RFP 742-21-184-2 Artificial Intelligence (Chat-Bot)

Questions and Answers:

1. How many users from the university (aprox.) will use the chatbot?

   Answer: 900 staff, 7500 students

2. How many users outside the university (aprox.) will use the chatbot?

   Answer: UnKnown

3. Currently, how much effort and employees answer the questions that the users ask?

   Answer: Gustimate 30 employees, Effort changes depending on time of Year, Enrollment is always higher Id say 95%, Other times Id say 30%

4. Have you already identified the top 5, 10 or top 20, etc. questions the users ask?

   Answer: No

5. Do you currently have an information or support web page or link where the users can be redirected?

   Answer: No

6. Have you tried any previous similar solutions? If yes, what were they focused on?

   Answer: No

7. What is your main platform or where would you like to implement your chatbot? (A power apps site, university web page, etc.)

   Answer: University Website for non authenticated users, Sharepoint , Student Portal and Teams for authenticated users

8. Do you have any preferences on which chatbot frameworks you want to implement?

   Answer: No

9. What is the total budget for the project?

   Answer: Not Set

10. In order to cater to individuals with disabilities, do you have requirements in mind?

    Answer: Yes, You must follow the State of Texas Accessibility guidelines.

11. Any restrictions on citizenship for resources?

    Answer: No

12. Will access to resources (platforms, servers, portals) be provided?

Answer: Yes

13. Will a single login (outside of the ones already created for students) be required?

    Answer: No

14. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this?
         (like,from India or Canada)
    Answer: Yes

15. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?
    Answer: No, Meeting through MS Teams will be used.

16. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)

    Answer: Yes

17. Can we submit the proposals via email?

    Answer: Yes, the University will accept submission via email. No sealed submission is required. Please make sure your HSP plan is a separate document.

    Email Submission will be addressed to:

        E. Montalvo
        Director of Purchasing
        Montalvo_e@utpb.edu

    Mailed Submission will be addressed to:

        E. Montalvo
        Director of Purchasing
        4901 E. University Blvd.
        Odessa, TX 79762

18. Is there a requirement for font, font size, and margins for the submission you prefer?

    Answer: No

19. Section 2.5.4 of the RFP requires that a separate copy of the HUB Materials be submitted. Is this in addition to the HUB Materials described in Section 3.5.6?

    Answer: No. One copy of the HSP plan must be submitted as a separate attachment from the proposal response.

20. Should responses be made within each of the sections and appendices required in the proposal?

Answer: This is strongly encouraged in order for the Evaluation committee to find the requested scored criteria in the response proposal

21. Are cover letter and/or executive summary permitted?
    Answer: Yes

22. Does the chatbot need to have a conversation or does it simply need to answer individual questions one at a time with no connection between them?

    Answer: I would prefer if it was able to have a connection between questions

23. There is a stated goal for the system to "answer 75% of their questions". Does this mean
    a. Correct answers to 75% of all questions asked,
    b. Providing some answer to 75% of questions asked,
    c. Correctly auto-routing 75% of questions to appropriate humans,
    d. Responding appropriately to 75% of incoming messages (if it's a chatbot, not all received messages are questions - people says things like "hi"), or YES
    e. Providing at least partial automation to 75% of incoming messages?

    Answer: d

24. Please describe your expectations for responding to questions and/or incoming messages.

    Answer: That the Bot is able to respond appropriately to 75% of the questions.

25. Is there any existing data around the kinds of questions you expect to answer? If no data are available, is there some kind of test plan you will share during the project so that those undertaking the project can know the number and kinds of conversations we need to handle.

    Answer: we will help deliver as many expected questions as possible during implementation

26. What kinds of resources will be available for integration to answer questions related to financial aid policies, admissions policies, course schedules, or any other questions that require some form of external information. For example, will we need to connect to a database that contains course schedules for a given semester?

    Answer: This will depend on the system integrating too. Some will give DB access others might have some sort of API and will need to be worked on with the vendor and out technical team.

27. Further to integration, how do you envision access to the chatbot within these applications?

    Answer: All systems are web based so I am envisioning a web pulgin.

28. How tightly integrated with the user interface do you envision?

    Answer: Unsure

29. What is the relative benefit of automatically routing a question to the correct expert compared to fully, automatically responding to it?
    Answer: Full automation is preferred to help with work load

    Answer: Full automation is preferred to help with work load.

