



# RFP for Technical, Product, and Research Services

December 13, 2024

Open UI Initiative

National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

[www.naswa.org/open-ui-initiative](http://www.naswa.org/open-ui-initiative)

## Introduction and Purpose

The following request for proposals is intended to support to the Open UI Initiative (the “Initiative”). The Initiative is seeking qualified vendors who can provide a small, cross-functional team or teams that will work in parallel with Initiative staff to

- Define and document the functionalities of an Unemployment Insurance system from a product perspective
- Provide technical support to refining a technical framework that includes functional modules and a flexible abstraction layer.
- Add, maintain, and update documentation in a public repository
- Support one or more states in a pilot activity related to the Open UI Initiative

Implementation of the full Open UI framework and modules in a state is not in scope for the purpose of this solicitation. Future implementations of the Open UI framework and modules will be at the discretion of a state.

## Background

The Open UI Initiative (Open UI) is currently funded by a grant from the US Department of Labor for a term of three years that ends September 30, 2026. The Initiative is currently housed within the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and operates alongside the Unemployment Insurance Information Technology Support Center (UI ITSC) at NASWA. Open UI was created to help address the well documented challenges and risks in state Unemployment Insurance systems through the creation of a technical framework and functional definitions of a state UI system that is modular and therefore more adaptable, scalable, and provides a better user experience to claimants, employers, and state agency staff. The Open UI Initiative seeks to create not only technical definitions and documentation but also establish and grow a community of states, vendors, and other stakeholders who can contribute, comment, and iterate modular approaches and implementations.

## Statement of Objectives

1. Define and iterate on prioritized modules that comprise an Unemployment Insurance system
2. Support the publication of materials to the future Open UI Initiative Public Repository
3. Identify and create plans for conducting one or more pilot projects with a state UI program using the work produced by the Open UI Initiative
4. Support user research, journey mapping, service blueprinting, or similar techniques to inform the Initiative.

## Contract Structure and Place of Performance

### Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) - (Multiple Awards)

The Initiative anticipates making multiple Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) awards to the offerors that represent the best value to the Initiative. The Initiative will then request Task

Order Responses from the offerors awarded these IDIQ contracts to support specific efforts. The Initiative will award a Task Order (TO) that shall include a Statement of Work, estimated labor hours and pricing, total TO funding authorized, and an estimated timeline for completion of deliverables, as appropriate; as well as any additional information needed. Each TO will be awarded using Time and Materials (T&M) pricing with a Not to Exceed (NTE) value. The total estimated budget is \$2,000,000 but additional funding may be authorized in the future that will change this number.

The Initiative anticipates multiple awards in the base period, dependent on NASWA staff capacity and available funding, as well as possible awards in each option year. The base period for this effort is one year from contract signing with the option for six-month extensions if funding is available to do so.

If you intend to respond and are interested in receiving additional information on NASWA's standard contractual Terms and Conditions, please submit a request to [openui@naswa.org](mailto:openui@naswa.org).

The selected vendors may choose the location(s) from which to complete the required work. Core working hours are 11am-5pm ET. All work must be conducted within the Continental United States (CONUS). All materials produced for the Initiative shall be saved and maintained in NASWA owned and managed tools including but not limited to Microsoft SharePoint.

Data Rights and Ownership of Deliverables – NASWA intends that all software and documentation delivered by the Contractor will be owned by the Initiative and potentially committed to the public domain at a future date. This includes, but is not limited to, data, documents, graphics, code, plans, reports, schedules, schemas, metadata, architecture designs, and the like; all new open source software created by the Contractor and forks or branches of current open source software where the Contractor has made a modification; and all new tooling, scripting configuration management, infrastructure as code, or any other final changes or edits to successfully deploy or operate software.

To the extent that the Contractor seeks to incorporate any software or documentation that was not first produced in the performance of this task order, NASWA encourages the Contractor to incorporate either documentation or software that is in the public domain, or free and open source software that qualifies under the Open Source Definition promulgated by the Open Source Initiative. In any event, the Contractor must promptly disclose to NASWA in writing, and list in the documentation, any software incorporated in the deliverables that is subject to a license.

If deliverables created by the Contractor incorporate software that is subject to an open-source license that provides implementation guidance, then the Contractor must ensure compliance with that guidance. If software delivered by the Contractor incorporates software that is subject to an open-source license that does not provide implementation guidance, then the Contractor must attach or include the terms of the license within the work itself, such as in code comments at the beginning of a file, or in a license file within a software repository.

In addition, the Contractor must obtain written permission from NASWA before incorporating any software that is subject to a license that does not qualify under the Open-Source Definition promulgated by the Open Source Initiative. If NASWA grants such written permission, then the Contractor’s rights to use that software must be promptly assigned to NASWA.

## Estimated Timeline

Project Activity	Timeline
RFP Webinar*	December 20, 2024
Clarification Questions Due	January 10, 2025
Questions and Responses Posted	January 24, 2025
Proposals Due	February 14, 2025
Offeror Presentations**	Week of March 3, 2025
Best and Final Offer Pricing (optional)	March 17, 2025
Award (anticipated)	March 21, 2025
Project Kickoff (anticipated)	March 31, 2025

\* The Webinar is designed to afford the opportunity for offerors to formulate additional questions and provide their input/comments. Webinar registration, a PDF copy of this RFP, and RFP questions and answers will be posted at <https://www.naswa.org/open-ui-initiative>

Register for the webinar here:

[https://naswa.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_1zAqvVcuRNmJvW2Vxj\\_iEQ](https://naswa.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1zAqvVcuRNmJvW2Vxj_iEQ)

\*\* Offeror presentations will be conducted remotely via Zoom with selected bidders determined to be within the competitive range for awards and may not include all bidders.

