



Address: 100 Marine Parkway | Suite 125
Redwood City, CA 94065
Phone: (650) 599-1234
Toll-Free: (800) 339-0761
Fax: (650) 591-1488
PONY: RET 141
Web: www.samcera.org
Email: samcera@samcera.org

Technology Modernization Project Manager RFP SamCERA Responses to Proposer Questions

1. Should data cleansing activities be performed before the new PASS selection, or only after identifying the target system (new PASS system)?

Data cleansing should begin before selecting the new PASS, but be aligned with the implementation to ensure consistency.

2. Will SamCERA provide any existing data profiling reports, or should consultant conduct full data assessment and profiling from scratch?

SamCERA will provide any existing data profiling reports, but there may be the need for the consultant to conduct a full data assessment to identify any gaps.

3. Besides user manuals and training guides, are there any specific compliance or audit reports that we need to prepare?

Yes. In addition to training guides, consultants must assist with IT audit strategy, risk control matrices, and compliance frameworks under NIST/CIS guidelines.

4. Do you require us to draft the entire RFP, including evaluation criteria, or just the technical and functional specifications?

The consultant is expected to develop the entire RFP for the new PASS, including technical and functional requirements, evaluation criteria, and vendor selection support.

5. Is the consultant responsible only for overseeing the implementation, or also for direct configuration and integration of the new system?

The consultant is primarily in an oversight and advisory role—not hands-on configuration/integration.

6. Should automation be implemented immediately post-deployment, or can it be phased in after initial system stabilization?

Automation is expected to be phased in, starting with pilot implementations and scaling post-deployment.

7. Are we expected to implement all recommended cybersecurity measures, or act as advisory on necessary upgrades?

Advisory only. Consultant evaluates, recommends, and supports—but is not directly responsible for implementing controls.

8. If certifications like CMMC or FEDRAMP are needed to certify as NIST or CIS Compliant, do you expect consultant to assist in the certification process?

Consultants are expected to advise on achieving compliance but not necessarily lead or certify on CMMC, FedRAMP, etc.

9. Is consultant responsible for setting up ongoing monitoring systems post-implementation, or just initial performance validation?

Consultant is responsible for initial validation, performance dashboards, and KPIs—and establishing a framework for ongoing post-deployment monitoring.

10. Can you clarify the scope of post-implementation support? Should it include incident management, user training, or system updates?

Includes handing off final deliverables, conducting a lessons learned session to capture successes and challenges, and preparing a final evaluation report summarizing performance against scope, schedule, and budget. Developing a plan for ongoing support and system maintenance. Post-implementation incident management or system updates are not explicitly in scope but may be discussed if needed. Training sessions to take place prior to go-live.

11. Will SamCERA assign dedicated internal stakeholders or IT leads to work alongside the Consultant during critical phases?

Yes, there will be ongoing coordination with SamCERA staff, including the Retirement Technology Officer and IT team, during all phases.

12. What specific types of imaging systems are currently in use that need replacement?

Document scanners using folder-based file servers used as document repositories, lacking audit trails and version control.

13. Are we expected to redesign all business processes related to pension administration, or focus only on those directly impacted by the new PASS?

Focus is on processes directly impacted by PASS and those introducing inefficiencies, especially manual or legacy-driven workflows.

14. If a key team member becomes unavailable, is SamCERA open to substituting with equally qualified personnel?

Substituting key team members is not preferred. If absolutely necessary, it is expected that any replacement will be up to speed with the project and require minimal ramp-up time to maintain continuity. Specifics should be confirmed in the proposal.

15. What is SamCERA's preference regarding the Staff presence during the project? Should the consultants be primarily onsite, remote, or follow a hybrid model (onsite for critical milestones and remote for routine management tasks)? Clarifying this will help us plan resource allocation and ensure effective project coordination.

A hybrid model will be offered.

