RFP 2025-01: Website Redesign
Questions and Answers

Contents

GENERAL QUESTIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
1.	Please clarify if we need submit the attachments separately with the proposal or we need to submit one copy of the proposals including all the attachments and required exhibits.	Covered California does not have a preference as long as all of the required documents and exhibits are included.
2.	Do we need to provide all the attachments in Pdf version only?	Per RFP 2025-01, Section 1.9 Format of Proposals, subsection 1, "Proposers may sign required attachments and documents electronically or with ink, so long as the attachments and documents are submitted in PDF format." Additionally, per subsection 3, "Proposer-suggested changes or exceptions to the Model Contract exhibits must be documented via tracked changes to the documents using Microsoft® Word®."
3.	2025-01 RFP Website Redesign - Addendum Timeline Is there any specific implementation timeline to be considered for website redesign	Covered California has a general implementation timeline in place, which will be finalized in collaboration with the selected vendor.
4.	Would Cover California consider changing the past project requirements from the past 2 years to the past "3" to "5" years.	Covered California is open to extending that timeframe and will issue Addendum 4 to reflect the updated schedule.
5.	Is there flexibility in the Agile cadence or must we strictly follow bi-weekly sprints?	Covered California prefers to follow the standard two (2)-week Agile sprint cadence but are open to discussing and finding a solution that works well for both the vendor's team and the Covered CA team.
6.	Should resumes be submitted only for key personnel or for all proposed team members?	Per RFP 2025-01, Section 4.3.3.1 Resumes, "Proposers must provide a resume of the relevant experience held by each proposed project team member."
7.	What is the maximum time Covered California needs to review and approve deliverables at each project phase? Are there any blackout periods (open enrollment, etc.) when testing or changes cannot occur?	The review and approval timeline will depend on the complexity and type of each deliverable. Covered California will work collaboratively to set appropriate timeframes during project planning. There are no blackout periods expected, as the new site will be developed on a separate platform, allowing testing and changes to proceed without impacting current operations.

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8.	Will the work plan, required under section 4.3.1 Understanding and Approach, count toward the narrative's 5-page limit?	Yes, the five (5) page limit includes the Work Plan that outlines your understanding of the SOW and describes tasks.
9.	Timeline Confirmation: To confirm, should all tasks outlined in Exhibit A (Tasks 1–7) be completed within the two-year performance period?	Yes, all tasks outlined in Exhibit A (Tasks 1–7) should be completed within the two (2)-year performance period.
10.	Travel Cost Expectations: The RFP indicates that travel expenses will not be reimbursed (Section 3.5.1). Should vendors incorporate any anticipated travel costs into their base cost proposal?	Yes, per the Exhibit B, Attachment 1 of the Model Contract, "*Rates identified in the Cost Worksheet shall be fully loaded and inclusive of all direct and indirect costs for all work completed, including, time, materials, tools and equipment used, and travel required to perform any or all support services under this Agreement."
11.	Catalyst for Redesign: Is there an internal catalyst or external event that has prompted Covered California to initiate this website redesign at this time?	The decision to initiate the website redesign was driven by internal goals focused on improving the overall user experience. As part of our ongoing commitment to serving Californians more effectively, we identified key areas where enhancements in design, functionality, and accessibility could significantly improve how users navigate and interact with the site. This effort reflects our proactive approach to staying aligned with modern digital standards and ensuring our platform continues to meet the evolving needs of our users.
12.	What prompted this redesign now? Was there a specific event, insight, or internal initiative driving it?	The decision to initiate the website redesign was driven by internal goals focused on improving the overall user experience. As part of our ongoing commitment to serving Californians more effectively, we identified key areas where enhancements in design, functionality, and accessibility could significantly improve how users navigate and interact with the site. This effort reflects our proactive approach to staying aligned with modern digital standards and ensuring our platform continues to meet the evolving needs of our users.

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13.	Is this project a completely new initiative, or is it a re-compete or extension of an existing contract?	This is a project that is a completely new initiative.
14.	If this is a new Contract, What is the annual Budget for this?	The annual Budget for this Contract is $750,000.00
15.	Could you clarify how the RFP was developed? Specifically, were any external consultants or vendors involved in drafting or providing guidance on its content?	This RFP was developed in-house without any external consultants or vendors involved in drafting or providing guidance.
16.	Will stakeholder interviews or workshops be facilitated by the City, or is the vendor expected to coordinate them?	If the Proposer is chosen for an interview, Covered California will reach out to the Proposers and provide information on the Interview process. The vendors are not expected to coordinate meetings.
17.	If the optional **HBEX migration** is activated, will the $500K amendment be automatically funded, or will this require a separate review and approval process?	If Covered California exercises the amendment option for the HBEX migration, there will be a formal amendment completed with the up to $500,000.00 being added to the contract total.
18.	How will it be awarded as Single Vendor or Multi Vendor?	Per RFP 2025-01, Section 1.8 Submission of Proposals, subsection 6, "The selection and contract award, if made, will be made to a single Proposer unless otherwise specified in this RFP." Additionally, per RFP 2025-01, Section 5.2 Phase Two: Technical Requirements, "the highest-scored proposal from a responsible Proposer will be selected for the contract award."
19.	We understand that the initial contract term is set for two years (November 10, 2025 – November 9, 2027), though the RFP notes that the term is subject to change and may be amended. Given that the redesign, development, MVP launch, QA, and post-launch iterations for a site of this scale can often be accomplished in under 12 months, would a shorter engagement be considered if it meets all project goals and milestones? If not, could you share more about the rationale for a two-year term?	Covered California welcomes vendor input on timeline efficiencies and would consider a shorter engagement if it demonstrably meets all objectives and provides appropriate post-launch support.

