REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (RFQ)

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

DOCUMENT NUMBER:	**RFQ2024/25-54**
RFQ ISSUE DATE:	**03 March 2025**
RFQ CLOSING DATE AND TIME:	**07 March 2025 @ 11h00**
RFQ VALIDITY PERIOD:	**90 Days (from the RFQ closing date)**
DESCRIPTION	**Provision of Maintenance and Support of the VMWare environment, Data Backup Management, and Disaster Recovery for the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for 12 months.**
RESPONSES TO THIS RFQ SHOULD BE EMAILED TO:	rfq@saqa.org.za
ENQUIRIES	ictrfq.enquiries@saqa.org.za 012 431 5158

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is a juristic person under the National Qualifications Framework Act, 67 of 2008 (NQF Act) and a schedule 3(A) national public entity under the Public Finance Management Act, 1 of 1999.

1.2. SAQA performs its statutory functions subject to the NQF Act and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and ensuring the achievement of its objectives.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this Request for Quotation (RFQ) is to appoint a service provider for a 12-month contract to maintain and support SAQA's VMWare environment, manage data backups, and provide full disaster recovery services.

3. SAQA'S CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

3.1 SAQA is currently hosting its Data Centre at an offsite facility located in Gauteng.
3.2 SAQA is operating IBM (x and p series) and HPE ProLiant DL360 Gen10 Plus servers, which are running a variety of operating systems, including AIX, RedHat, CentOS, and Windows, with multiple versions installed.
3.3 SAQA is utilising both HPE Nimble Storage and the VNX 5400 Storage Area Network (SAN), with HPE Nimble Storage as the primary storage solution.
3.4 SAQA uses Azure Cloud for its core operations and has set up disaster recovery in Azure for these services.
3.5 SAQA uses IBM Spectrum Protect for backup management of one AIX machine and Veeam Suite for VMware backup management.
3.6 SAQA uses the IBM LTO Tape Libraries for both IBM Spectrum Protect (AIX) and Veeam Suite (VMWare).
3.7 The VNX5400 is connected to the AIX.

N.B. SAQA is responsible for the software licenses.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED

The appointed service provider will be responsible for the maintenance and support of SAQA's IT infrastructure, including:

4.1 Server Management and Support

4.1.1 Managing and maintaining services running on the following operating systems:

- AIX
- Microsoft Windows
- Linux

4.2 VMware and AIX Replication

4.2.1 Implementing and maintaining a fully replicated solution for services running on:

- VMware
- AIX

4.2.2 The replication must be hosted offsite to ensure redundancy and high availability.

4.3 Backup Management and Disaster Recovery

4.3.1 Managing and supporting Azure Backup Management within SAQA.
4.3.2 Providing a disaster recovery solution to ensure business continuity in case of system failures.

4.4 Backup and Virtualization Technologies

The service provider must manage and maintain the following technologies:

4.4.1 IBM Spectrum Protect or an equivalent backup solution.
4.4.2 VMware Environment, including:
- vCenter
- vSphere

4.4.3 Veeam VUL for backup and replication.
4.4.4 IBM Tape Libraries, ensuring proper service management and operational upkeep.

4.5 Maintenance and Support of the Storage Area Network

- The VNX 5400 SAN, which is currently connected to the AIX system, will be decommissioned. The service provider will be responsible for connecting the AIX system to the newer HPE storage solution to ensure a seamless transition and continued system performance.

SERVICES REQUIRED FROM THE SERVICE PROVIDER

SERVICE #1: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND SOFTWARE MAINTENANCE & SUPPORT

The service provider will be responsible for maintaining and supporting server operating systems, including AIX, Microsoft Windows, and Linux. The required services include:

- Installing, upgrading, and maintaining server operating systems in line with industry standards.
- Applying proactive patches and upgrades (versions and technology levels) as recommended by the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM).
- Performing system installation, programming, maintenance, and utility support.
- Managing equipment configuration, integration, and interconnectivity between servers.
- Resolving server-related incidents and problems within agreed service levels.
- Evaluating, developing, implementing, integrating, and maintaining tools and processes for service provision.
- Conducting system analysis and optimizing resource usage.
- Implementing preventative and proactive system maintenance.

SERVICE #2: IBM SPECTRUM PROTECT SUPPORT

The service provider will be responsible for the installation, maintenance, and management of IBM Spectrum Protect. The required services include:

- Installing and maintaining IBM Spectrum Protect software in line with industry standards.
- Applying proactive patches and upgrades (versions and technology levels) as recommended by OEM.
- Performing maintenance and utility support for IBM Spectrum Protect.
- Resolving IBM Spectrum Protect-related incidents and problems within agreed service levels.
- Implementing and managing tools and processes to ensure service efficiency.
- Performing IT system backups, data recovery tests, and server restores as per SAQA's data backup plan.
- Monitoring performance metrics and addressing any issues proactively.
- Providing daily reports on backup status, including root cause analysis and resolution of failures.
- Implementing preventative and proactive maintenance strategies.
- Identifying opportunities for hardware, software, and process enhancements to improve performance.
- Providing technical support and liaising with SAQA's ICT unit as required.
- Submitting monthly written reports on maintenance efforts and resource usage trends.

SERVICE #3: VEEAM SUPPORT

The service provider will be responsible for the installation, maintenance, and support of VEEAM software. The required services include:

- Installing and maintaining VEEAM software in accordance with industry standards.
- Applying proactive patches and upgrades (versions and technology levels) as recommended by OEM.
- Performing maintenance and utility support for VEEAM.
- Managing equipment configuration, integration, and interconnectivity between servers.
- Resolving VEEAM-related incidents and problems within agreed service levels.
- Conducting quarterly disaster recovery testing at the offsite location.
- Assisting the ICT unit with data and server recovery/restoration as required.
- Monitoring performance metrics and proactively addressing issues.
- Providing daily reports on backup status, root cause analysis, and failure resolutions.
- Implementing preventative and proactive system maintenance.
- Conducting security analysis and enforcing industry-standard best practices.
- Providing recommendations for system configuration and connectivity improvements.
- Offering technical advice and guidance on potential service improvements.
- Submitting monthly written reports on maintenance status and service performance.

SERVICE #4: AZURE DISASTER RECOVERY & FAILOVER

The service provider will be responsible for configuring, maintaining, and managing disaster recovery and failover solutions in Microsoft Azure. The required services include:

- Configuring, applying, and maintaining disaster recovery and failover solutions.
- Ensuring timely resolution of incidents related to Azure disaster recovery and failover processes.
- Evaluating, developing, implementing, integrating, and maintaining appropriate tools and processes for effective disaster recovery management.
- Conducting fail over tests quarterly.

SERVICE #5: VMWARE SUPPORT

The service provider will be responsible for managing, maintaining, and supporting the VMware environment. The required services include:

- Configuring and applying VMware patches and upgrades (versions and technology levels) as recommended by OEM.
- Resolving VMware-related server incidents and problems within agreed service levels.
- Implementing and managing tools and processes to ensure efficient VMware service provision.
- Monitoring performance metrics and addressing any related issues proactively.
- Monitoring ESXi infrastructure, network availability, and storage performance.
- Providing knowledge transfer and skills development for SAQA staff.
- Managing system uptime and mitigating downtime due to power failures.
- Conducting security analysis and enforcing industry-standard best practices.
- Providing technical support and liaising with SAQA's ICT unit as required.
- Submitting trend analysis reports on resource usage and future capacity planning.
- Assisting with the creation and modification of virtual servers as needed.

SERVICE #6 (HARDWARE MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT)

- Proactively upgrade all firmware and microcode of supported servers as required and/or recommended by OEM and in accordance with acceptable standards.
- Proactively upgrade all the operating systems as required and in accordance with acceptable standards.
- Provide preventative maintenance and support and ensure that any incidents and problems are resolved within defined Service Levels.

SERVICE #7 MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT OF THE SAN

The service provider will be responsible for the maintenance and support of Storage Area Network. The required services include:

Proactive Monitoring and Performance Optimisation

- Continuous monitoring of SAN components, including storage arrays, switches, and host connections, to detect and resolve issues before they impact operations.
- Capacity planning to prevent storage shortages and maintain efficient utilization of resources.

Hardware Lifecycle Management

- Planning for hardware refresh cycles to replace aging equipment before it impacts performance.
- Proper decommissioning and data sanitization of retired SAN components

Backup and Disaster Recovery Integration

- Ensuring seamless integration with backup solutions, including tape libraries and cloud-based storage.
- Implementation of redundancy measures to safeguard against data loss.
- Regular validation of backup processes to confirm data integrity and recoverability.

SERVICE LEVELS AND APPLICABLE PENALTIES

Event	Definition	Requirements	Target	Penalties
Priority Level 1	Complete system failure affecting majority or all users	Mean time to response < 2 hours	100% adherence to timelines.	20% of the monthly invoice.
		Mean time to repair <4 hours	100% adherence to timelines.	
Priority Level 2	Partial system failure affecting specific users or system is functional but in a degraded state	Mean time to response < 2 hours	100% adherence to timelines.	15% of the monthly invoice.
		Mean time to repair < 8 hours	100% adherence to timelines.	
Priority Level 3	Maintenance or approved enhancements	Mean time to response < 4 hours	100% adherence to timelines.	15% of the monthly invoice.
		Mean time to repair Scheduled	100% adherence to timelines.	

PRICING SCHEDULE

COST BREAKDOWN		
DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE	**DURATION**	**MONTHLY COST**
Provision of Maintenance and Support of the VMWare environment, Data backup management, and Disaster Recovery for the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for 12 months.	12 months	
TOTAL ANNUAL COST		
VAT		
TOTAL INCLUDING VAT		

5 EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

Stage 1: Admin requirements

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.

RFQ SPECIAL CONDITIONS

SPECIAL CONDITIONS
a) Bidders must submit the recent National Treasury (CSD) Central Supplier Database's report. b) 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. c) Bidders must complete, sign, and submit the attached SBD 4 and SBD 6.1 forms. d) The proposal and required documents must be submitted using the PDF format only, through email to rfq@saqa.co.za e) In Instances, where brand names are mentioned, SAQA will accept equivalent items that have similar specifications. f) The National Treasury's General Conditions of Contract (GCC) will apply and is enforceable on this RFQ. g) The RFQ will be evaluated in terms of the 80/20 system prescribed by the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (PPPFA).

6 PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

1.1 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).

1.2 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.

1.3 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.

1.4 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**

1.5 Failure on the part of a tenderer to submit proof or documentation required in terms of this tender to claim points for specific goals with the tender, will be interpreted to mean that preference points for specific goals are not claimed.

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.

DEFINITIONS

(a) **"tender"** means a written offer in the form determined by an organ of state in response to an invitation to provide goods or services through price quotations, competitive tendering process or any other method envisaged in legislation;

(b) **"price"** means an amount of money tendered for goods or services, and includes all applicable taxes less all unconditional discounts;

(c) **"rand value"** means the total estimated value of a contract in Rand, calculated at the time of bid invitation, and includes all applicable taxes;

(d) **"tender for income-generating contracts"** means a written offer in the form determined by an organ of state in response to an invitation for the origination of income-generating contracts through any method envisaged in legislation that will result in a legal agreement between the organ of state and a third party that produces revenue for the organ of state, and includes, but is not limited to, leasing and disposal of assets and concession contracts, excluding direct sales and disposal of assets through public auctions; and

(e) **"the Act"** means the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, 2000 (Act No. 5 of 2000).

FORMULAE FOR PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES

3.1. **POINTS AWARDED FOR PRICE**

3.1.1 **THE 80/20 OR 90/10 PREFERENCE POINT SYSTEMS**

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

80/20 **or** **90/10**

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

Where

Ps = Points scored for price of tender under consideration

Pt = Price of tender under consideration

Pmin = Price of lowest acceptable tender

3.2. **FORMULAE FOR DISPOSAL OR LEASING OF STATE ASSETS AND INCOME GENERATING PROCUREMENT**

3.2.1. **POINTS AWARDED FOR PRICE**

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

80/20 **or** **90/10**

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

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: ……………………………………………………….

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