16. We note the proposal due date is April 24, 2025. Is that for the electronic submission only, with the hard-copy proposals sent by that date and received later, or does that due date apply to the hard copies as well?

Both an electronic and hardcopy submission are required. The electronic version must be received by April 24, 2025, while the hardcopies must be postmarked by that date.

17. Given that responses to vendor questions will be released on April 17 and proposals are due on April 24, would it be acceptable if proposals are shipped before the submission deadline—as long as they are clearly postmarked by April 24—even if they arrive a few days later due to courier delivery schedules?

Both an electronic and hardcopy submission are required. The electronic version must be received by April 24, 2025, while the hardcopies must be postmarked by that date.

18. Is the technology modernization effort focused solely on the Pension Administration Software System (PASS), or does it encompass broader, organization-wide systems and applications?

The effort centers on replacing the Pension Administration Software System (PASS), but also includes broader modernization of business processes, document management, automation, cybersecurity, and IT governance—making it an organization-wide initiative.

19. How is the current Vitech V3 system being managed and supported—through internal resources, vendor support, or a hybrid approach?

The current Vitech V3 system is supported through a hybrid approach, combining internal IT staff resources with external vendor support.

20. Are live backups currently being performed as part of SamCERA's operational IT practices?

Yes, live backups are currently performed as part of SamCERA's operational IT practices to ensure data protection and support continuity during system transitions or failures.

21. Is there a PASS Subject Matter Expert (SME) on SamCERA's internal team?

Yes, SamCERA has an internal Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the current PASS system who can support project activities and provide system-specific insights.

22. Can you provide details about the current PASS database—including type, size, number of schemas, level of normalization, and the approximate number of tables and records in scope for data cleansing?

The system runs on a Java/Oracle platform. Specifics like schema count, normalization level, and table volume will be detailed during the assessment phase.

23. How many external integrations and interfaces does the current PASS system support?

Less than 10. Consultants should plan to discover and document all integrations during the early phases of system assessment.

24. Are there anticipated deadlines or timelines already defined for each major deliverable in this project, or is the selected consultant expected to propose a phased implementation schedule?

Aside from the overall project timeline (July 2025–June 2028), specific deadlines for deliverables are not defined. The selected consultant is expected to propose a phased implementation schedule with milestones.

25. What percentage of work is expected to be performed on-site versus remotely?

A hybrid model will be offered.

26. Will preference be given to local or regional vendors?

No preference will be given to local or regional vendors.

27. Will a single Project Sponsor or Steering Committee oversee all six service areas, or will separate leads be assigned?

A single Project Sponsor will oversee the entire project, with support from cross-functional leads aligned to each service area.

28. Will the contractor be expected or permitted to recommend changes to policy or governance structures where needed to support automation, data quality, or audit readiness?

Yes, the contractor is expected to make recommendations that improve governance, policy alignment, and operational readiness in support of automation, data quality, and audit objectives.

29. Is there a separate budget allocated for any additional systems, platforms, or resources that may be required to fulfill the scope of work?

A separate budget is not pre-allocated, but contractors should itemize any recommended tools or platforms with justifications for consideration.

30. Are there any other major initiatives, system overlaps, or IT projects scheduled to run concurrently that could impact project dependencies, resource availability, or timelines?

No major conflicting initiatives are currently planned. However, standard operational demands should be accounted for in resource planning.

31. Are there expectations for the vendor to provide supplemental technical resources to support delivery, or will SamCERA's internal IT team serve as the primary technical lead? If applicable, should any proposed resource costs be presented as separate line items?

SamCERA's internal IT team will serve as the primary technical lead. Vendors may propose supplemental resources as needed, with associated costs presented as separate line items.

32. Are there any security or compliance constraints that would limit the contractor's access to systems or data required for assessments and reviews?

Contractors will be granted appropriate access to systems and data necessary for project activities, in accordance with standard security and confidentiality protocols.

33. The PASS section references audits and security. Does this scope extend more broadly to include network environments, existing systems, 3rd-party systems, and infrastructure? If so, is the contractor expected to report on identified issues only, or also to provide recommendations and implement approved solutions?

The scope may extend to PASS audits and its integrations where applicable. Contractors are expected to report on issues, provide recommendations, and optionally assist with implementation as agreed.

34. Can you provide a complete list of legacy systems currently in use, including their technology stacks, integration points, and any known technical limitations?

A comprehensive list will be provided during the discovery phase. Key systems include the Vitech V3 platform (Java/Oracle) and Microsoft 365 tools, among others.

35. What platforms (cloud, on-premises, or hybrid) are currently in use, and are there any preferences or constraints for future system architecture?

SamCERA currently operates in a hybrid environment using both on-premises infrastructure and cloud-based platforms. Future architecture should prioritize scalability, security, and supportability.

36. Which existing systems (e.g., financial, HR, member portals) will need to integrate with the new Pension Administration Software System (PASS) or automation tools?

The new PASS will likely need to integrate with HR platform, member portals, and document management tools. Final integration points will be confirmed during project planning.

37. Will SamCERA assign internal data stewards or subject matter experts to assist with data cleansing, validation, and mapping?

Yes, internal data stewards and SMEs will support data-related activities including cleansing, validation, and mapping.

38. What is the anticipated volume of data to be migrated, and are there any specific data retention or compliance requirements to be aware of?

Data volume will be assessed during discovery. All data migration activities must adhere to applicable retention policies and compliance standards in place.

39. Has SamCERA conducted prior data profiling or cleansing work, and can those findings be shared?

While limited profiling may have occurred, vendors should plan to conduct a full data assessment. Any prior findings will be shared where available.

40. Will SamCERA's internal IT team provide hands-on support for data migration and implementation tasks, or should the contractor plan to manage these activities in full?

The contractor will be expected to lead and manage data migration activities, with support from SamCERA's internal IT team for validation and coordination.

41. How many stakeholder groups will be involved in this transformation, and what level of engagement is expected from each?

Multiple groups, including IT, Benefits, Finance, and Administration, will be involved. Engagement levels will vary by phase and area, but active collaboration is expected throughout.

42. Will SamCERA assign a dedicated internal project manager or coordination team to work alongside the contractor across all project areas? If a team, will there be a single point of contact for final approval on initiatives?

Yes, a dedicated internal project sponsor will be assigned. A single point of contact will be designated for final approvals and coordination.

43. Has a change readiness assessment been conducted to gauge staff preparedness for this transition?

A formal change readiness assessment has not yet been conducted but will be addressed as part of the broader change management effort.

44. Is there any existing documentation of current-state processes, or should vendors assume that all models will need to be created from scratch?

Minimal documentation currently exists. Vendors should assume that process modeling will need to be completed from scratch through discovery and stakeholder engagement.

45. Has SamCERA established any performance benchmarks (e.g., cycle times, backlog volumes) that can be used as baselines for improvement tracking?

Some performance data is available, but vendors should be prepared to establish or refine benchmarks as part of the business process reengineering effort.

46. Are there any PASS vendors or platforms currently under consideration?

No vendors are currently under consideration. Selection will occur through the formal RFP process supported by the contractor.

47. Has a separate budget been established for PASS implementation?

A separate implementation budget will be established once vendor selection and planning are complete.

48. Does SamCERA prefer an in-house/custom-built solution, or is there interest in an off-the-shelf product?

SamCERA is open to evaluating both off-the-shelf and custom-built solutions, depending on alignment with business and technical needs.

49. Will security and compliance assessments (e.g., penetration testing, accessibility audits) be handled by SamCERA's internal or separate cybersecurity advisors, or should vendors include them as part of the PASS implementation plan?

Vendors should include these assessments in their implementation plan unless otherwise directed during planning.

50. Has SamCERA previously evaluated or piloted any workflow automation platforms?

No formal pilots have been conducted to date. Vendors should include evaluation and selection of automation tools as part of their scope.