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20.	Given the contract start date of November 10, 2025, and the two-year term, are there prioritized phases or deliverables (e.g., MVP launch, iterative releases) within the timeline?	Yes, Covered California will prioritize key phases and deliverables, including an MVP launch and iterative releases, and will determine the detailed timeline collaboratively with the selected vendor.
21..	Beyond the 2-year contract window, is there a target launch window or milestone we should work toward?	At this time, there is no target launch window or milestone planned beyond the two (2)-year contract period.
22.	What was the annual spend for the previous year on this Project?	This is a new project, so there was no annual spend in the previous year specifically associated with it.
23.	How will Covered California manage **multi-vendor collaboration** (e.g., with Marketing AOR, IT security teams, multi-cultural transcreation partners)? Will there be a **single project owner** to streamline approvals?	Per RFP 2025-01, Section 1.8 Submission of Proposals, subsection 6, "The selection and contract award, if made, will be made to a single Proposer unless otherwise specified in this RFP." So there should be a single project owner and any additional collaborators will be considered subcontractors and should be listed on Attachment 5 Bidder Declaration (GSPD-05-105).
24..	Do you envision a joint development team (a collaborative implementation effort), or will the Contractor be responsible for implementation and run the development team independently?	Primarily, it is expected that the vendor will manage and run the development team independently, handling the implementation process on their own.
25.	If a Proposer plans to include subcontractors, is there a preference for local California-based SBs, MBs, or DVBEs?	If a Proposer decides to utilize subcontractors who are certified with the Department of General Services (DGS) as a Small Business (SB) or Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE), then the Proposer is entitled to preference and incentive options described in Section 6 Preference and Incentive Programs of RFP 2025-01.
26.	Are there any political guardrails or red tape that we will need to be aware of as we map out our plan and approach?	As a state agency, Covered California must comply with public procurement rules, accessibility standards, and data security regulations. While there are no unusual political constraints, approvals and stakeholder alignment must follow state processes, which may impact timelines. Clear documentation and collaborative

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		planning will help navigate these requirements effectively.
27.	When was the Covered California website (CoveredCA.com) last redesigned or redeveloped? Who was the vendor responsible for that effort? What was the approximate budget for that previous redesign project?	The website was last redesigned in the fall of 2021. This was completed with no budget because it was done in house.
28.	When was the last time the Covered California website was redesigned, and which vendor(s) were awarded the contracts for its design, development, and implementation?	The website was last redesigned in the fall of 2021. This was completed with no budget because it was done in house.
29.	Can one person be assigned to multiple project team roles?	Yes, if their expertise can encompass both roles.
30.	Can we propose additional roles outside of the roles listed in the RFP?	Yes, Covered California is looking for the vendor to complete the tables in Exhibit B, Attachment 1 with the list of proposed roles.
31.	How many revision cycles are expected per deliverable?	The number of revision cycles will depend on the type of deliverable. This can be discussed and defined more clearly based on the nature and complexity of each deliverable.
32.	How many rounds of design revisions do you anticipate during the website redesign process?	The number of design revision rounds will depend on the proposed design and how closely it aligns with the established vision.
33.	Will there be a formal timeline for review/approval to avoid delays?	Yes.
34.	Delivering the response: We deeply value in-person collaboration and would love the opportunity to present our proposal to your team in-person. Is this something we could arrange?	Due to time constraints, only the top two (2) - three (3) shortlisted proposals/vendors will have the opportunity to demo in person.
35.	Are reference letters required to be signed? Are there specific reference form templates we must use?	Per RFP 2025-01, Section 5.2.1.5 Proposer Interviews, Proposer is only required to submit Professional References if they are chosen to participate in the Interview. When the Proposer is notified that they were selected for an interview, information about required reference submission will be included.

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36.	What tools or platforms are planned for meetings and communication (e.g., Zoom, Teams, etc.)?	Covered California primarily uses Microsoft Teams for meetings and ongoing communication.
37.	Will proposer interviews and/or presentations be conducted virtually? If so, which platform (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) will be used?	Interviews will be conducted in person. More information will be provided to the top two (2) - three (3) proposers who will be invited to interview.
38.	Do you need design proposals in the submission?	All details about required submission documents can be found in RFP 20205-01, Section 4. Required Proposal Submission Content
39.	How will the evaluation results be communicated/notified?	After the Evaluation Team has scored the responsive proposal(s) on the Technical Requirements, then the top two (2) - three (3) Proposers will the highest scores will be contacted via email to be interviewed. Per the Key Action Dates (RFP 2025, Section 1.2), the Notice of Intent to Award will be posted publicly on the Covered California website in the week of September 29, 2025.
40.	What is your current annual spend on support?	Covered California has a 14-person, in house IT team to support this project.
41.	What are the expectation for uptime guarantees?	Covered California plans on a 99.9% uptime guarantee, but the specifics will be determined in coordination with the selected vendor after contract execution.
42.	Is this a deliverables based contract or time and materials?	This will be a deliverables-based contract.
43.	Can Covered California confirm whether the $1.5M cost ceiling is inclusive of all costs such as development, usability testing, hosting during build, accessibility testing, and post-launch support?	Yes, the $1.5M cost ceiling is inclusive of all costs such as development, usability testing, hosting during build, accessibility testing, and post-launch support.
44.	Is WCAG 2.1 AA compliance a requirement?	Yes, WCAG 2.1 AA compliance is required.
45.	Are there specific accessibility testing tools or methodologies mandated?	Accessibility is tested via Lumar and Figma.
46.	Is the optional $500K amendment (Task 7 – HBEX site migration) expected to be proposed now, or scoped and priced later if activated?	Exhibit B, Attachment 1: Cost Worksheet includes Task 7 and it should be completed and broken down similarly to the other 6 tasks.

