

Request for Proposal (RFP)

For PSEB Web Portal Hosting

A (01)/PSEB/2024-32

July, 2024

**PAKISTAN SOFTWARE EXPORT BOARD
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN**

RFP for the Selection of Web Hosting Provider for PSEB Web Portal

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https://zoom.us/j/97958332631?pwd=rhhDSR0zSD7qLmk17ge6xsP5a8O6Cz.1	11
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1. PAKISTAN SOFTWARE EXPORT BOARD (G) LTD. AN INTRODUCTION

The Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) is the entity within the Government charged with the task of accelerating growth in the Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology enabled services (ITeS) industry. PSEB is a guaranteed limited company owned and funded by the Government of Pakistan. It is under the administrative control of the Federal Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications. It is governed by a Board of Directors chaired by the Federal Minister of IT and Telecommunications. Through its many support programs, PSEB aims to help Pakistani IT companies and IT professionals in obtaining a greater share of the global IT and ITeS marketplace.

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

PSEB intends to hire a web hosting services provider to provide efficient & reliable managed hosting services for the PSEB Web Portal.

The international revolution has prompted many developments in all industries. With new media and high-speed networks, expectations of consumers worldwide have increased. Information is required in real-time for making effective business decisions. This trend is prevalent not only in the private sector, but also in public sector organizations. The active role of governments in delivering content as well as online services via internet and through other electronic media is enabling highly efficient process and rapid execution of tasks.

Keeping in view the roles and objectives for promoting IT in Pakistan and attracting foreign investment in this sector, PSEB has developed a new web portal with much enhanced functionalities with a concept to provide a One Stop Shop for the IT industry of Pakistan.

3. PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document serves to delineate the deliverables pertaining to this project, outlining the methodology and criteria to be employed by PSEB in the assessment, evaluation, and selection of a firm or company for web hosting services. This document also illustrates the requirements and the conditions, which shall be adhered to fulfill and qualify for the stipulated task (PSEB Web Portal).

The selected company will be required to provide **Managed Hosting Services** for a period of one, two or three years contingent on better pricing with subsequent extension, subject to satisfactory performance.

4. HOSTING REQUIREMENTS

Following are the hosting requirements for the Web Portal.

4.1 General Requirements

- a. Mirrored Server, Back-up & Disaster Recovery at a different site, DNS Hosting.
- b. Managed local cloud-based hosting and/or datacenter based hosting and associated services like NFS, Database etc.. The hosting provider will be responsible for platform configuration, schedule backups, disaster recovery and optimization of the configuration from time to time as per required by the application to run smoothly and to ensure the high availability of the database.
- c. Web-based portal performance monitoring tools.

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- d. Web-based service management tools like cPanel or Plesk Panel.
- e. Tier-I bandwidth connectivity as per portal requirements.
- f. SLA with 99.9% uptime and infrastructure guarantee.
- g. CDN Integration on server level or a third-party service like., Cloudflare. This will be the hosting service provider's responsibility to arrange required licensing, if required.
- h. SSH and SFTP Access to root user to all machines.
- i. All application and database servers will be interacting with each other through private network IPs rather than public IPs.
- j. SSL Certificates for the portal.
- k. SMTP service to deliver emails to internal and external customers of the portal.
- l. 24/7 Technical Support of the hosting infrastructure.

Email Service incl. SMTP management, API Interfaces and IP Pooling (to avoid spamming) with detailed tabular and graphical reporting i.e., Delivery Status, Unsubscribes etc. (If a paid solution is quoted then the price must be mentioned separately)

4.2 Security Requirements

- a. Virus and Malware Protection
- b. IPS (DoS/DDoS Mitigation) – Network + Server level
- c. Spyware Control
- d. Web Server Security Protocols
- e. Database Protection
- f. Server-Side Scripting Protection
- g. Firewall Protection
- h. Ransomware protection
- i. To keep the OS and other platform applications updated with security patches as per the requirements of the Application vendor.
- j. User Activity Monitoring and Logging

4.3 Hardware Requirements

Multiple options of Virtual Machines (VMs) to host PSEB Portal either on Local cloud Platform or in Data Center environment are outlined in **table-1** below. The procuring agency invites proposals for both platforms, i.e., Local cloud Platform as well as Data Center environment. The final decision regarding the hosting platform and the number of VMs will be determined by the procuring agency based on its specific requirements.

