract with RITA, the successful vendor guarantees that they comply, or will comply with the above provision and all other applicable state and federal laws regarding public contract work, and agrees to indemnify and hold the Regional Income Tax Agency harmless from any claims or damages incurred against or by the Regional Income Tax Agency resulting from any non-compliance by the successful vendor.

By submitting a proposal, each respondent is declaring that they are not in arrears to RITA for municipal income taxes or any other obligation to the Agency.

MUTUAL NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

This NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT is between the Regional Income Tax Agency (“RITA”) and the potential business partner or potential contractor of RITA. Each party acknowledges that it may not disclose any confidential information that it, its officers, employees, agents or contractors may obtain or may access as a result of transactions and/or dealings with the other party, as the parties explore the possibility of a future business/contractual relationship.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, marketing practices, proprietary software, security and network designs and installations, computer applications, networking designs and installations, intellectual property, research and development findings and application, confidential taxpayer information as defined by local, state and federal law, technology, agency and research strategies, trade secrets, inventions and know-how disclosed by either party to the other party and/or to any of its officers, employees, agents or contractors, directly or indirectly, in written form, orally, in other tangible form, and/or in electronic form or format, or generated by the either of the undersigned, its officers, employees, agents or contractors (collectively, “Confidential Information”). In this regard, neither party will disclose Confidential Information to any third party without the prior, written consent of the other party.

However, in no event is either party permitted to disclose for any unauthorized purpose taxpayer information, and each party acknowledges that it is subject to criminal and financial sanctions by doing so. Each party will separately take all precautions and take any action necessary to prevent confidential taxpayer information from being acquired, accessed, used, duplicated, transmitted, stored, or disclosed by its officers, employees, agents or contractors for any purpose other than a purpose authorized by law..

Each party shall keep separate and segregated from other work all documents, records notebooks, correspondence and the like, referencing Confidential Information. All right, title and interest in Confidential Information belongs to the party owning or first generating the Confidential Information, and all forms of Confidential Information, including copies thereof, whether created or prepared by either party or by another, shall be delivered to the party owning or first generating the Confidential Information.

Each party acknowledges that its execution of this Non-Disclosure Agreement does not constitute an agreement on the part of either party to enter into either a contractual arrangement or other relationship with the other party.

Date: _____

Date: _____

Regional Income Tax Agency

<Add Company Name>

By: _____

By: _____

Printed Name: Amy Arrighi

Printed Name: _____

Its: Executive Director

Its: _____

Title

Title