



**STATE OF TENNESSEE**  
**Department of Finance and Administration, Strategic Technology Solutions**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**  
**FOR**  
**Vendor Assistance for American Disabilities Act (ADA) State Compliance**

**RFI # 31701-03579**  
**October 18, 2024**

**1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The State of Tennessee, Department of Finance & Administration - Strategic Technology Solutions ("State" or "STS") issues this Request for Information ("RFI") for the purpose of soliciting proposals from qualified, experienced service providers who will be able to provide products and services that will update the State's applicable digital content to be ADA compliant, meeting the Revised 508 Standards and the 2023 version of WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standards. The goal of the STS ADA Digital Accessibility Initiative (ADA Program) is to ensure all digital content used by employees or which is public facing is accessible for users of all abilities and that agencies within STS consolidated support have met the requirements "for making accessible the services, programs, and activities offered to the public through the Web and Mobile Applications" and to the extent necessary, ensuring compliance for State employees, as well.

**2. BACKGROUND:**

1,747,053 adults in Tennessee have a disability; this is equal to 32% or one in three adults. On April 24, 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) published a final rule updating its regulations for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as found in 28 C.F.R. Part 35 (the Rule). The new Rule has specific requirements about how to ensure web content and Mobile Applications are accessible to people with disabilities. The Rule states that "it is critical to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access important web content and Mobile Applications quickly, easily, independently, privately, and equally." The State meets the definition of "a public entity, other than a special district government, with a total population of 50,000 or more" and thus shall comply with this Rule by April 24, 2026. There are a total of 23 agencies supported by STS. Each of these agencies are in the process of performing an inventory of the applications that will fall within the scope of the ADA Program. This inventory process is scheduled to be completed by October 31, 2024.

All digital services, programs, and activities offered to the public and employees through the Web and Mobile Applications belonging to the State will need to be reviewed for compliance and

potentially updated or modified to remain compliant within this ADA Program. It should be noted that this RFI addresses the services to be provided for in-house Mobile and Website Applications developed by State personnel. Vendor applications and websites are outside the scope of services requested.

### **3. DEFINITIONS:**

- 3.1. Web Applications - Transactional sites running in a web browser (e.g., Powerplatform, ServiceNow, Agency-specific sites)
- 3.2. Mobile Applications - Applications designed to run on an iPhone or Android device (e.g., MyTN)
- 3.3. WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) - A global collaboration on technical standards to make the web more accessible to all individuals everywhere.
- 3.4. Websites - Non-Transactional sites running in a web browser (e.g., TN.Gov, WordPress)
- 3.5. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) – A technology that converts text in images into a machine-readable format.
- 3.6. Level AA – WCAG is broken into three levels of compliance, A, AA, AAA, with conformance at higher levels indicating conformance at lower levels. The DOJ Rule specifies that States are legally required to be compliant at Level AA, indicating Websites are both usable and accessible for most users whether they have a disability or not.
- 3.7. Undue Burden or Exceptions - Those exceptions provided under the DOJ Rule which are defined in the federal register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/24/2024-07758/nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-disability-accessibility-of-web-information-and-services-of-state>

### **4. SCOPE OF SERVICES:**

The State is seeking responses from qualified vendors able to assist with remediation of Web and Mobile Applications, as well as the site assets (documents of a variety of types) associated with those applications, in accordance with the application accessibility standards and guidelines provided under the 2023 version of WCAG 2.1 AA.

### **5. COMMUNICATIONS:**

- 5.1. Please submit your questions and response to this RFI to:  
Shannon Keefe, Contract Specialist  
Finance and Administration, Strategic Technology Solutions  
901 Rep. John Lewis Way North, Nashville, TN 37243  
(615) 350-4244  
[Shannon.Keefe@tn.gov](mailto:Shannon.Keefe@tn.gov)
- 5.2. Please reference RFI # 31701-03579 with all communications to this RFI.
- 5.3. Questions should be directly emailed to the main point of contact by the deadline listed below in Section 6.
- 5.4. Please limit all questions to one submission per vendor.

