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Review of the current landscape of IETF document processing tools

A Request for Proposals issued on 2020-07-16

IETF Executive Director
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Overview

The IETF seeks a contractor to review the current landscape of tools that have been specifically designed to be used by the IETF community to work with IETF documents (I-Ds and RFCs) and to build a dataset about these tools, including technical details, maintenance processes, licensing and others, and further to determine what parts of the document production, management and usage lifecycle each tool supports and document that both as a lifecycle document and a coverage map.

Timeline

16 July 2020	RFP Issued
30 July 2020	Questions and Inquiries deadline
6 August 2020	Answers to questions issued and RFP updated if required
13 August 2020	Bids due
27 August 2020	Preferred bidder selected and negotiations begin
10 September 2020	Contract execution and work begins

RFP Process

The process for the RFP is as follows:

1. The RFP is publicly issued, posted to our website¹ and announced to the RFP Announcement mailing list², which anyone can subscribe to.
2. Potential bidders have until 30 July 2020 to submit any questions by email to ietf-rfps@ietf.org. Questions will be treated as anonymous but not private, as explained below. If you do not receive confirmation that your questions have been received within 24 hours then please check your junk folder for an address confirmation check.
3. A written response to all questions is provided on or before 6 August 2020, direct to those parties that sent questions, by email to the RFP Announcement Mailing List and posted on our website³. The response will

¹ <https://www.ietf.org/about/administration/rfps/>

² <https://www.ietf.org/mailman/listinfo/rfp-announce>

³ <https://www.ietf.org/about/administration/rfps/>

include the questions asked and the answers, but will not identify the company asking the question. If required, the RFP may be updated to correct or clarify any issues identified.

4. Bids are due by **13 August 2020** by email to ietf-rfps@ietf.org. If you do not receive confirmation that your bid has been received within 24 hours then please check your junk folder for an address confirmation check. The bid should include the following information:
 - a. Executive summary
 - b. Project approach including any assumptions.
 - c. Project plan and schedule including when the work will begin and end, and any other milestones, as well as any dependencies that may delay delivery.
 - d. Fee and payment schedule. Fixed priced bids are preferred but if that is not possible then a maximum fee must be specified.
 - e. Warranty including a proposal for fee reduction/refund due to late- or non-delivery
5. The IETF Administration LLC and designated contractors and volunteers will select a preferred bid and notify the bidder by 27 August 2020. The selection process may include questions by email and/or conference call.
6. The IETF Administration LLC then enters into contract negotiation with the preferred bidder, based on its standard contract and using the relevant sections of the Statement of Work below. If contract negotiation fails then a different preferred bidder may be chosen.
7. Contract negotiation is anticipated to complete by 10 September 2020 and result in the award of the contract. All RFP contract awards are posted on our website and announced to the RFP Announcement mailing list. The terms of the contract are later posted publicly on our website, with the fee information and signatures (where possible) redacted. In addition any Conflict of Interest declarations required of the preferred bidder are also posted publicly on our website. This transparency is non-negotiable.
8. Work generally begins immediately after award of the contract, unless specified otherwise in the Statement of Work or negotiated contract.

Jay Daley
IETF Executive Director
IETF Administration LLC

Statement of Work: Review of the current landscape of IETF document processing tools

Overview

The IETF seeks a contractor to review the current landscape of tools that have been specifically designed to be used by the IETF community to work with IETF documents (I-Ds and RFCs) and to build a dataset about these tools, including technical details, maintenance processes, licensing and others, and further to determine what parts of the document production, management and usage lifecycle each tool supports and document that both as a lifecycle document and a coverage map.

Deliverables

Deliverable 1 - Dataset

A dataset about the tools containing a combination of text, simple scales, simple classifications and supporting narrative. For example, for licensing, a simple classification may include "GPL v3, Proprietary, BSD-like" and more.

The dataset is to be provided as raw data in CSV format.

The data to be collected for the dataset is:

1. A full catalog of tools.
2. Details of the maintainer(s) of each tool
3. The licensing of the tool (simple classification)
4. The technical environment each tool is intended to work in (OS, packages, containers, etc)
5. How each tool is maintained, including
 - a. where the source code is located
 - b. how issues are raised (simple classification)
 - c. the level of version control and release management in use (on a simple scale)
 - d. how comprehensive the test coverage is (on a simple scale)
 - e. the form of testing framework in use (simple classification)

6. A subjective assessment of the current maintained state of the tool (on a simple scale)
7. A subjective assessment of the suitability of each tool (on a simple scale), based on 3, 4, 5 and 6 above.
8. What stages of the document lifecycle (see below) each tool covers.

Deliverable 2 - Document lifecycle

A model of the IETF document lifecycle including document production (authoring, review, format conversion, etc), document access (download tools, search tools, etc) and document usage (extracting certain parts, etc). This is only to cover the work carried out by the IETF community and not the work of the RFC Production Centre.

There are no templates for this model nor any existing work to build upon and so it is expected that this will be entirely new.

Deliverable 3 - Coverage map

Some form of coverage map/infographic showing each tool and each stage of the document lifecycle, the coverage of each stage in the lifecycle and the subjective assessment of the suitability of each tool. This coverage map should allow at-a-glance understanding of the coverage of each stage and each tool including stages covered by multiple tools and stages not covered by any tool.

This coverage map is to be supplied in any common vector image format.

Requirements

Selecting which tools to assess

The contractor will be responsible for drawing up the list of tools to be included for approval by the IETF LLC. This should include all the relevant tools at <https://tools.ietf.org> and other tools that are not listed there but are known to be in use.

Transparency and engagement

The IETF is committed to transparency and community engagement and so requires this work to be carried out as follows:

1. All three deliverables are to be developed using a public repository so that interested parties can see the work as it unfolds.

2. The initial list of tools proposed by the contractor will go out for community comment and the contractor will need to consider the feedback and potentially revise the list before the final version is presented for approval.
3. The maintainers of the tools are to be given every opportunity to recommend changes to the data and the assessments within (though the contractor retains the final say in what data they choose to include in the deliverable), which means:
 - a. Any issues or pull requests raised by maintainers on the repository are to be considered and responded to.
 - b. Once the initial version of the dataset is complete, it will go out for community comment and the contractor will need to consider the feedback and potentially revise the dataset before the final version is delivered.
4. The initial versions of the document lifecycle and coverage map will also go out for community feedback and the contractor will need to consider the feedback and potentially revise these before the final versions are delivered.

Work of the RFC Production Center

The RFC Production Center (RPC) is solely responsible for two steps in the document lifecycle:

1. The publication of the RFC, which uses a number of internal tools to manage references, assign DOIs and more.
2. The conversion of the XML RFC into the long term ar PDF/A format for long term archive, which uses commercial software.

The tools used solely for the two processes above are not within scope for this RFP but these steps should appear in the document lifecycle and coverage map.

Additional Details

None.

ENDS