The costing of the hosting solution is detailed in Annexure-I. The costing sheet shall only be the part of financial proposal and shall not be disclosed in technical proposal in any way Failure to comply with this instruction will result in the disqualification of the bid.

Table#1

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VM Options	vCPU's	vCPU Speed (Minimum)	RAM	HD/Storage
1	04	2.0 GHz	16 GB	500 GB SSD
2	04	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD
3	08	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD
4	08	2.0 GHz	64 GB	500 GB SSD
5	16	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD
6	16	2.0 GHz	64 GB	500 GB SSD
7	Cost of addition SSD /Object Oriented storage in 100 GB sizing			
8	Cost of Load Balancer, if and when required			

4.4 Network/Bandwidth Requirements

- Multi-homing, tier-I and scalable bandwidth minimum 10 Mbps.
- Each storage volume must have minimum throughput of 300 MB/s.

4.5 Software Requirements

The following outlines the minimum software requirements to support portal hosting. it is the responsibility of the bidder/hosting service provider to install the required software on respective VMs and ensure their readiness for use.

Sr. #	Server Type	Software Required
1	Application Server.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ubuntu (latest/ stable version) Nginx (latest/ stable version) PHP-FPM (latest/stable version), PHP 7.3+ including basic + additional support libraries like Curl, Mastering, MCRYPT, gd, libimage, etc. Redis/Memcached Server for caching GlusterFS Client or its equivalent on local cloud (in case service provider managed NFS is not used) including its dependencies, will be acquired if and when required. <p>Note:-The version of each of the applications listed above will be finalized at the time of rollout and in consultation with the Portal Developer.</p>
2	Database Server	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MariaDB/ MySQL , Latest stable version and upgradable as per the requirements. Redis/Memcached Server for caching if required
3	AI/BI Server	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ubuntu 18 (Stable version) Nginx Elastic Stack – Kibana, Elasticsearch and Logstash Redis/Memcached Server for caching
<p>In case service provider doesn't have managed NFS service then GlusterFS Server including its dependencies will be acquired if and when required.</p>		
<p>Note: The proposal must specify that the hosting company will provide any necessary software or software versions required for hosting, as needed from time to time.</p>		

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4.6 Scalability:

4.6.1 Horizontal Scaling (for Local cloud Hosting)

Autonomous horizontal scaling will be required in peak hours or in case of high traffic without any manual or human intervention depending on the parameter configured.

4.6.2 Vertical Scaling (for Data Center Hosting)

Vertical scaling will be required through manual intervention as per PSEB requirement during any campaign or peak hours.

PSEB will opt the solution depending upon its efficiency, cost effectiveness and other requirements.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation process will adhere to the following criteria

1. The weightage of Technical Proposal =70%.
2. The weightage of Financial Proposal = 30%

5.1 Mandatory Criteria

S. No.	Requirement	Marks	Documents/Evidence Required
1	Valid and active Income Tax Registration of bidding company.	Mandatory	The firms shall provide copy of valid and active NTN certificate
2	Valid and active sales tax registration of each of the bidding company.	Mandatory	The firms shall provide copy of valid and active Sale Tax Registration certificate
3	Details of Data Centers locations, both Primary and DR site.	Mandatory	
4	Datacenter should be tier-III or tier-IV compliant or certified. Attach reference document.	Mandatory	
5	A certificate that the bidder is not blacklisted by any Government Department, or public sector organization in Pakistan.	Mandatory	The bidder shall provide undertaking on Rs. 100 stamp papers.
6	Service Level Agreement (SLA) with 99.9% uptime	Mandatory	
7	Mirrored Server, Back-up & Recovery, DNS Hosting provision. Please attachd relevant documents.	Mandatory	
8	Managed Services, including third-party integrations, its connectivity, VPNs, and integration of sub modules/sub portals in existing portal and all such requirements time to time.	Mandatory	

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9	Security Feature 1. SPAM Protection 2. AntiVirus Protection 3. IPS (DoS/DDoS Protections) 4. Spyware Control 5. Web Server Security 6. Content Security 7. Database Protection 8. SQL Injections Protection 9. Server Side Scripting Protection 10. Ransomware Protection 11. Protection against vulnerabilities found in the analysis as well as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IP Spoofing ▪ Session hijacking ▪ URL Manipulation ▪ Cross Site Scripting ▪ Directory Listings ▪ Customized error messages 	Mandatory	
10	Web Base Network Monitoring Tools	Mandatory	
11	The company must provide evidence that it is a managed hosting service provider and not solely a local cloud infrastructure provider.	Mandatory	
12	Web based service management tools like Cpanel	Mandatory	
13	24/7 Technical Support. Copy of SLA shall be attached with the proposal	Mandatory	

5.2 Evaluation Criteria

Technical evaluation criteria of company's proposal are as follows. Qualifying marks=70%

Sr#	Description	Max. Score	Marks Allocation	
1.	Firm/Bidder Profile (copy of company registration)	10	Years of registered establishment of local cloud services (01 mark for each year)	10
2.	Financial Strength (revenue from hosting services only)	10	Annual turnover up to PKR 50+ mil	10
			Annual turnover PKR 31-50 mil	07
			Annual turnover PKR 10- 30 mil	05
3.	Transfer of knowledge	05	Training for the designated staff of PSEB to comprehensively understand the hosting platform and communicate effectively in case an issue arises.	05
6.	Vendor Lock-in & Exit terms.	10	Provide policies around data access, data location and jurisdiction, confidentiality, and usage /ownership rights. Policies on how to transfer data if a client decides to exit.	10
7.	Disaster recovery (Runbooks, Technical Recovery Procedures(TRPs), IT DR Plans, BCP etc. shall be	10	Provide disaster recovery provisions, processes and ability to support data preservation, recovery time, scheduling, backup, restore, integrity checks, etc.	10

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	in place. A copy of such documents shall be provide with proposal)			
8.	List and contact details of corporate clients of hosting services.	10	List of corporate clients with contact details of FoC. Feedback of the clients will be a key point of evaluation process.	10
9.	Certifications in InfoSec, Local cloud/Data Center, etc. (Like ISO27001:2013)	20	One certification =10 mark	10
13.	Technical Support and SLA at International Standards(details shall be provide with proposal) 24/7/365 technical support facility strictly compliant to SLA. Market feedback will be part of this evaluation	25	Incident response time	05
			Avg. problem resolution time	05
			Service availability in each calendar month	05
			Escalation Matrix for support	05
			Downtime vs. %age rebates shall be mentioned with clarity.	05
G. Total		100		

5.3 Financial Bid Evaluation Criteria

The financial bids of only technically qualified bidders will be opened. The pricing shall include all applicable taxes.

The evaluation of financial bids will be calculated as follows:

- The weightage of financial proposal is 30% in total score.
- The financial weightage will be calculated by the formula as given below:
= (lowest bid/bid offered) *30

The score achieved by a bidder will be aggregated as follows:

Total score obtained by a bidder = Technical weightage + Financial weightage

The contract shall be awarded to the bidder who achieved the maximum points from Total Score and shall be considered a **Most Advantageous Bidder**.

Kindly refer to Annexure-I to submit financial proposal. Following terms shall be taken care while drafting financial proposal:

- Cost of hosting service for 1, 2 and 3 years taking into account the discounts for long-term service agreement.
- Payment will be made on quarterly basis.
- Detailed breakdown of all the costs.
- Financial Proposal should include all taxes cost (cost mentioned in proposal will be considered final cost inclusive of all taxes)

6. CORRUPT OR FRAUDULENT PRACTICES BY BIDDER.

Any instance of corrupt or fraudulent practices or provision of any false information by the bidder will result in disqualification of the bid and confiscation of the bid security regardless of the price and quality of the product.

7. SUBMISSION OF BIDS:

a. Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Process

A single stage two envelope bidding process will be followed. The technical and financial bids shall be in English language “**Tender for Web Hosting Requirements to Host PSEB Web**

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Portal” The technical bid has to apply with “**Technical Proposal for Web Hosting Requirements to Host PSEB Web Portal**” containing technical specifications only (without prices). The financial proposal shall be marked with “**Financial Proposal for Web Hosting Requirements to Host PSEB Web Portal**” containing financial proposal,

The earnest money in the shape of Demand Draft and Pay Order in the favor of Pakistan Software Export Board with an amounting to Rs. 300,000/-.

b. Bid Submission and Opening

Bids should be submitted electronically ONLY through EPADS. For registration and training on EPADS or in case of any technical difficulty in using EPADS, prospective bidders may contact PPRA Team, Director MIS Room No.109, 1st Floor, FBC building Sector G-5/2, Islamabad. Contact Number 051-111-137-237.

The bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the bidding documents along with bid security instrument (Copy) & Proof of Eligibility documents as specified in bid documents in favor of the undersigned must be submitted through EPADS by **July 25th, 2024 at 03:00 pm** Technical bids only will be opened on the same day **at 03:30 pm** at below mentioned address in the presence of vendors/bidders or their authorized representatives who desires to attend the bid opening session. The financial bids will be opened only of those bidders who qualifies in technical proposals evaluation. The opening of financial bids will be notified separately once technical evaluation has been completed. Please note that submission date and time shall be strictly adhered, and it will be bidders’ responsibility to ensure the submission of bid at given date and time.

Note: Original Bid Security instrument MUST BE submitted to the undersigned before closing hours of the bids submission time.

Only those bids will be entertained who applied through EPADS <https://eprocure.gov.pk>

c. Prices

Prices quoted must remain valid for acceptance up to 90 days from the date of its opening. Quoted price should be in Pak Rupees and inclusive of all applicable taxes. Prices quoted without any tax remarks will be treated as inclusive of all applicable taxes. Any changes in Government duties or taxes shall be borne by the successful bidder.

d. Performance Bond

The bidder selected to award the contract shall have to submit 5% of total amount as Performance Bond. The performance bond shall be in the shape of Bank Guarantee/Bank Draft / Pay Order in the favor of “Pakistan Software Export Board”

e. Representation Requirements

The representative of the bidder shall bring an authority/nomination letter on company’s letterhead for attending the financial bid opening. The representative of the bidder shall bring an authority/nomination letter on company’s letterhead for attending the financial bid opening.

8.1 Withdrawal of Bid.

- a. A bidder may withdraw the bid prior to the deadline for submission of bid as prescribed

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in these tender documents.

- b. The bid security will be forfeited if a bidder withdraws the bid after the deadline of bid submission or during the period of bid validity or in the case of a successful bidder fails to sign/accept the Purchase Order/Contract.

8.2 Rejection of Bid.

- a. Bid security has not been submitted as per the relevant clause.
- b. Incomplete, conditional, or optional bids will be rejected forthwith.
- c. Bids received after due date & time will not be accepted.
- d. Bids failing to meet the eligibility / evaluation criteria.
- e. Any noncompliance to the terms and conditions of bidding documents.
- f. Company shall be disqualified if financial figures are mentioned in the technical proposal.

8.3 Compliance to the Instructions.

- a. Quoted rates shall include all applicable GoP taxes otherwise all the prices quoted will be considered all taxes included.
- b. No cutting / overwriting of the offered prices will be accepted.
- c. Strict Compliance of bidding documents, given Specifications and eligibility / qualification criteria.

8.4 Performance of Bidder.

- a. In case of any poor performance by the selected bidder, PSEB reserves the right to issue Poor Performance Certificate to bidder. PSEB reserves the right to confiscate the bid security/performance bond of the bidder in case of three poor performance certificate, and bar the bidder from participation in future procurements of PSEB.

9. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

- a. Should the selected bidders decline to accept the Purchase Order/Contract, their bid security will be confiscated, and a poor performance certificate will be issued to vendor.
- b. In the event of a discrepancy between the unit price and total price for any items quoted in the bid, the unit price of that/those items shall prevail and decision of PSEB in this regard shall be final.
- c. Total Prices must align with the individual prices of all the items quoted and delivered.
- d. Participating vendors are requested to abstain from all overt & covert activities that may arise any doubt or ambiguity in the tendering process and tender opening session.

10. BIDDER'S QUERIES.

Any queries by the Bidders must be addressed at least three (3) working days before the bid submission deadline, otherwise PSEB will not be liable to respond.

11. PRE-BID MEETING.

Pre bid meeting on PSEB Web Portal Hosting

A pre-bid meeting will be held on July 18th, 2024 at 11:00 am address the queries, if any, of the prospective bidders. Please use following link to join meeting:

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<https://zoom.us/j/97958332631?pwd=rhhDSR0zSD7qLmk17ge6xsP5a8O6Cz.1>

12. POINT OF CONTACT. (e-mails)

For Admin query To: rarif@pseb.org.pk

For Technical query To: sbilal@pseb.org.pk

13. BID SUBMISSION AND OPENING ADDRESS.

Manager Administration

Pakistan Software Export Board
6th Floor, State life Building, Blue Area,
Islamabad

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Annexure-I : Financial Proposal for Hosting Platforms

A. Requirements for Hosting on Local cloud Platform

VM Options	vCPU's	vCPU Speed Minimum	RAM	HD/Storage	Cost		
					01 Year	02 Years	03 Years
1	04	2.0 GHz	16 GB	500 GB SSD			
2	04	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD			
3	08	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD			
4	08	2.0 GHz	64 GB	500 GB SSD			
5	16	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD			
6	16	2.0 GHz	64 GB	500 GB SSD			
7	Cost of addition SSD /Object Oriented storage in 100 GB sizing						
8	Cost of Load Balancer, if and when required						
Total							

AND/OR

B. Requirements for Hosting in Data Center Environment

VM Options	vCPU's	vCPU Speed Minimum	RAM	HD/Storage	Cost		
					01 Year	02 Years	03 Years
1	04	2.0 GHz	16 GB	500 GB SSD			
2	04	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD			
3	08	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD			
4	08	2.0 GHz	64 GB	500 GB SSD			
5	16	2.0 GHz	32 GB	500 GB SSD			
6	16	2.0 GHz	64 GB	500 GB SSD			
7	Cost of addition SSD /Object Oriented storage in 100 GB sizing						
8	Cost of Load Balancer, if and when required						
Total							

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C. Software Requirements On All Servers (Option-C is must requirement whichever the option (A or B) PSEB opt to procure.

Sr. #	Server Type	Software Required	Cost		
			01 Year	02 Years	03 Years
01	Application Server	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ubuntu (latest/stable version) • Nginx (latest/stable version) • PHP-FPM (latest/stable version), PHP 7.3+ including basic + additional support libraries like Curl, Mastering, MCrypt, gd, libimage, etc. • Redis/Memcached Server for caching • GlusterFS Client or its equivalent on local cloud (in case service provider managed NFS is not used) including its dependencies will be acquired if and when required. 			
02	Database Server	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MariaDB or above (latest stable version) • Redis/Memcached Server for caching if required 			
03	AI/BI Server	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ubuntu 18 (Stable version) • Nginx • Elastic Stack – Kibana, Elasticsearch and Logstash • Redis/Memcached Server for caching 			
In case service provider doesn't have managed NFS service then GlusterFS Server including its dependencies will be acquired if and when required.					
Total					

Important Note:-

Price shall include the cost of software/ applications (if any), installation, configuration as per portal requirement, updates and support during the tenure of the service agreement)