The Initiative reserves the right to invite offerors to participate in detailed discussions, clarifications to responses, and presentations/demonstrations after the proposal due date.

The Initiative also offers the opportunity to unsuccessful bidders to participate in a de-brief meeting to review an unsuccessful submission and provide the bidder with the opportunity to ask questions. Please note that de-brief meetings will be limited to 30-minute slots during the week of April 7, 2025. If you are unsuccessful and are unable to attend a debrief that week, please reach out to [openui@naswa.org](mailto:openui@naswa.org).

## Proposal Submission Elements

Respondents are requested to address each of the items noted below.

### 1) Company Overview

Provide a brief description of your company, services, business size (revenue, employees, customers), and 1-2 points of contact, including name, address, phone numbers, and email addresses.

*Limit response to 1 page.*

## 2) Project Summary Citations

Include up to three (3) examples of previous work that your organization has conducted focused on the definition of a complex policy and technology problem. Examples do not have to be specific to Unemployment Insurance but should be from the public sector. For each project summary citation, please include the following: project summary, project size/scope, project budget, agency/organization, agency/organization point of contact, and email address. Cited organizations may be contacted as references for the purposes of this RFP.

*Limit response to 3 pages for each citation, at least 1 reference requested, no more than 3 will be considered.*

## 3) Module Definition Exercise

For Open UI, we are attempting to define the modules that when connected through a technical framework, comprise an Unemployment Insurance system. An example of the types of information we seek to capture includes but is not limited to:

- Defining the scope of the module – what functions are in or out of scope?
- Assessing and describing technical feasibility
- Understanding the connection points with other functionality
- Research approach to understanding the problem

**Please describe your process or methodology for breaking down a complex policy and technology problem.**

*Limit response to no more than 5 pages.*

## 4) Resumes

Please provide sample resumes (two pages maximum per resume) for the following roles:

- Technical Lead or Technical Architect
- Product Manager
- Researcher or Content Strategist
- Engagement/Delivery Manager

Please note these roles are not considered key personnel.

*Total page limit is 8 pages (4 roles and two pages per role)*

## 5) Pricing

Complete Attachment 1- Pricing Summary information. Add rows as needed to capture the different types of roles and associated rates.

For indirect costs, please include any expenses beyond staff time that are proposed for successful completion of the work described. While travel is not explicitly required, it may be requested by the Initiative in support of the goals and objectives. Any travel requested by the Initiative will be reimbursed according to GSA per diem rates.

**6) Minority and Women-Owned Business (MWBEs)**

If your organization is an MWBE, or is partnering with an MWBE, please include documentation certification your/their status as such to receive up to five (5) bonus points.

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals that meet the submission requirements will be evaluated as follows:

Company Experience	10 points maximum	
Relevant Experience	30 points maximum	
Sample problem assessment aka Sample Task	30 points maximum	
Personnel	15 points maximum	
Pricing	10 points maximum	
MWBE	5 points	

## Proposal Description and Process

Participation in this RFP process is voluntary. All costs incurred in responding to, or in participating in this RFP, will be the responsibility of the vendors, or other third-party organizations participating in the RFP, and not that of the Initiative.

## Confidentiality

Any document submitted in response to this RFP that contains confidential information must include a “Confidential” watermark on the appropriate pages. The confidential information must

be clearly identifiable to the reader as confidential. All other information will not be treated as confidential. Note: All confidential information is for the Initiative's use in evaluating proposals in response to this RFP.

## Instructions and Response Guidelines

Responses to this RFP shall adhere to the page limits specified in the Proposal Structure above and must be in narrative form and provide details on contractor capabilities. Responses must be viewable with Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat and printable on 8.5" x 11" paper, must use 12-point font, the margins of each page should be at least ½ inch, and each page should contain a page number in the footer.

Submit responses electronically to [openui@naswa.org](mailto:openui@naswa.org). Responses must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on February 14, 2025. The Initiative will confirm the receipt of each submission. If you do not hear from us confirming receipt, please reach out. Responses will be sent to the email address of the sender, along with any additional email addresses included in the submittal.

Telephone calls regarding this RFP will not be accepted. Questions may be submitted by email up to 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, January 10, 2025. Questions received after this time will be answered at the discretion of the Initiative. The Initiative will post questions and answers (with vendor details removed) to the [RFP website](#).



## ATTACHMENT 1: LABOR CATEGORIES AND RATES

**Estimated Hours and Rate Table:**

*Please complete the following table with labor categories and hourly rates for the base period. If additional rows are required add them as necessary.*

*If proposing an escalation clause in contract periods after the base period ends, please specify what this rate is and how it will be applied.*

Labor Costs	
Labor Category	Labor Rate
Indirect Costs	
Cost Type	Estimate
<b>TOTAL</b>	