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47.	Will Covered California require the same key personnel to remain assigned throughout the full 2-year contract term, or is staffing flexibility permitted post-MVP?	Per RFP 2025-01, Section 2.3 Reassignment of Personnel, subsection 1,"The Contractor shall not reassign substitute personnel assigned to the contract during the contract term without prior written approval of Covered California. If a Contractor employee is unable to perform duties due to illness, resignation, or other factors beyond the Contractor's control, the Contractor shall make every reasonable effort to provide suitable substitute personnel."
48.	Will CoveredCA allow its solution partner to work EDT hours, as long as its solution partner can make team members available during the normal workhours for CoveredCA employees as required? *References Section/Page: 3.5 Project Assumptions and Constraints*	Yes.
49.	Our firm is certified as a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE). Will this certification qualify for any scoring preference or incentive under this RFP?	Proposer must be certified with the Department of General Services (DGS) as a Small Business (SB), Micro Business (MB), or Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) to receive the preference and/or incentive points. Alternatively, the Proposer can subcontract out a percentage of their proposal to a certified SB, MB, and/or DVBE to receive the preference and/or incentive points. For more information about the preference and/or incentive options, please refer to Section 6 Preference and Incentive Programs of RFP 2025-01.
50.	Can you confirm which certifications or forms (e.g., SB, DVBE, SOS registration) must be submitted **at the time of proposal** to be considered responsive?	In order to receive preference/incentive points, the Proposer must list all SB/DVBE/MB subcontractors on Attachment 5: Bidder Declaration. If the subcontractor is a certified SB/DVBE/MB with the Department of General Services (DGS), then Covered California will evaluate and add any preference/incentive points to the proposal score. Additionally, if a Proposer wants to claim DVBE preference points, they must

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		also complete Attachment 8: Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Declarations (STD. 843).
51.	Is the cap of $1.5M is applicable for the full term (i.e. 2 years) of the contract or is it an annual appropriation allowing for a cost of up to $3M over the term? References Section/Page: **1.4** *Contract Term and 1.5 Contract Amount*	The cap is $1.5M for the full term of the contract.
52.	Is the cap of $1.5M is applicable for the full term (i.e. 2 years) of the contract or is it an annual appropriation allowing for a cost of up to $3M over the term? *References Section/Page: 1.4 Contract Term and 1.5 Contract Amount*	The cap is $1.5M for the full term of the contract.
53.	Does CoveredCA have an estimated timeline for the completion and selection of its CMS evaluation so that we can ensure we include that in the workplan appropriately.? *References Section/Page: 3.2 Purpose*	A final selection timeline is still being defined, but we anticipate making key decisions during the early phases of the project. Covered California will collaborate closely to align this with the workplan as details are finalized.
54.	Please confirm whether bidders are permitted to submit a Certificate of Insurance to satisfy the insurance requirements outlined in the RFP. *Required Documents, page 25*	Yes, Proposers should submit a certificate of insurance with all required insurances included to satisfy this requirement.
55.	The RFP does not appear to include a specific cost template. Please confirm whether bidders are permitted to use Exhibit B Attachment 1 – Cost Worksheet as a reference, or if bidders are expected to submit pricing details using their own template *Cost Proposal*	The cost template that should be completed and submitted as part of the proposal is Exhibit B, Attachment 1.
56.	Are there any known constraints or risks (e.g., legal, compliance, data privacy) that we should factor into our proposal?	As a state agency, Covered California must comply with public procurement rules, accessibility standards, and data security regulations. While there are no unusual political constraints, approvals and

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		stakeholder alignment must follow all applicable state rules and laws.
57.	Can we include blended rates for roles where multiple team members may contribute (e.g., UX Designers or Developers)?	Yes, a blended rate can be proposed; however, Covered California will only compensate at that proposed rate regardless of the personnel that contribute.
58.	The RFP mentions a potential $500,000 amendment for Task 7 (HBEX Site Migration). What factors will determine whether this amendment is exercised, and what is the expected timeline for this decision?	The decision to exercise the amendment for Task 7 will be made by Covered California executive leadership and Board. There is currently no expected timeline.
59.	What are Covered California's specific requirements for CMS licensing costs? Should vendors assume perpetual licensing, annual subscription, or enterprise licensing models in their cost proposals?	Content Management System (CMS) licensing costs are not part of this proposal. Vendors should focus their cost proposals on implementation and related services, excluding licensing fees. Covered California will evaluate and manage CMS licensing separately based on the selected solution.
60.	What constitutes a "high-priority issue" and what are the expected resolution times?	A high-priority issue is one (1) that significantly impacts site functionality, user experience, or critical operations. The resolution timeline for these issues is dependent on complexity.
61.	Scope Clarification – Is everything within https://apply.coveredca.com/ deemed out of scope for this procurement?	Yes, everything within https://apply.coveredca.com/ is outside the scope of this RFP.
62.	Use of Subcontractor Qualifications – Regarding Sections 5.2.1 & 5.2.1.2 (pages 30 & 31), can the Corporate Qualifications Summary and Past Projects Completed scored sections include qualifications and past projects from named subcontractors, including DVBE/SB partners, to help meet the evaluation criteria?	No, subcontractors cannot be utilized to meet the Corporate Qualifications Summary and Past Projects Completed. Prime Contractors must meet all of the qualifications required without the use of subcontracts to help meet the evaluation criteria.
63.	Use of Project Team Qualifications – Similarly, regarding Sections 5.2.1 & 5.2.1.4 (pages 30 & 31), can the Corporate Qualifications Summary and Past Projects Completed sections also include the relevant experience of	Yes.

