



REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (RFQ)

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) invites Service Providers to submit Quotations for requirements stipulated below:

DOCUMENT NUMBER:	SAQA RFQ 2024/25 - 20
RFQ ISSUE DATE:	28 June 2024
RFQ CLOSING DATE AND TIME:	04 July 2024 @ 11:00
RFQ VALIDITY PERIOD	90 DAYS (from RFQ closing date)
PERIOD	Twelve (12) months
DESCRIPTION	Provisioning of testing as a Service for twelve (12) months
RESPONSES TO THIS RFQ SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO:	RFQ@saqa.org.za
ENQUIRY	amamane@saqa.co.za 012 431 7551

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is a public entity listed in Schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

1.2. SAQA is mandated by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, 67 of 2008, to oversee the further development and implementation of the NQF, advance the objectives of the NQF and coordinate its three Sub-Frameworks.

2. PURPOSE

2.1. The purpose of this Request for Quotation (RFQ) is to appoint a service provider to provide testing as a Service for twelve (12) months.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

3.1. Overview.

SAQA has developed and operates a cloud-native application. The application is web-based with the main functionality of the application being that of validating qualifications in South Africa.

The application is developed using .NET technology based on the HTTPS protocol and interfaces with multiple Application Programming Interfaces (API) for the sharing and storing of data between various applications and systems.

The application is hosted in a Microsoft Azure infrastructure encompassing database, application, and web servers. Microsoft SQL is the database technology of choice, and the application is developed following a DevOps methodology to increase efficiency, speed, and security. To maintain the highest standards of quality, it is necessary for a Quality Assurance (QA) practice with formal quality procedures to be established and maintained.

3.2. SAQA's Requirements

SAQA understands the need for a formal QA practice and seeks to implement a comprehensive testing service for its solution. Besides the functional aspect, SAQA has also identified non-functional testing as a necessity, both that of performance and security and has already engaged the services of a security testing firm.

This leaves the functional and performance testing competency left to be established to ensure that the application developed by SAQA is of the highest quality, adhering to the functional requirements across all features and that can be categorized as stable and highly responsive. This would entail the ongoing examination of input mechanisms, data processing, user interactions, and system responses across various scenarios and conditions before the implementation of a new release into a production environment ensuring the ongoing accurate and correct functioning of the application.

SAQA would like to employ regression testing and as it is a crucial milestone to be achieved before each release into production ensuring that the application has not been negatively impaired by the planned changes. SAQA also wants the regression testing to be automated to decrease the time and effort required in the execution of the envisaged regression testing.

3.3. Below are the other types of testing required.

3.3.1. Automation Testing as a Service (ATaaS)

Align the test automation service under the proposed testing center of excellence (TCOE), and implement three types of automation testing covering new functionality and regression testing;

- **Application automation** - This is the automation that will be applied to test all applications.
- **Regression testing** - This is the automation that will be applied to test all existing functionality that is required to be executed repeatedly to increase testing coverage and increase speed.
- **API automation** - This is the integration layer to automate APIs including microservices.

3.3.2. Automation Testing as a Service (ATaaS)

Incorporate performance testing as a service in the TCoE. The performance testing must incorporate performance monitoring and optimization with the mature processes and implementations that accompany these services.

- **Load Testing-** Simulate realistic user loads to evaluate the system's performance under expected and peak conditions, ensuring optimal responsiveness.
- **Stress Testing-** Subject the systems to extreme conditions, pushing their limits to identify potential bottlenecks and weaknesses in performance.
- **Spike Testing-** Test sudden spikes in user activity to assess the system's ability to handle abrupt increases in load.

- **Isolation Testing** - Where applicable, conduct isolation testing to pinpoint and address specific components or functionalities impacting performance.
- **Stability or Soak Testing** - Perform prolonged testing under normal load conditions to assess system stability and identify any gradual degradation in performance.
- **Throughput Testing** - Implement a testing strategy that will measure the system's capacity to handle a specific volume of transactions within defined time frames, ensuring optimal throughput.
- **Response Time, Integrity, Endurance** - Meticulously evaluate response times, data integrity, and system endurance to guarantee a seamless and reliable user experience.
- **Robustness, Reliability, and Application Size**
Implement a testing process that will assess the system's robustness, overall reliability, and ability to scale with consideration for the application size, providing valuable insights for optimization.

3.4. Resources

SAQA requires staff augmentation in the allocation of a Test Lead on a full-time basis to meet the bulk of the requirement as outlined above along with the addition of a technical test analyst on an ad hoc basis i.e. approximately a week before the upcoming release, to execute the performance test pack.

The test lead shall form part of the DevOps team and will be responsible for the testing effort as a whole (inclusive of managing and reporting on the performance testing envisaged). The technical test analyst will only be involved initially in creating the performance test cases, setting up data management for performance test cases and the performance test scenario, and then again, every month before a release to execute the performance test pack to ensure that no performance degradation has affected the application.

This shall result in the proactive detection, identification, and reporting of both functional and performance related issues that could negatively impact the application user experience, whilst also providing valuable insights into the system such as capacity thresholds, level of quality and reliability, and of course, responsiveness of the application.

3.4.1. TEST AUTOMATION ENGINEER

The Test Analyst assigned to the DevOps team will be responsible for the creation and execution of the required testing against a detailed test plan. It is envisaged however that a master test plan shall be drafted and approved by all stakeholders which will govern each release, with the specifics i.e. the scope and any change to strategy, methodology, tool usage, or any other detail for the release in question, documented and filed as the current release test plan specifics i.e. where there is no mention in the release test plan, the master test plan shall govern the process/situation.

3.4.2. SENIOR PERFORMANCE TESTING ENGINEER

Senior Performance Engineer (specializing in Performance testing). This resource shall require a few weeks initially to gain a sufficient understanding of the application, which user journeys are to be included i.e. developed as performance test cases, their respective data requirements and to develop the test data management thereof, how the application is utilized and what the expected performance metrics should be to build a performance testing scenario that resembles how the application is utilized in a production setting.

4. DURATION OF CONTRACT

SAQA will enter a twelve (12) months contract (SLA/PO) with the recommended service provider.

5. PRICING TEMPLATE

	DESCRIPTION	Total Hours	Rate	Total Cost (12 months)
1.	Test Automation Engineer	1920		
2.	Snr Test Performance Engineer	340		
	Total including VAT			

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The proposal will be evaluated in two (2) stages:

6.1. Stage 1: Mandatory- Admin requirements

6.1.1. Bidders must submit a minimum of three (3) formal reference letters from clients where the bidder has previously provided testing service.

The reference letters should:

- Be on the client's letterhead.
- Be signed and dated.
- Indicate the work done.
- Indicate the year the work was done, (please note that the reference letters should be within 5 years of the RFQ closing date; and
- Show the client's contact details including contact name and telephone or email address.

6.1.2. Bidders must submit proof of software or tools to be utilised on the project.

6.1.3. Bidders must submit CVs and Qualification of the resources to be assigned to the project.

6.2. Stage 2: Price and Preference Points Evaluation

Bidders will be evaluated in terms of the 80/20 system prescribed by SAQA in line with PPR 2022 as follows:

- i. 80 Points for pricing
- ii. 15 Preference points for the company that has at least 51% black ownership
- iii. 5 Preference Points for the company that has at least 30% black woman ownership.

NB: Bidders must submit the certified B-BBEE Certificates copies/Sworn Affidavits indicating ownership percentage to claim the preference points.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

7. RFQ SPECIAL CONDITIONS

- 7.1. Bidders should submit the recent National Treasury (CSD) Central Supplier Database's report.
- 7.2. Bidders are required to submit an original or certified copy of the B-BBEE certificate or Sworn Affidavit as per the B-BBEE Act. The SANAS Logo should be visible on the B-BBEE Certificate.
- 7.3. Bidders must complete, sign, and submit the attached SBD 4 and SBD 6.1 forms.
- 7.4. The proposal and required documents must be submitted using the PDF format only, through email to rfq@saqa.co.za.
- 7.5. In Instances, where brand names are mentioned, SAQA will accept equivalent items that have similar specifications.
- 7.6. The National Treasury's General Conditions of Contract (GCC) will apply and is enforceable on this RFQ.
- 7.7. The RFQ will be evaluated in terms of the 80/20 system prescribed by the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (PPPFA).

8. PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

- 8.1. In this clause, the words "personal information", "processing" and "responsible party" have the meanings ascribed to them in the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No.4 of 2013).
- 8.2. SAQA will comply with the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No.4 of 2013, (POPIA) by lawfully processing personal information submitted by bidders in accordance with the conditions of lawful processing as set out in POPIA.
- 8.3. All bidders must comply with their obligations as set out in POPIA for which they are a Responsible Party before sharing any information with SAQA.
- 8.4. SAQA will not be held liable for any non-compliance with the provisions of POPIA or unlawful processing or sharing of information by a bidder.

BIDDER'S DISCLOSURE

1. PURPOSE OF THE FORM

Any person (natural or juristic) may make an offer or offers in terms of this invitation to bid. In line with the principles of transparency, accountability, impartiality, and ethics as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and further expressed in various pieces of legislation, it is required for the bidder to make this declaration in respect of the details required hereunder.

Where a person/s are listed in the Register for Tender Defaulters and / or the List of Restricted Suppliers, that person will automatically be disqualified from the bid process.

2. Bidder's declaration

- 2.1 Is the bidder, or any of its directors / trustees / shareholders / members / partners or any person having a controlling interest¹ in the enterprise, employed by the state? **YES/NO**

- 2.1.1 If so, furnish particulars of the names, individual identity numbers, and, if applicable, state employee numbers of sole proprietor/ directors / trustees / shareholders / members/ partners or any person having a controlling interest in the enterprise, in table below.

Full Name	Identity Number	Name of State institution

- 2.2 Do you, or any person connected with the bidder, have a relationship

¹ the power, by one person or a group of persons holding the majority of the equity of an enterprise, alternatively, the person/s having the deciding vote or power to influence or to direct the course and decisions of the enterprise.

with any person who is employed by the procuring institution? **YES/NO**

2.2.1 If so, furnish particulars:

.....

2.3 Does the bidder or any of its directors / trustees / shareholders / members / partners or any person having a controlling interest in the enterprise have any interest in any other related enterprise whether or not they are bidding for this contract? **YES/NO**

2.3.1 If so, furnish particulars:

.....

3 DECLARATION

I, _____ the _____ undersigned,
 (name)..... in
 submitting the accompanying bid, do hereby make the following
 statements that I certify to be true and complete in every respect:

- 3.1 I have read and I understand the contents of this disclosure.
- 3.2 I understand that the accompanying bid will be disqualified if this disclosure is found not to be true and complete in every respect.
- 3.3 The bidder has arrived at the accompanying bid independently from, and without consultation, communication, agreement or arrangement with any competitor. However, communication between partners in a joint venture or consortium² will not be construed as collusive bidding.
- 3.4 In addition, there have been no consultations, communications, agreements or arrangements with any competitor regarding the quality, quantity, specifications, prices, including methods, factors or formulas used to calculate prices, market allocation, the intention or decision to submit or not to submit the bid, bidding with the intention not to win the bid and conditions or delivery particulars of the products or services to which this bid invitation relates.
- 3.4 The terms of the accompanying bid have not been, and will not be, disclosed by the bidder, directly or indirectly, to any competitor, prior to the date and time of the official bid opening or of the awarding of the contract.
- 3.5 There have been no consultations, communications, agreements or arrangements made by the bidder with any official of the procuring

² Joint venture or Consortium means an association of persons for the purpose of combining their expertise, property, capital, efforts, skill and knowledge in an activity for the execution of a contract.

institution in relation to this procurement process prior to and during the bidding process except to provide clarification on the bid submitted where so required by the institution; and the bidder was not involved in the drafting of the specifications or terms of reference for this bid.

- 3.6 I am aware that, in addition and without prejudice to any other remedy provided to combat any restrictive practices related to bids and contracts, bids that are suspicious will be reported to the Competition Commission for investigation and possible imposition of administrative penalties in terms of section 59 of the Competition Act No 89 of 1998 and or may be reported to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for criminal investigation and or may be restricted from conducting business with the public sector for a period not exceeding ten (10) years in terms of the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act No 12 of 2004 or any other applicable legislation.

I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION FURNISHED IN PARAGRAPHS 1, 2 and 3 ABOVE IS CORRECT.

I ACCEPT THAT THE STATE MAY REJECT THE BID OR ACT AGAINST ME IN TERMS OF PARAGRAPH 6 OF PFMA SCM INSTRUCTION 03 OF 2021/22 ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING ABUSE IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SHOULD THIS DECLARATION PROVE TO BE FALSE.

.....
Signature Date

.....
Position Name of bidder

PREFERENCE POINTS CLAIM FORM IN TERMS OF THE PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS 2022

This preference form must form part of all tenders invited. It contains general information and serves as a claim form for preference points for specific goals.

NB: BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM, TENDERERS MUST STUDY THE GENERAL CONDITIONS, DEFINITIONS AND DIRECTIVES APPLICABLE IN RESPECT OF THE TENDER AND PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, 2022

GENERAL CONDITIONS

1.1 The following preference point systems are applicable to invitations to tender:

- the 80/20 system for requirements with a Rand value of up to R50 000 000 (all applicable taxes included); and
- the 90/10 system for requirements with a Rand value above R50 000 000 (all applicable taxes included).

To be completed by the organ of state

(Delete whichever is not applicable for this tender).

- a) The applicable preference point system for this tender is the 90/10 preference point system.
- b) The applicable preference point system for this tender is the 80/20 preference point system.
- c) Either the 90/10 or 80/20 preference point system will be applicable in this tender. The lowest/ highest acceptable tender will be used to determine the accurate system once tenders are received.

1.3 Points for this tender (even in the case of a tender for income-generating contracts) shall be awarded for:

- (a) Price; and
- (b) Specific Goals.

1.4 To be completed by the organ of state:

The maximum points for this tender are allocated as follows:

	POINTS
PRICE	80
SPECIFIC GOALS	20
Total points for Price and SPECIFIC GOALS	100

1.6 The organ of state reserves the right to require of a tenderer, either before a tender is adjudicated or at any time subsequently, to substantiate any claim in regard to preferences, in any manner required by the organ of state.

A maximum of 80 or 90 points is allocated for price on the following basis:

$$Ps = 80 \left(1 + \frac{Pt - P_{max}}{P_{max}} \right) \text{ or } Ps = 90 \left(1 + \frac{Pt - P_{max}}{P_{max}} \right)$$

Where

Ps = Points scored for price of tender under consideration

Pt = Price of tender under consideration Pmax = Price of highest acceptable tender

POINTS AWARDED FOR SPECIFIC GOALS

- 4.1. In terms of Regulation 4(2); 5(2); 6(2) and 7(2) of the Preferential Procurement Regulations, preference points must be awarded for specific goals stated in the tender. For the purposes of this tender the tenderer will be allocated points based on the goals stated in table 1 below as may be supported by proof/ documentation stated in the conditions of this tender:
- 4.2. In cases where organs of state intend to use Regulation 3(2) of the Regulations, which states that, if it is unclear whether the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point system applies, an organ of state must, in the tender documents, stipulate in the case of—
- (a) an invitation for tender for income-generating contracts, that either the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point system will apply and that the highest acceptable tender will be used to determine the applicable preference point system: or
 - (b) any other invitation for tender, that either the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point system will apply and that the lowest acceptable tender will be used to determine the applicable preference point system, then the organ of state must indicate the points allocated for specific goals for both the 90/10 and 80/20 preference point system.

Table 1: Specific goals for the tender and points claimed are indicated per the table below.

(Note to organs of state: Where either the 90/10 or 80/20 preference point system is applicable, corresponding points must also be indicated as such.)

Note to tenderers: The tenderer must indicate how they claim points for each preference point system.)

The specific goals allocated points in terms of this tender	Number of points allocated (90/10 system) (To be completed by the organ of state)	Number of points allocated (80/20 system) (To be completed by the organ of state)	Number of points claimed (90/10 system) (To be completed by the tenderer)	Number of points claimed (80/20 system) (To be completed by the tenderer)
At least 51% black ownership		15		
30% black woman ownership.		5		

DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO COMPANY/FIRM

4.3. Name of company/firm.....

4.4. Company registration number:

4.5. TYPE OF COMPANY/ FIRM

☐ Partnership/Joint Venture / Consortium

☐ One-person business/sole propriety

☐ Close corporation

☐ Public Company

☐ Personal Liability Company

☐ (Pty) Limited

☐ Non-Profit Company

☐ State Owned Company

[TICK APPLICABLE BOX]

4.6. I, the undersigned, who is duly authorised to do so on behalf of the company/firm, certify that the points claimed, based on the specific goals as advised in the tender, qualifies the company/firm for the preference(s) shown and I acknowledge that: i) The information furnished is true and correct; ii) The preference points claimed are in accordance with the General Conditions as indicated in paragraph 1 of this form;

iii) In the event of a contract being awarded as a result of points claimed as shown in paragraphs 1.4 and 4.2, the contractor may be required to furnish documentary proof to the satisfaction of the organ of state that the claims are correct.

iv) If the specific goals have been claimed or obtained on a fraudulent basis or any of the conditions of contract have not been fulfilled, the organ of state may, in addition to any other remedy it may have –

(a) disqualify the person from the tendering process.

(b) recover costs, losses or damages it has incurred or suffered as a result of that person's conduct.

(c) cancel the contract and claim any damages which it has suffered as a result of having to make less favourable arrangements due to such cancellation.

(d) recommend that the tenderer or contractor, its shareholders and directors, or only the shareholders and directors who acted on a fraudulent basis, be restricted from obtaining business from any organ of state for a period not exceeding 10 years, after the *audi alteram partem* (hear the other side) rule has been applied; and

(e) forward the matter for criminal prosecution, if deemed necessary.

.....
SIGNATURE(S) OF TENDERER(S)

SURNAME AND NAME:

DATE:

ADDRESS:

