

LIMITED-SOURCES JUSTIFICATION

1. **Contracting Activity:** Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Procurement, Acquisition, and Logistics
Technology Acquisition Center
23 Christopher Way
Eatontown, NJ 07724

2. **Description of Action:**

This proposed action is for a firm-fixed price sole source task order to Vecna Technologies, Inc. (henceforth referred to as Vecna) 36 Cambridge Drive, Suite 36, Cambridge, Maryland (MD) 02140-2313, under the General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Schedule GS-35F-0363L for the procurement of operational and sustainment support services for the Veterans Point of Service (VPS), Office of Veterans Access to Care, vKiosk program.

3. **Description of the Supplies or Services:**

The proposed effort is for a comprehensive range of operations and maintenance (O&M) support services for the vKiosks, which includes Vecna's solution of VetLink hardware and Vecna proprietary software, which is the VetLink kiosk system utilized by VA, Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Point of Service (VPS) program. The VetLink kiosk system operates in all VA Medical Centers (VAMC) and their satellite treatment facilities. For VAMCs, self-service patient kiosks lessen a Veteran's wait time for appointment check-in, updating personal patient information, completing clinical questionnaires, reviewing their medications and allergies as well as providing valuable information to their care providers. The current need to maintain the operational and sustainment of the VetLink system, including hardware and software, is critical to the VPS Program Office. The O&M contract GS-35F-0363L VA118-15-F-0047 will expire on September 30, 2019 and the Performance Management and Control contract, VA118-16-C-1203, expired on July 5, 2019. The O&M support services are inclusive of a three-tier service desk and performance management services for the vKiosks. The scope includes project management, support for all hardware and software deployed by the VPS Program Office throughout the country, and the connectivity and network behavior of the VetLink hardware and Vecna's proprietary software. This support includes technical advice, trouble analysis, problem detection, problem resolution, and general information systems support to users. This effort shall cover any support services for the vKiosk hardware, vKiosks peripherals such as magnetic strip readers, card image scanners, barcode scanners, VetLink servers, Vecna proprietary software, and network connectivity. This effort requires software/hardware troubleshooting, hardware vKiosk extended warranties for 750 vKiosks, including installation and required

documentation as it relates to supporting the vKiosk solution which includes kiosk appliances, each peripheral device, the server and the network infrastructure supporting them. The scope of this effort includes the sustainment of the Vecna proprietary software such as critical bug fixes and security patches. This software support is required to proactively manage any defects in the existing software and to maintain the software's current performance level including associated software release support. To maintain efficiency of use, the O&M services also require system end-user sustainment training both on-site and virtual. This effort requires improving kiosk metrics and generating performance management reports. This effort does not include the purchase of any additional kiosks.

This effort is for a six (6) month base period with four (4), six (6) month option periods. The overall period of performance shall not exceed thirty (30) months.

4. Authority:

This acquisition is conducted under the authority of the Multiple-Award Schedule Program. The specific authority providing for a limited source award is Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 8.405-6(a)(1)(i)(B), "Only one source is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services are unique or highly specialized."

5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above:

The proposed source is Vecna, 36 Cambridgepark Drive, Suite, MD. 02140-2313.

In June 2017, VA announced its decision regarding the future of VA's Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, otherwise known as the Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) and announced VA was adopting the same system as the Department of Defense (DoD), now known as Military Health System GENESIS, which at its core consists of a Cerner Millennium product which, when fully deployed, will provide a seamless patient healthcare record between VA and DoD. As a consequence of the announcement, the kiosk program, which relies on the underlying architecture platform for data sourcing, was required to analyze the VPS requirements to better understand what the transition to a Cerner EHR solution would mean for the deployment and sustainment of a new kiosk solution. In August 2018, the VPS Program Office conducted a kiosk gap analysis with Cerner that took seven months and determined that there was roughly a 60 to 70 percent gap between the vKiosk and Cerner's kiosk solution. As a result, a decision was made to phase into the Cerner kiosk solution with the understanding that a shift to using a Cerner kiosk solution would mean significant development work in order to meet VA's kiosk needs. Then unexpectedly in June 2019, Cerner announced it was abandoning its kiosk application development,

thus requiring the VPS Program Office to plan and define the way forward for the kiosk program with the understanding that Cerner has officially discontinued its development strategy for a patient kiosk solution.

This unanticipated change in course requires that VA continue O&M for its deployed kiosks for an estimated 30 months while it pursues a full and open competition for a Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) solution. The VPS program office requires continued operation and sustainment services for the existing Vecna vKiosks in order to prevent a break in services which would result in disruption to the health care of Veterans. The only source capable of providing these support services is the current kiosk incumbent, Vecna. Vecna is the original provider of the VetLink system, including its proprietary software integrated with hardware and branded as the VetLink System.

Integrated in the VetLink system is Vecna proprietary software. This software provides the current kiosk functionality including checking into appointments, reviewing and updating Protected Personal Information (PPI), co-pay balances, VA prescriptions and allergy information; and view and print upcoming appointments. The software also provides the drivers that run the kiosk and associated peripherals such as barcode scanners, magnetic strip readers, thermal printers, and image scanners. Vecna's proprietary commercial software product was designed and configured to be compatible with the branded VetLink hardware.

Additionally, the vKiosks require critical continued servicing of the hardware due to its end-of-life status. Only VetLink branded hardware replacement parts are compatible. Use of any other brand name hardware would not fit into the current deployed vKiosk due to the proprietary design of the kiosks. No source other than Vecna, has the original kiosk parts required for the branded VetLink system. Currently, only the VetLink branded hardware is configured to Vecna's proprietary software code. As a result, no source other than Vecna is capable of providing the required operation and sustainment support. Use of any other brand name hardware will increase the risk of an inoperable VetLink System due to the reconfiguration time of software that would be required. Other commercial brand name hardware run on a particular platform, which is an unknown. A platform dependency means that software can only be used on that platform. Therefore, this type of dependency requires time to analyze and reconfigure software which runs the firmware for the associated hardware peripherals. The analysis and reconfiguration is at least a six month lead time and requires additional costs. The Government technical experts have estimated that reconfiguration is required on the front and back ends of any other hardware solution. The Government estimate is a duplication cost of at least \$500K; however, back end configuration costs is an unknown due to its dependency on the particular platform.

Further, since Vecna configured its proprietary kiosk software to be compatible with the Vetlink branded hardware and infrastructure, only Vecna can provide the technical support to maintain and sustain the software due to the proprietary nature of the software. The software source code is solely owned by Vecna and no other vendor is authorized to access and use the data. Based on the proprietary nature of the VetLink software, no other source can provide the technical support for the VetLink software which encompasses troubleshooting and resolving VetLink software issues. Failure to keep the VetLink system operational will result in Veterans inability to check-in to appointments, review and update their PPI and view and print upcoming appointments.

The VPS program requires continued operations and sustainment support services for the current VetLink system as a bridge until a competitive solution can be developed that integrates with the Cerner EHRM.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition:

Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. This effort did not yield any sources that can meet the Government's immediate, short-term requirements. There is no competition anticipated for this acquisition. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 8.405-6(a)(2) the award notice for this action will be synopsized on the Federal Business Opportunities website and this justification will be made publicly available within 14 days of award.

7. Actions to Increase Competition:

The VPS office has determined that the kiosk program future requirements will be met by a competitive COTS open market solicitation. In anticipation of this future competitive solution, the following is provided:

The solution shall be a 21st Century kiosk system that will streamline the way Veterans schedule and check-in for appointments. It will increase productivity, while reducing life cycle cost.

The future architectural solution will be cloud based, serverless, Wi-Fi enabled, operate from a touch screen tablet, and offer a mobile application. The architectural solution must interface with Cerner as the authoritative system/source.

The COTS open market solution, at a high level, will need to have the following salient characteristics for front-end hardware:

1. Tablet;
2. Touch screen minimal diagonal screen size of 12 to 14 inches ;

3. Wi-Fi Standards: Wi-Fi (802.11 a/b/g/n/ac); dual band (2.4 gigahertz (GHz) and 5GHz); High Throughput (HT)80 with Multiple Input, Multiple Output (MIMO); Yes, add
4. Mount to wall or desk (no floor stands).

The COTS open market solution, at a high level, will need to have the following salient characteristics for software, Tablet and/or Mobile application:

1. Interface with Cerner Millennium and/or VistA;
2. Integrate with Cerner Scheduling and/or VistA Scheduling;
3. Analyze Data for reporting of utilization;
4. Integrate with Beneficiary Travel Self Service System (BTSSS) and/or VistA Beneficiary Travel(BT);
5. Check-In Appointment (touch screen self-service – via Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) and/or social security number (SSN)/ date of birth (DOB)/single sign-on (SSOi), two form factor rule available for log-on;
6. Appointment reminders – integrate with VEText or Cerner SMS messaging;
7. Able to camera capture VHIC and Insurance Cards;
8. Able to take patient vitals via thumb pad (tablet or mobile phone);
9. View and update personal profile or demographic information;
10. View and confirm insurance information is either correct or incorrect;
11. Digitally Sign forms;
12. View, email or print future appointments;
13. View, email or print travel directions to appointments;
14. Request medical record and offer a digital copy (encrypted) ;
15. Link to VA Forms;
16. Patient Queuing (e.g. check In, surgery, clinic walk-ins and pharmacy);
17. Support Questionnaires and/or National surveys.

The VPS Program Office's plan is to move to a COTS kiosk solution as soon as reasonably possible. In late August 2019, the VPS Program Office began initiating market research to include medical kiosk vendors in order to ascertain if industry can provide a commonality of software requirements/functions followed by hardware requirements. The VPS Program Office anticipates an initial set of requirements to be defined in the late September 2019 timeframe. Following the completion of the market research and requirement definition, the VPS Program Office will define and set the software and hardware requirements that will be communicated to industry through an Industry Day.

8. Market Research:

A Request for Information was posted on the Federal Business Opportunities page on July 24, 2019. On August 6, 2019, a total of three responses were received - Klastes Business Solutions Incorporated (Women Owned Small Business), Principle Information Technology Company (Small Disadvantaged

Business), and Vecna Technologies LLC (Small Business). The technical review concluded that only Vecna was capable of submitting a responsive bid to the solicitation requirements. Neither Klastes Business Solutions nor Principle Information Technology Company addressed their organization's capability to access the proprietary software, which is required to provide the entire range of requirements in the solicitation. To clarify, the Government requested the two respondents confirm if it can access the proprietary software. Based on these communications, it was confirmed that neither respondent can access the proprietary software. As a result, only Vecna was found capable of providing the required operation and sustainment support services as the other two responses did not clearly address their ability or access to the software to meet the hardware and software constraints stated in the requirements. Based on the above, there is no competition anticipated for this effort, and therefore, the acquisition will be solicited sole source to Vecna Technologies.

9. Other Facts: None