51. Are there compliance, audit trail, or data retention requirements that automation workflows must meet, especially in areas such as fund disbursements and approvals?

Yes, all automation workflows must comply with applicable audit trail, data retention, and security requirements, particularly in areas handling financial transactions and approvals.

52. Do the physical copies of the proposal have to be onsite by 4/24/25 at 5:00 PM, or can they be postmarked by that date/time if the emailed copy is sent by the deadline?

Both an electronic and hardcopy submission are required. The electronic version must be received by April 24, 2025, while the hardcopies must be postmarked by that date.

53. Is there an incumbent?

There is no incumbent vendor. This RFP is an open solicitation for new project management services.

54. What is the budget?

Vendors should propose costs based on the scope of work and include a clear breakdown of services, rates, and resource estimates.

55. How many full-time and part-time resources are expected on the contract?

The number of resources is not predefined. Vendors should propose staffing levels appropriate to meet the scope and timelines, with justification for full-time and part-time roles.

56. Will this be an onsite-only contract or will the resource(s) be able to work remotely?

A hybrid model will be offered.

57. Have solution requirements been defined?

High-level requirements are outlined in the RFP. Detailed solution requirements, particularly for the new PASS, will be developed through discovery and stakeholder engagement during the project.

58. How many business processes (human and electronic) are associated with the current pension system?

Vendors should expect to conduct a comprehensive assessment of both human-driven and system-based workflows as part of the business process reengineering effort.

59. Are existing business processes documented?

Limited documentation exists. Vendors should assume that most process models will need to be created from scratch.

60. Have workload metrics been measured and baselined for the legacy pension system business processes?

Some performance and backlog data may exist, but comprehensive workload metrics and baselines are not formally established and will need to be developed during the engagement.

61. Does the legacy pension system have documented workflows?

Workflow documentation may be limited or incomplete. Vendors should plan to reconstruct current-state workflows through interviews and process mapping.

62. How many end-users are in the legacy pension system?

SamCERA supports approximately 8,570 active and deferred members and 6,095 retirees. Internal system users include around 20 staff members across departments, though exact user counts for system access will be confirmed during discovery.

63. Does the county have existing IT Security Audit Policies and Procedures? If so, can you provide a high-level description?

SamCERA is in the process of developing a comprehensive IT audit policy and general controls framework as part of this project. Current practices are being enhanced to align with NIST and CIS standards.

64. Does the county have an existing security awareness program? If so, can you provide a high-level description?

The county does have a formal security awareness program. The contractor may be asked to support or advise on security awareness initiatives aligned with cybersecurity remediation efforts.

65. Is the county required to adhere to the Federal Information System Controls Audit Manual (FISCAM) for the new system? If so, is this expected to be included in the scope for IT Controls and Audit Strategy?

The IT Controls and Audit Strategy will be aligned with NIST Cybersecurity Framework and CIS Controls, with support for internal and external audit alignment as outlined in the RFP.

66. We seek to better understand SamCERA's expectations for the data migration surrounding section 4.3. Does SamCERA intend for the selected vendor from this RFP to be responsible for managing and executing the data migration?

Yes, the selected vendor will be responsible for managing and executing the data migration effort. This includes planning, cleansing, validation, risk mitigation, and coordination with SamCERA's internal IT team to ensure a successful transition to the new system.

67. What is the estimated volume of data (in number of records or GBs) expected to be cleansed and migrated as part of this activity?

The precise volume of data has not been collected. Vendors should plan for a detailed data assessment during project initiation to determine the number of records, size in GBs, and scope of cleansing and migration required.

68. Has SamCERA performed any type of recent data quality assessments and/or have an existing data cleansing process?

While some informal data reviews may have occurred, vendors should assume that a comprehensive data quality assessment and cleansing effort will need to be performed as part of this project. Any existing findings will be shared during discovery, if available.