### **6. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

EVENT		TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		10/18/2024
2.	Vendor Written Questions and Comments Deadline	2:00pm	10/29/2024
3.	State Response to Written Questions and Comments		11/08/2024
4.	RFI Response Deadline	2:00pm	11/22/2024

## 7. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- 7.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.
- 7.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the State chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.
- 7.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.
- 7.4. Any services or products proposed in this RFI, must be in compliance with the following security policy: all State data must remain in the United States, regardless of whether the data is processed, stored, in-transit, or at rest. Access to State data shall be limited to US-based (onshore) resources only. Configuration or development of software and code is permitted outside of the United States, however, software applications designed, developed, manufactured, or supplied by persons owned or controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction or direction of, a foreign adversary, which the U.S. Secretary of Commerce acting pursuant to 15 C.F.R. 7 has defined to include the People's Republic of China, among others are prohibited. Any testing of code outside of the United States must use fake data. A copy of production data may not be transmitted or used outside the United States.
- 7.5. The State may request oral presentations from RFI respondents.
- 7.6. Responses should be prepared, with emphasis on completeness and clarity, and should NOT exceed twenty-five (25) pages in length. Responses, as well as any reference material presented, must be written in English, and must be written on standard 8 ½" x 11" pages and all text must be at least a 12-point font. All pages must be numbered.

**8. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:**

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

<b>RFI #31701-03579</b>	
<b>TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM</b>	
1.	RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:
2.	RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON: Name, Title: Address: Phone Number: Email:
3.	Provide examples of recommended similar solutions that have been implemented in other states or local governments. Include descriptions of the experience and challenges in those states. Provide any relevant information regarding implementation and customer satisfaction.
4.	Provide a description of the respondent's recommended approach, solution, and timeline to ensure compliance and conformance with Section 508, ADA, and the 2023 version of WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines, across multiple platforms. In your response, please define what platforms you service.
5.	Describe the specific approach to achieving Level AA conformance with the 2023 version of WCAG 2.1 guidelines, within the mandated deadline, using a multi-year plan.
6.	Provide a sample staffing plan indicating the number and roles of vendor personnel that a project of this nature would require.
7.	Describe the methodology for accomplishing testing and resolving deficiencies across multiple applications, using a multi-year approach.
8.	Provide a description of methods used for discovery and remediation of standard document types (e.g., documents, spreadsheets, pdfs, infographics/diagrams) as well as data dashboards, maps, charts/graphics, and OCR files. Include recommended workflows or business processes to define and perform archive actions on content that falls within the exceptions outlined in the Rule.
9.	Provide a description of the recommended testing tools to be utilized by respondent, agency, and User Acceptance Testing (UAT) staff, as well as recommended frequency of testing through various project phases with multiple solutions.
10.	Provide a description of the respondent's recommendation for the percentage of the applications that should be tested annually to ensure continued compliance.
11.	Provide a description of the respondent's testing output to include deficiency traceability and resolutions.
12.	Provide a description of anything STS should consider or any potential problems, issues and risks the State may experience while planning for the solution, as described in the RFI.
13.	Provide a description of recommendations of how the solution would be updated to reflect any federal requirements or new mandates that arise based on available methods/processes. Describe any anticipated barriers to complying with any state or federal laws.
14.	Provide a description of how a recommended solution could be configured and scaled to meet the business needs of State agencies for continued monitoring and support.

15. Provide any organizational change management recommendations to ensure continued compliance.
16. Provide recommendations on documentation for the Undue Burden or Exceptions provided under the federal Rule definitions.
17. We have several SharePoint and Power BI sites that would need to be assessed and remediated. Provide recommendations on how you would assess and remediate these sites.
18. To ensure future compliance, provide recommendations on best practices related to training.

<b>COST INFORMATIONAL FORM</b>
1. Propose an estimated cost range to complete the various ADA compliance services as described throughout the Technical Informational Form in Section 8 that your company provides. Please include your methodology and reasoning for the variance in the range, if applicable.
2. Describe the typical price range for hourly/daily services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Describe how ADA compliance services your company provides are billed (e.g., hourly/daily, fixed fee, etc.) for tasks such as project change requests, customizations, and configuration management.</li> <li>b. Provide a rate card for hourly/daily rates by resource (e.g., database administrator, business analyst, project manager).</li> </ul>
3. Provide cost information related to any tools recommended and any ongoing costs, such as ongoing licenses and/or subscriptions, etc.
4. Does your company provide no-cost proof of concept ADA compliance services to potential customers? If so, which services would you potentially be willing to provide under a no-cost proof of concept?

<b>ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>
1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional considerations that might benefit the State: