



SELF-HELP CLIMATE CAPITAL, LLC

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

August 23, 2024

Software Development Services RFP #1

1. How should we sign the attachments? Do you accept digital signatures?

For all signatures, please use an electronic image of a wet signature (e.g. a scanned pdf) or a digital signature.

2. What is the anticipated timeline for evaluating vendors and starting work? / When does Self-Help expect to notify contractors of the RFP award decision? / Is there an expected timeline for response to our proposal?

Self-Help anticipates beginning the evaluation process as soon as the submission period has closed. Services will begin upon award of contract and successful vendor onboarding. Self-Help intends to complete these processes as timely as possible; at the earliest work will begin in Q4 of 2024.

3. Where the RFP states “conform to appropriate information security and compliance standards”, are there standards unique to Self-Help that may not be standard for other financial institutions?

No.

4. Where the RFP states “experience bringing legacy code bases up to modern standards”, are there decisions or preferences for what modernization means to Self-Help?

Self-Help wants to take this opportunity to discuss the needs of the business today, and implement architectural best practices thoughtfully, carefully and correctly with focus on maintainability, extensibility, scalability, or other software engineering fundamentals.

5. The RFP mentions the use of VB.NET and WinForms under the qualifications section. Can Self-Help elaborate on the need for VB.NET and WinForms?

SAM has existing user interface applications written in/using VB.Net and Winforms. The plan is to migrate most or all of them to web-based applications developed using C#, Blazor, and Dapper, but the legacy applications will require maintenance in the meantime.

6. The RFP mentions development staff of three people. Will these staff members need to be in particular Self-Help offices or are they able to be remote?

The successful Proposer will support Self-Help as an off-site third-party vendor and will not work in Self-Help offices, except potentially for planning or strategic sessions, as needed. The team works Eastern business hours (9AM to 5PM ET).

7. Does Self-Help need a full development team, or would the development staff requested in the RFP be added to an existing development team at Self-Help?

Self-Help has an internal development team. The successful Proposer should offer the full range of software development services detailed in the Scope of Work section of the RFP and be able to function both independently and in tandem with Self-Help's team.

8. Will the software need to interface with any specific Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)?

Possibly. The programs and data sources have not been finalized for the energy-efficiency transactions.

9. Will the software need to interface with the Climate United Fund's technology? If so, please describe the nature of the necessary interface.

At this point, no.

10. Can Self-Help share any existing software/system architecture documentation? / Please elaborate on the availability of Self-Help's existing documentation for requirements gathering, processes and procedures, testing plans et al.?

Not at the present time. Self-Help has some documentation for the system, but it is not complete. The successful Proposer will help Self-Help build out system documentation as part of the engagement.

11. Self-Help seeks software development services in support of activities pertaining to the NCIF award, which may include (but are not limited to) purchase of loans and/or participations from a third party, sale of loans and participations to a third party, and other work in support of the NCIF award. Could you provide more details about what "other work" could entail?

"Other work" refers to financial transactions or borrower and/or lender support other than the purchase and/or sale of loans and/or participations.

12. Does Self-Help have any restrictions or preferences regarding location (e.g., regional/ onshore, offshore) of software development teams?

Self-Help is not considering an offshore labor model. Proposer should provide geographic location for qualified staff identified in the proposal.

13. Is Self-Help seeking to enhance existing functional capabilities or additional new features?

Both.

14. Can Self-Help share high-level estimate of FTEs supporting SAM?

Currently, about five FTEs support SAM in either a software or a product role.

15. Please elaborate further on the extent of Self-Help's legacy code i.e., complexity, types of calcs, extent of joins, data sources/ reference data, et al.

20 fat-client apps (though several are obsolete) comprising roughly 1 million lines of code. Mostly C#, but the oldest code is VB.NET. SAM is locked into .NET Framework 4.6 due to dependencies on third-party libraries.

The database is MySQL 5.6.35, which Self-Help has been unable to upgrade without performance degradation. It contains:

- 662 tables
- 11139 columns
- 1553 indexes
- 149 stored procedures
- 932 functions
- 680 triggers

The main table, to which all other tables join directly or indirectly, contains 137 columns and 90,000+ rows.

16. What is the frequency of reporting and what type of metrics are in-scope for Self-Help i.e., origination volume, delinquency, default, charge-off, prepayment, LTV, NIM, recovery, et al.?

Self-Help monitors and reports on a variety of origination and performance metrics on at least a monthly basis, with expanded reporting on a quarterly basis, including but not

limited to production volume, delinquency status, default status, and origination characteristics.

17. Can you please elaborate on the quality of Self-Help's source data and if establishment of data quality monitoring, and or remediation, is required?

Self-Help's current source data quality is high. Self-Help does perform data quality tests and corrects data as needed and would expect new development to support data integrity monitoring.

18. Please elaborate further on Self-Help's expectations around testing, your existing testing framework, and expectations on manual or automated testing?

SAM does not have any automated testing in place at present. The team would like to add it to the Blazor applications, and new development, but does not plan to add it to the legacy codebase. Developers assigned to work on the legacy apps will make changes in a sandboxed environment and will be expected to test there before pushing to a staging environment for user testing.

19. Is Self-Help seeking staff augmentation or an outcome-based delivery commercial structure?

Outcome-based delivery.

20. Can Self-Help provide an indication or range of the scale of work that is part of the scope of the proposal, meaning how many persons hour's worth of work should be considered during the term of the engagement (1 year)?

The project and staffing plan for the software development work will be determined between Self-Help and the successful Proposer. We expect that, at a minimum, the successful Proposer will contribute staff time on software development, project management, design, and testing.

21. Is Self-Help committed to its current systems and practices? Is Self-Help willing to adopt new workflows and practices (i.e.: CI/CD, TDD, InfraOps)?

The team is eager to improve and standardize our tech ecosystem, including incorporating latest best practices, but unlikely to invest in modernizing the legacy SAM codebase. Some CD pipelines are already built (for deployments only).

22. Is there an anticipated duration for maintenance and support after the deemed completion of modernization?

This has not been determined, as of yet.

23. Are there any anticipated new projects that will adjust our project timelines, or can we assume that all work will be modernization of just SAM?

Software development in support of the NCIF award will require both functionality for new projects and modernization. This RFP seeks software development services for only SAM and no other Self-Help systems.

24. What does a successful project look like to Self-Help?

In a general sense, a successful project is one that is collaborative between Self-Help and the successful Proposer and completed according to timeline and budget with a valuable and usable product at the end.

25. What are the current pain points that Self-Help has with the current SAM software?

Pain points include reliance on third party libraries, occasional system slowdowns, need for better documentation, and increased need for system speed.

26. Who will we be working with and what are their working expectations (e.g.: how many meetings and check-ins we should do, any project management desires)?

The specifics will be worked out between the successful Proposer and Self-Help. The Self-Help team includes an internal development team, the SAM product management team, and subject matter experts. Meetings will be regular and recurring between the two parties between 9AM and 5PM Eastern business hours, with some meetings occurring in person, as needed.

27. Would it be possible to see what SAM currently looks like and what parts Self-Help would like to modernize?

Self-Help is not prepared to provide this type of access or information at this point in the process.

28. The RFP states that Self-Help expects to pay its fees, at least in part, with proceeds of its subaward from Climate United under NCIF. Will Self-Help confirm that the awardee providing the services called for by the RFP will be as a “contractor”, provided the requirements of § 200.331 are met?

The awardee who enters into a contract with Self-Help for services to be provided pursuant to Software Development Services RFP#1 is not a "Subrecipient" and will be considered a "Contractor" under § 200.331.

29. Is there an expectation to replace or significantly modify any of the current technology stacks (VB, C#, Blazor, MySQL) as part of this project?

The team has no plans to move from C# or Blazor.

30. Are there plans to standardize on a single technology stack, or will the new development need to integrate with all existing technologies? / Does Self-Help wish to standardize on one development stack?

Self-Help wants to standardize on Microsoft technology (C#, Blazor, and MS-SQL). However, as long as there are legacy applications in use, SAM will continue to use MySQL 5.6.35 as the backend.

31. Does SAM currently have an API? If so, what type (REST, GraphQL, etc.)?

No.

32. Are there any plans to migrate the SAM database and applications to the cloud or a virtualized environment?

No.

33. Will Self-Help be providing project and task tracking tools such as TFS or JIRA?

Yes, Self-Help uses Jira, and third-party developers will have access.