30. Do you have a budget ceiling for this project?

    Answer: $150,000

31. What are the various contents that Authenticated User and non-authenticated users will be facilitated through Chabot?

    a. For the Authenticated user, does the Bot support multiple departments? What is the content scope?
       Answer: Data from integrated systems
    b. Similarly, what is the Content scope for the non-authenticated users?
       i. For Example, with regard to non-authentic user support, the bot must interface with FAQ, as per website FAQ as follows - Course Evaluation FAQ, Internship FAQ, Audit FAQ, Library FAQ). Defining this would help.
       Answer: WebSite and predefined Q&A's

32. With regard to the Functional Specification - Ability to hand off a customer to a live agent for chat.
    a. What is the scope of live Agent? Should it cover 24x7 availability? How many dedicated agents may need to be planned?
       Answer: Should know if a live agent is available and transfer if they are. If not "Take a Message" email the correct agnet so they can respond later.

    b. Is there any restriction on the agent team location and support?
       Answer: UTPB staff can be located onsite or remotely.

33. How many authenticated users may need to be planned for this solution?
    Answer: 7,000

34. Is the entire technology landscape available in Cloud OR on-premises OR Hybrid infrastructure?
    Answer: Technology is On-premises

35. Can you please define Content maturity for BOT Enablement?
    a. Beginner, intermediate, advanced, complete
    Answer: Beginner

36. What is proposed budget for this effort?

Answer: 150,000

37. Are services are purchased on a monthly/annual basis and what is length of the award?
Answer: 3 Years

38. In RFP there is requirement "Ability to hand off a customer to a live agent for chat" – does it mean that user is provided a phone number he/she can call a call center maintained by University IT Helpdesk to handle any questions from users?
Answer: No, Chat handoff to Agent on chat.

39. Do you have Azure subscription?
Answer: Yes

40. Please share the O365 license types assigned to internal users. Count of total active O365 licenses?
Answer: A5 for faculty 863, A5 for Students 7440

41. What would be the tentative count of unique authenticated and non-authenticated monthly users who will access the bot?
Answer: see question 1

42. Which authentication Identity Provider is implemented? E.g. Azure AD, On-premise AD or any other?
Answer: hybrid AD with Azure

43. Where all the BOT needs to be deployed to for Authenticated users? Does it need to be deployed on some website or Teams? Please share all the details of technology of the website?
Answer: see Question 7

44. Does the Non-Authenticated users Bot need to be deployed on UTPB.edu website?
Answer: Yes

45. Specify components/functionalities of PeopleSoft that needs to be integrated with bot
Answer: looking to know what you are able to provide.

46. Specify components/functionalities of Canvas LMS that needs to be integrated with bot
Answer: looking to know what you are able to provide.

47. Specify components/functionalities of MS Teams that needs to be integrated with bot
Answer: looking to know what you are able to provide.

48. Authenticated Chatbot should integrated with SharePoint & Websites - Can you share details of these. Are these SharePoint Online Sites? Which websites and what technology are these websites are built on?

Answer: Sharepoint is O365 hosted by Microsoft. Website is Hosted and we use Cascade to maintain it.

49. An integration is required for non-authenticated/public facing bot with UTPB.edu. Please share the integration components / functionalities Required? Also, what technology is this website built on (UTPB.edu)?

Answer: Cascade, looking to know what you are able to provide.

50. Is live agent handoff required in both public facing (non-authenticated) bot and internal bot (Authenticated)?

Answer: non-authenticated only at this time

51. Does university have any existing Live agent hub or CRM? If yes, please share the details. If no, is there any preference to any Live agent tool?

Answer: No, no preference. We do own Slate and Mongoose.

52. Will university deploy its support staff to provide support for requests which will escalated to human agent from bot?

Answer: Yes

53. Which all different languages should this bot support?

Answer: English, Spanish

54. For the multilingual support, is university fine with AI translation services for translating bot responses from primary language or they need a separate knowledge base of each supported language.

Answer: AI translation until University Spanish site is complete.

55. Is university looking for subscription-based Chabot product?

Answer: we are open to proposals.

56. Is university fine with custom developed solution as per their requirements?

Answer: Yes

57. University want to host the solution on their environment (Azure, AWS, GCP) or they are fine with hosting the solution on provider's environment?

Answer: Would prefer Azure but not a requirement.

58. To enable access on Smartphones/ Tablets, do you expect integration with any of the college's mobile app or user will access the Chabot from within the college's site.
   Answer: no App is planned at this time.

59. Apart from students and prospective students, is there any other user personas who will be accessing the bot, like different departments, etc. If yes, how many?
   Answer: see question 1

60. Do you have in-house IT support staff to provide post live support or do you need a vendor to provide it?
   Answer: yes but would like to have support options.

61. Do you have FAQs and other content ready for ingestion to the Chabot database or you want the offeror to develop it for you?
   Answer: no formal FAQ. Informal ones are available.

62. Referring to section 5.4 - Assumptions, we wanted to understand if the University is looking for one cost to implement chatbot for prospective Students only or looking for 2 different costs each for prospective and non-prospective Students?
   Answer: individual and together would be nice.

63. Referring to "Report on questions being asked and how they were answered", please share more details specific to your expectations around "how they were answered", what level of details are expected here?
   Answer: list of questions and the answers the bot provided. Ex. Human: what color is the sun. Bot: Yellow.

64. Referring to "Admins should be able to update how answers should be given to specific questions" we understand, you want admin to be able to update answer to the specific questions. Rest the chatbot will be able to find correct answer from the Q&A bank using AI and NLP. Correct?
   Answer: Yes: Ex. Human: what color is the sun. Bot: Green.(Wrong answer so I tell the Bot it was Yellow, not green)

65. We would like to understand the type of information to be pulled from SharePoint team sites? How many such team sites to be considered for integration?
   Answer: Approx. 67 sites, News Articles, Info from Web Pages, Calendars.

66. We would like to confirm that University will accept the proposal submission via email. No Sealed submission is required if email submission is done. Correct?
   Answer: Yes, the University will accept submission via email. No sealed submission is required. Please make sure your HSP plan is a separate document.

   Email Submission will be addressed to:

        E. Montalvo

67. Referring to section 3.6 Miscellaneous, when proposing a cloud hosted solution, we don't think following questions have any relevance to this solicitation for AI Chatbot software implementation and should be removed.

    3.6.4 Describe the bandwidth and wireless signal service level guarantees.
    3.6.5 Describe your normal hardware refresh cycle.

    Kindly update the question and help us in understanding context of the above questions so that we can address your query to serve you better.

    Answer: Correct, Please ignore

68. Referring to the section 3.6.11, please provide more details on "gaming functionality" here considering this to be a chatbot solution to answer students queries. Let us have more details around this requirement.
    Answer: Do you give badges to authenticated users for using the bot? Like first time user, You have asked 10,000 questions etc. Something to help encourage use of the bot.

69. Can you share the Budget Range for this engagement? - 0-100K, 100-200K, 200-300K, >300K?
    Answer: 100-200

70. We have to provide inputs to number of different technical questions and we feel June 24th would be aggressive. Therefore, for us to serve better and present best of our proposal and solution, we would request the University to consider our 2 weeks of extension for proposal submission.
    Answer: We will provide an additional week from the original submittal date

71. General - Governance - Do we have IT Governance [Project Management, Technical staff for Infrastructure, Application SMEs for Peoplesoft, Canvas, O365, MS Teams, SharePoint & Single Sign On] in place at UTPB to assist with project management and execution?
    Answer: Yes

72. Application Usage - What is the anticipated User Volume from 1 year, 3 Year and 5 Year perspective for Autheticated Users (Ballpark estimate within +- 25%)?
    Answer: Authenticated Year 1 20%, Year 3 80%, Year 5 90%, Unauthenticated Year 1 40%, Year 3 80%, Year 5 95%

73. Technology - Single Sign On - Can we get more details on current Authetication and Authorization technology / application service utilized (like Oauth, Okta, AD etc.)?
    Answer: Hybrid AD, Shibbiloth, Azure SAML2

74. Technology - Are we open to leverage Cloud Natural Language Processing & Conversational AI services made available by leading AI companies like Google, Amazon AWS etc.?
    Answer: Yes

75. Technology - Need Confirmation - For Non Authenticated Users, Source of Knowledge is only through public website and FAQs available

    Answer: Yes

76. Technology - Do we have an existing question logs / Approximate number of questions for Autheticated and Non Autheticated Users
    Answer: No

77. Technology - Language Support: Which all languages ChatBot needs to support?
    Answer: Spanish, English

78. Technology - ChatBot: Do we need Voice enabled ChatBots (VoiceBot) as an addin to ChatBot?
    Answer: No

79. Technology - Live Agent - Which telephony system [technology] is currently being used to answer live calls? How many agents are currently utilized to answer incoming / outgoing call volumes?
    Answer: Legacy Avaya but migrating to MS Teams. 30

80. Technology - Is Client looking for Chat bot deployment as SAAS / On Perm ?
    Answer: No Preference

81. Technology - Are the API's / Service end points available for Canvas, People soft?
    Answer: Yes

82. Technology - What is the Live Agent platform

    Answer: we do not have one

83. Technology - Do we have API endpoints already built for Integrating systems like Peoplesoft, O365 to fetch the information sought by Authenticated User? Do we need to consider efforts for building these Integrations?
    Answer: No, Yes

84. User Experience - Does the User Interface need to accommodate for gifted or special need users?
    Answer: Yes, it must be compliant with the State of Texas Accessibility law.

85. University want to host the solution on their environment (Azure, AWS, GCP) or they are fine with hosting the solution on provider's environment? To enable access on Smartphones/ Tablets, do you expect integration with any of the college's mobile app or user will access the Chabot from within the college's site.

Answer: No preference, no, website