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	named individual Project Team members to meet the evaluation criteria?	
64.	Past Projects Completed Requirement – Regarding Section 4.3.4, the requirement to narratively describe up to five (5) projects completed in the past two (2) years is limiting, especially for certified Small Businesses and DVBE firms that may take on fewer concurrent projects. We respectfully request that the State allow inclusion of both completed and currently active projects, and extend the timeframe to include projects completed within the past seven (7) years, so we can provide a broader and more accurate representation of our relevant experience.	Covered California is open to extending that timeframe and will issue Addendum 4 to reflect the updated schedule.
65.	Agile Methodology: Will the full project be expected to follow a specific Agile methodology (e.g., Scrum, SAFe)? Will Covered California ensure that key decision-makers are available to participate in Agile ceremonies?	While we would like the project to follow Agile methodology, we are open to discussing other possibilities depending on the vendor's approach and project needs. Covered California will ensure that key decision-makers and stakeholders are available to participate in Agile ceremonies, including sprint planning, reviews, and retrospectives, to support efficient collaboration and decision-making.
66.	Do you have this data with a breakdown of device types accessing the sites?	Yes, that data will be made available to the selected Proposer after contract execution.
67.	What are your internal review, feedback, and approval processes like?	Approval workflows may differ based on the nature of the deliverable, with certain items requiring escalation to senior leadership for final approval.
68.	Are there any additional services not explicitly mentioned in the Scope of Work that may be required (e.g., SEO optimization, analytics configuration)?	No, all the services are described in the Model Contract, Exhibit A, Scope of Work.
69.	What are the expectations for the phased releases mentioned in the	The phased releases will be determined in collaboration with the selected vendor, based on project scope and feasibility.

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	Scope of Work? Are there specific timelines or priorities for each phase?	
70.	Are there specific requirements for user roles, permissions, or publishing workflows?	Final details will be refined in collaboration with the selected vendor based on platform capabilities and organizational needs.
71.	Are there specific reporting requirements or communication protocols beyond the 48-hour issue notification?	Final details will be refined in collaboration with the selected vendor based on platform capabilities and organizational needs.
72.	What level of detail is required for deliverables such as wireframes, information architecture diagrams, and technical specifications?	Covered California expects deliverables like wireframes, information architecture diagrams, and technical specifications to be detailed enough to guide necessary decision-making.
73.	Are there specific enrollment periods that the MVP or subsequent releases must align with?	The alignment of the MVP and subsequent releases with specific enrollment periods will be determined in collaboration with the selected vendor, based on project scope and feasibility.
74.	Should the CMS accommodate time-sensitive publishing for state emergencies or urgent policy updates?	Yes, the Content Management System (CMS) should accommodate time-sensitive publishing.
75.	Is the scope inclusive of the entirety of the site experience – from the educational to shopping/comparison to lead generation/conversion, both pre and post sign-in?	No, the scope is focused on the experience up to the pre–sign-in stage. This includes educational content, shopping and comparison tools, and lead generation. Post–sign-in functionality is outside the scope of this project.
76.	To confirm, the redesign scope is limited to **responsive web (desktop/mobile)** — there is no expectation for native apps or kiosk experiences, correct?	Yes, the redesign scope is limited to responsive web (desktop/mobile).
77.	Will Covered California provide **technical documentation or API specs** for DHCS and other system integrations referenced in the scope?	Yes, documentation will be made available to the selected Proposer after contract execution.
78.	Exhibit A mentions, "Minimum Viable Product (MVP) and first releases of user functions for the first 12 months. The full project roadmap required in releases post-MVP is 24 months total for completion." Do you have a	The expectation is to collaborate with the selected vendor to define iterative milestones and deliverables within the 12-month timeline. While a full MVP launch by 12 months is the general goal, we are open to a phased approach that delivers value

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	roadmap that shows iterative milestones/deliverables in the 12-month timeline that we would target? Or is the expectation that the first go-live would be a full MVP launch at 12 months?	incrementally based on agreed-upon priorities.
79.	Is the defined budget focused on implementation, or should it also account for adjacent costs such as CMS licensing costs, additional tooling, and infrastructure?	No, the defined budget is focused solely on implementation costs.
80.	Given the hard cap of $1,500,000.00 for the original term and an additional $500,000.00 for the HBEX site migration, would Covered California please provide more detailed expectations on the prioritization of features and functionalities within this budget, especially if a comprehensive redesign pushes against these financial limits?	The expectations and functionality for HBEX will align with those developed for the new Covered California website, as HBEX will be incorporated into the newly built site.
81.	Regarding the "Payment Contingency based on QHP Fees," where Covered California has the option to cancel the contract with no liability or amend it for a reduced amount if QHP fees are insufficient, could Covered California provide clarity on the frequency of assessing QHP fee sufficiency and any potential mechanisms for early notification to the contractor?	Covered California is still working on responding to this question and will provide an updated response shortly.
82.	What recourse or mitigation strategies are available to the contractor in the event of a contract cancellation or reduction due to insufficient QHP funding?	Covered California is still working on responding to this question and will provide an updated response shortly.
83.	Is the $1,500,000 budget inclusive of all potential amendments (e.g., the optional $500,000 for HBEX site migration), or is it exclusive of those funds? Does the budget include software acquisition and operational	Currently the project is budgeted for $1,500,000.00 for the base contract and an additional $500,000.00 if the optional amendment is exercised. Software acquisition and operational costs are not included in the scope.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	costs (e.g., CMS platform licenses and volume usage charges)?	
84.	Given the initial contract amount limit of $1,500,000.00, could Covered California provide any further breakdown or allocation expectations across phases (e.g., discovery, design, development, UAT, deployment) to help proposers align their cost proposals?	Covered California does not have a set breakdown or allocation expectations across phases and would like to review what is proposed by the vendor.
85.	Will there be a pre-proposal conference or bidder's meeting scheduled?	No, there is no Pre-Proposal Conference or Bidder's Meeting scheduled. Please see RFP 2025-01, Section 1.2 Key Action Dates for a list of all the due dates for this RFP.
86.	What is the expected timeline for the evaluation and selection process following the August 20th deadline?	Proposer Interviews for the top two (2) - three (3) proposals are scheduled for September 11, 2025 – September 12, 2025. Covered California expects to have evaluate proposals before this time. The Notice of Intent to Award is scheduled to be released in the week of September 29, 2025.
87.	Is there a complete RFP that includes the scope for this project?	The detailed scope of services can be found in Exhibit A of the Model Contract.
88.	Or do you want a proposal based off assessing the existing website?	Please review RFP 2025-01, Section 4. Required Proposal Submission Content, for information about what is required to be submitted for a responsive proposal.
89.	Are there opportunities to subcontract for this RFP? If so, how do we advertise to prospective prime contractors?	Yes, there are opportunities for subcontracting. Covered California recommends that you post an Ad for this RFP on Cal eProcure to let Prime Contractors know you are interested. For information about placing Ads to Cal eProcure, please see the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8NrKwI 2z9g
90.	How does Covered California typically manage risks and challenges during a project, especially in terms of delays or unexpected issues?	Covered California manages project risks and challenges through proactive planning, continuous monitoring, and adaptive response strategies. This includes identifying potential risks early, maintaining clear communication among stakeholders, and implementing contingency plans to address

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		delays or unexpected issues swiftly and effectively.
91.	The website supports insurance policy browsing, comparison, and purchases. Will these functionalities be included in the redesign scope, or should they remain unchanged?	Final details will be refined in collaboration with the selected vendor based on platform capabilities and organizational needs. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their expertise.
92.	Will the contractor be responsible for improving the user flow for policy comparison, eligibility verification, account creation, and payment processing?	No.
93.	What is the deadline for the MVP (Minimum Viable Product) release, and how will features be prioritized across the MVP and post-MVP phases?	Final details will be refined in collaboration with the selected vendor based on platform capabilities and organizational needs.
94.	Can the proposal include optional services like content updates, training, or additional system integrations, or should the proposal strictly cover the defined scope?	The proposal should primarily address the defined scope, but you're welcome to include optional services—such as content updates, training, or additional system integrations—as clearly labeled add-ons. These will be considered separately and evaluated based on relevance and value.
95.	Does the budget allocated for this project include ongoing maintenance for the website for all years, or will maintenance be a separate budget item?	The budget includes maintenance and/or support (including accessibility) until the end of the contract term.
96.	What is your current annual budget for website maintenance?	The website is maintained in-house.
97.	What was the cost of the last website redesign? Are there any other significant past investments in the current website (e.g., hosting, development)?	The last redesign was conducted in-house. Maintenance, updates and upgrades are also managed in-house.
98.	Will interviews be conducted for the shortlisted bidders? If so, what areas will be emphasized during these interviews (e.g., project understanding, technical approach, team	Yes, interviews will be conducted for the top two (2) - three (3) shortlisted proposals. The focus will be on all of the areas mentioned.

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	qualifications, previous relevant projects)?	
99.	Are there any specific qualifications, certifications, or tools that would add value to the evaluation process (e.g., relevant past projects, CMS experience)?	Experience with Content Management System (CMS) implementations, especially in public or healthcare sectors, is highly valuable. Familiarity with accessibility standards, user-centered design, and successful execution of similar projects will also strengthen the evaluation.
100.	What criteria will you use to shortlist potential vendors for this project? Are there any key considerations we should be aware of when preparing our proposal?	We will shortlist potential Proposers based on a combination of demonstrated experience, technical capability, understanding of the project scope, and alignment with Covered California's mission and user needs. Key evaluation criteria include: • Proven success delivering large-scale, accessible, and user-centered websites for public-sector or healthcare organizations • Compliance with relevant standards (e.g., WCAG 2.1, CMS security, HIPAA where applicable) • Strength of proposed team, project management approach, and implementation timeline • Innovative yet practical solutions that enhance usability, mobile responsiveness, and system integration
101.	What is the anticipated award date for this project? Is there a timeline for when you expect to make a final decision?	The Notice of Intent to Award is anticipated to be posted during the week of September 29, 2025. The final selection decision will be made following proposer interviews, which are scheduled for September 11, 2025 – 12, 2025.
102.	Can you provide any insight into the scoring matrix or evaluation criteria that will be used to assess proposals?	Scoring of the Technical part of the proposals will be done using the Criteria found in RFP 2025-01, Section 5.2.1 Evaluation Categories and Criteria.

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103.	What are the expectations for audit logging and access control in the CMS (e.g., versioning, user-level logging, role-based permissions)?	Final details will be refined in collaboration with the selected vendor based on platform capabilities and organizational needs.
104.	Is a formal VPAT submission required for accessibility validation, or will comprehensive automated and manual WCAG 2.1 AA testing reports be acceptable?	Covered California currently does not utilize a VPAT for accessibility. The team uses tools within Figma during the design phase, Lighthouse during the development phase, and Lumar to run periodic crawls across the entire site to collect and track WCAG related bug fixes.
105.	Scope Clarification – Is everything within https://apply.coveredca.com/ deemed out of scope for this procurement?	Yes.

QUESTIONS ABOUT EXTENSION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
106.	Finally, we kindly request an extension to the proposal submission deadline beyond the current August 20, 2025, date. Two additional weeks would allow our team to respond more thoughtfully and comprehensively, particularly in light of several outstanding areas where clarification is needed to finalize technical and pricing components.	Yes, an extension was granted. Updated due date will be featured in the Addendum 3.
107.	Can you please give us an extension of 1-2 weeks to submit our proposal?	See answer to question 106.
108.	Given the breadth of the project scope and submission requirements, would Covered California consider granting a one-week extension to the current proposal due date of August 20, 2025?	See answer to question 106.
109.	Would Covered California extend the due date for this RFP?	See answer to question 106.
110.	We kindly request the Covered California to extend the proposal submission deadline by **at least 2 weeks** following the release of response to vendor questions.	See answer to question 106.
111.	Request for Extension – Given the scope and complexity of this RFP, which requires a substantial amount of technical narrative and resource alignment, and the short window between the Q&A release and the proposal submission date, we respectfully request that the submission deadline be extended to allow two full weeks after August 11th, ideally setting the new due date during the week of August 25th.	See answer to question 106.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT ACCESS TO SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION	
112.	What specific facilities or resources will be provided on-site for the contractor's team?	There is only a slight chance that on-site participation will be needed. If it is required, Contractors will be expected to use their own equipment, as Covered California will not provide on-site technical resources. Any on-site engagements would be limited to key meetings or workshops and scheduled in advance.
113.	Will remote access to systems and environments be permitted for the vendor?	Yes, the selected vendor will have remote access to systems and environments after contract execution.
114.	Will the vendor team receive access to current Google Analytics and past site performance data to support discovery and planning?	Yes. The selected vendor will have access to the current Google Analytics and past site performance data after contract execution.
115.	How early must background checks be initiated for project team members who require access to the data?	Background checks will be completed after contract execution and prior to any work starting.
116.	Will the Contractor have access to existing APIs or documentation for integrating with Covered California's tools and systems?	Yes, the selected vendor will have access to existing APIs or documentation after contract execution.
117.	Will the Contractor have access to the current website's codebase and documentation during the discovery phase?	Yes, the selected vendor will have access to the current website's codebase and documentation after contract execution.
118.	Will access to these systems be provided for development and testing?	Yes, the selected vendor will have access to the systems after contract execution.

QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK LOCATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
119.	Will the resources be required to work on-site at Covered California's location or will they be remote?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely.
120.	Will performance of services be expected to occur onsite, remotely, or in a hybrid format?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely.
121.	Do you anticipate any on-site participation being needed as part of this contract?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
122.	Exhibit A, "Scope of Work," mentions, "The Contractor is required to perform all services under this Agreement on site at Covered California, unless directed otherwise by the project representative listed in this Exhibit." How negotiable is this requirement?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
123.	Work will be onsite or remote?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
124.	Can you confirm whether all work under this contract may be performed remotely, or if there are any expectations for in-person activities such as kick-off, training, or usability sessions?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
125.	Can the Contractor's team perform all work remotely, or will any on-site presence be required during the contract term?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations,

QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK LOCATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
		depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
126.	Are you open to a hybrid delivery model with a mix of offshore and onshore resources?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
127.	Are there any requirements for on-site attendance of the project team? (i.e., kickoff meetings, etc.)	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
128.	Given the stated requirement for on-site work in Sacramento, can you confirm whether vendors who cannot commit to regular on-site presence will be disqualified or deemed non-responsive? We are particularly interested in understanding if there is flexibility for a hybrid or fully remote delivery model, especially for roles that do not require physical proximity.	Proposers who cannot commit to regular on-site presence will not be disqualified or deemed non-responsive. While there may be a few instances for in-person participation in Sacramento—such as for key meetings or workshops—the project can primarily be executed in a hybrid or fully remote model. Covered California is open to flexible delivery approaches, especially for roles that do not require physical proximity. However, Covered California will not reimburse for travel if a vendor is located outside of California and needs to be in attendance for a meeting.
129.	Given the "On-Site Work Requirement" in Sacramento, could Covered California elaborate on the flexibility for remote work or a hybrid model, particularly for roles that may not require constant on-site presence?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected Proposer.

QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK LOCATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
130.	Are there any geographical limitations/considerations for vendors who are interested in submitting a proposal? i.e. will there be any preference for local, California-based firms?	There are no formal geographical limitations for vendors submitting a proposal, and proposals from out-of-state firms will be considered. However, vendors should be aware that occasional in-person meetings in Sacramento may be requested. While there is no official preference for California-based firms, familiarity with California-specific regulations and stakeholders may be beneficial. Additionally, Covered California will not reimburse for travel if the vendor is located out of state and their attendance is required to attend an in-person meeting.
131.	Our team is eager to leverage our unique blend of onshore strategic guidance and offshore development efficiency to ensure a project delivered with excellence and value. Will an onsite-offshore delivery model be acceptable for this engagement?	We anticipate that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
132.	For a project of this scale and importance, we have found that in-person collaboration significantly improves communication, stakeholder engagement, and overall project efficiency. Would Covered California be open to requiring or prioritizing proposals from vendors whose full project team is based locally and available for on-site meetings as needed?	We anticipate that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. Any onsite meetings will be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor. Location will not be prioritized as long as a vendor meets all the Minimum Requirements and has an understanding of the California Market and Consumers; however, Covered California will not reimburse for travel if a vendor is located outside of California and needs to be in attendance for a meeting. **Please note: Data cannot be held in offshore resources. Per ARC-AMPE SA-09(08) requires that any PII be processed and stored within the**

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK LOCATION		
		continental U.S. Hawaii, or U.S. Territories.
133.	Can you please provide work mode for this Project whether it is ONSITE, HYBRID or REMOTE?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
134.	The document specifies that the Contractor shall perform all services on-site at Covered California's office in Sacramento unless directed otherwise. Can you provide more clarity on the expected on-site versus remote work breakdown, especially for the various project phases?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
135.	Please confirm for the purpose of this submission and its associated pricing that it is the intent of CoveredCA to require all work to be performed onsite at CoveredCA headquarters. *References Section/Page: Exhibit A: F. Reporting Headquarters Location*	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
136.	Please confirm, if vendors are allowed to propose hybrid engagement model (Onsite within California and Offshore from India)	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
137.	We propose implementing a hybrid resource model that strategically leverages a combination of onshore and offshore resources. We request Covered California to confirm its acceptance of the proposed mix of onshore and offshore resource allocation strategy.	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.

QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK LOCATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
138.	Does Covered California accept remote resources to work on the project?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
139.	On-Site Requirement – Page 16 of the SOW states: *"The Contractor is required to perform all services under this Agreement on site at Covered California, unless directed otherwise by the project representative listed in this Exhibit."* As you know, we cannot provide on-site resources unless a waiver is granted. Can you confirm if this requirement can be waived or modified?	Covered California anticipates that most of the work can be completed remotely; however, limited on-site participation may be requested for key meetings, workshops, or stakeholder presentations, depending on project needs and milestones. This can be discussed and coordinated with the selected vendor.
140.	Are there any restrictions on use of resources outside the United States on this project?	There are no formal geographical limitations for vendors submitting a proposal, and proposals from out-of-state firms will be considered. However, vendors should be aware that occasional in-person meetings in Sacramento may be requested. While there is no official preference for California-based firms, familiarity with California-specific regulations and stakeholders may be beneficial. Additionally, Covered California will not reimburse for travel if the vendor is located out of state and their attendance is required to attend an in-person meeting. **Please note: Data cannot be held in offshore resources. Per ARC-AMPE SA-09(08) requires that any PII be processed and stored within the continental U.S. Hawaii, or U.S. Territories.**
141.	Is there a preference for where the vendor resources are located, US vs offshore?	There are no formal geographical limitations for vendors submitting a proposal, and proposals from out-of-state

QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK LOCATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
		firms will be considered. However, vendors should be aware that occasional in-person meetings in Sacramento may be requested. While there is no official preference for California-based firms, familiarity with California-specific regulations and stakeholders may be beneficial. Additionally, Covered California will not reimburse for travel if the vendor is located out of state and their attendance is required to attend an in-person meeting. **Please note: Data cannot be held in offshore resources. Per ARC-AMPE SA-09(08) requires that any PII be processed and stored within the continental U.S. Hawaii, or U.S. Territories.**
142.	Should the resources submitted be local to CA, Sacramento?	There are no formal geographical limitations for vendors submitting a proposal, and proposals from out-of-state firms will be considered. However, vendors should be aware that occasional in-person meetings in Sacramento may be requested. While there is no official preference for California-based firms, familiarity with California-specific regulations and stakeholders may be beneficial.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
143.	Pre-response, via video: May we have the opportunity to meet the team leader and any key stakeholders to hear directly from those currently responsible for the site and its future vision?	At this stage of the process, Covered California is not offering pre-response meetings or video sessions with the team leader or key stakeholders. However, selected vendors will have the opportunity to engage directly with project leads during the interview and selection phases.
144.	Are there any incumbent vendors or existing technical constraints we should be aware of?	The redesign project will not be affected by incumbent vendor constraints.
145.	Is there an incumbent vendor currently providing website design, development, or CMS services for Covered California or CoveredCA.com? If so, could you please identify the vendor and describe the scope of their current engagement?	No, there is not an incumbent vendor currently providing these services. Currently, the design and development of CoveredCA.com are completed in-house.
	If there is an incumbent provider, what challenges or gaps have led to considering other design and development agencies?	There is no incumbent vendor.
146.	Could you please confirm whether there is an incumbent currently providing these services? If so, who is the incumbent vendor?	There is no incumbent vendor.
147.	Is there an incumbent agency or internal team currently supporting CoveredCA.com, and are past assets or technical documentation available to incoming vendors?	No, there is no incumbent vendor. Documentation from in-house work may be provided related to the current design, build, and testing processes, as needed
148.	Is there an incumbent vendor or team currently managing the website or CMS?	No, there is no incumbent vendor.
149.	Does Covered California currently use a specific Content Management System (CMS)? If so, what is the current platform in use, and is there a preference for continuity or change?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as our Content Management System (CMS) but are actively exploring alternative solutions to better meet our evolving needs.
150.	What is the current search provider?	Covered California utilizes Google APIs and Google Search Console.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
151.	What CMS is currently in use, and what limitations or pain points are driving the desire to replatform?	The current Content Management System (CMS) in use is CloudCannon, which has served us well for basic content management and publishing needs. However, several limitations have prompted the consideration to replatform, including: • Limited support for complex, multi-stage workflows • Scalability challenges with large and complex content • Insufficient granular role-based access controls • Limited integration capabilities with backend systems • Inadequate audit logging for compliance needs • Suboptimal editorial experience for non-technical users • Dependency on static site generation limiting agility

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
152.	What do you consider to be the biggest challenges with the current website experience?	On a high-level: • **Unclear user journeys**: There's no clear, actionable path to coverage; users are left to navigate on their own. • **Too much text and forced education**: Users have to click through too much content to get started. • **Overly graphic-heavy**: Excessive use of colors, buttons, and visual treatments creates a dense and overwhelming interface. • **Poor mobile experience**: The content-heavy design doesn't translate well to mobile, where over 60% of users access the site. • **Site is too large**: Many rarely visited pages could be eliminated or consolidated. • **Redundant content sections**: Overlapping areas like the Learning Center, Support Center, blog, and Let's Talk Health cause confusion. • **Lack of clear help direction**: It's unclear when users should call Covered California vs. an agent—help options aren't well guided.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
153.	Can you provide an overview of your current technology stack and CMS? What's driving any anticipated changes?	The current Content Management System (CMS) in use is CloudCannon, which has served us well for basic content management and publishing needs. However, several limitations have prompted the consideration to replatform, including: • Limited support for complex, multi-stage workflows • Scalability challenges with large and complex content • Insufficient granular role-based access controls • Limited integration capabilities with backend systems • Inadequate audit logging for compliance needs • Suboptimal editorial experience for non-technical users • Dependency on static site generation limiting agility
154.	What CMS is currently being used for CoveredCA.com and hbex.coveredca.com?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as our Content Management System (CMS).
155.	Which CMS platform is currently in use, and what version is it?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as our Content Management System (CMS).
156.	What is the current CMS, and is automated content migration a possibility?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as our Content Management System (CMS)
157.	What Web Content Management Systems (WCMS) are being used for hbex.coveredca.com and CoveredCa.com?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as the Content Management System (CMS) for both websites.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
158.	Can you confirm what content management system(s) Covered California is currently using for CoveredCA.com and hbex.coveredca.com?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as the Content Management System (CMS) for both websites.
159.	Who currently maintains both coverca.com and hbex.coveredca.com?	Both platforms are maintained internally by Covered California.
160.	Who currently maintains both coverca.com and hbex.coveredca.com?	Both platforms are maintained internally by Covered California.
161.	Are there existing systems (such as chatbots, document upload features, or Salesforce integrations) that must be preserved in the new environment?	Yes.
162.	Are there any specific CMS platforms you are currently considering or have previously used?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as our Content Management System (CMS) but are actively exploring alternative solutions to better meet our evolving needs. Covered California has a list of preferred CMS vendors, which will be finalized with the selected vendor.
163.	Which CMS platform(s) does Covered California currently use, and are there any preferred CMS solutions for the redesign?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as our Content Management System (CMS) but are actively exploring alternative solutions to better meet our evolving needs. Covered California has a list of preferred CMS vendors, which will be finalized with the selected vendor.
164.	What is the current web hosting environment (e.g., cloud vendor, on-premises infrastructure)?	The current web hosting environment is Azure Cloud.
165.	Are CDN (Content Delivery Network) or WAF (Web Application Firewall) solutions currently in use or expected to be included in the future solution?	Azure Frontdoor provides both CDN and WAF solutions.
166.	What is your current Tech Stack?	The current Tech Steck is GitHub, Azure, CloudCannon, Salesforce.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
167.	Can you describe or provide diagrams for your current tech stack? Are you currently leveraging a government cloud provider (either AWS or Azure)?	The selected vendor will receive access to diagrams of our tech stack as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
168.	Who designed and developed the current website?	The current website was designed and developed in-house.
169.	What was the cost incurred for the design and development of the current website?	The website was designed and developed in-house.
170.	What is the current governance of the site?	CoveredCA.com is currently governed by a cross-functional Digital Experience Team made up of representatives from IT and Communications. The Website Product Owner leads day-to-day prioritization, backlog management, and coordination across teams. Content is developed and reviewed by subject matter experts and routed through a centralized intake process. Major changes are informed by user research, stakeholder input, and leadership alignment.
171.	What tools or frameworks does Covered California currently use or recommend for accessibility testing and validation?	Figma, Lighthouse and Lumar are currently used to test and validate at various stages of the process.
172.	Is there a list of any currently pending research initiatives that may get carried over to the new vendor *References Section/Page: Model A: D.1.b.2 General Scope or Tasks*	No.
173.	What is the current backend and frontend technology stack (e.g., CMS, frameworks, languages)?	The website is currently built using Jekyll in order to utilize the CloudCannon Content Management System (CMS) platform. There is also HTML, CSS, Python, JS, and NodeJS. This will not dictate the future tech stack.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
174.	What's your current tech stack? Do you have a preferred future tech stack? a. Frontend and backend frameworks? b. CMSs you're evaluating? (Confirmed current is CloudCannon) c. Any other integrations or plugins that need to be maintained or are preferred for future implementation? Exhibit A mentions "GenAI embedded functions." What are the specific requirements/use cases for this? Preferred systems?	Please refer to question 166 for a list of the current tech stack. a. The frontend utilizes Jekyll - an open-source static site generator. Along with HTML, CSS, and JS. The Backend utilizes Python and NodeJS. b. Covered California is still evaluating a number of CMS' and it's too early to provide a shortlist. The current Content Management System (CMS) is CloudCannon. c. Integration with Salesforce CRM is ideal for future implementation. GenAI functionality is open-ended as will be implemented as needed. No use cases are currently being discussed.
175.	Is the website currently running on a custom-built system or a commercial CMS (e.g., Drupal, WordPress?	The website is currently being run on commercial CMS (CloudCannon).
176.	What analytics tools are currently used (e.g., Google Analytics, Adobe Analytics)?	Current analytic tools being used include Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and CrazyEgg.
177.	What specific data and analytics platforms does Covered California use, and how will these platforms need to integrate with the new website (e.g., CRM, user behavior tracking)?	Current data analytics being used include Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and CrazyEgg. Basic integrations need to be maintained to provide base level analytics.
178.	Do you have existing personas, user journey maps, or audience research we can reference?	Previous personas developed by various teams are now outdated and inconsistent. Covered California is moving forward with a unified, organization-wide set to ensure cross-division alignment and guide future initiatives, including the website redesign. We are currently seeking strategic partners to support this effort. Additional research, including user journey maps and related materials, will be made available to the selected vendor.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
179.	What user access roles and workflow requirements do you have, if any?	Covered California is currently in the process of defining the user access roles and workflow requirements. Our goal is to establish a structure that ensures security, efficiency, and compliance. This will likely include multiple user roles with varying levels of access—such as administrators, editors, and contributors—and a multi-stage content approval workflow to maintain quality and oversight.
180.	Are you currently using any analytics platforms (e.g., Google Analytics, Adobe, or other tools) to monitor user engagement, conversion, and accessibility? Are there specific KPIs the new platform should support?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
181.	Could you briefly describe the existing personas in place for your primary target audiences?	Previous personas developed by various teams are now outdated and inconsistent. Covered California is moving forward with a unified, organization-wide set to ensure cross-division alignment and guide future initiatives, including the website redesign. Covered California is currently seeking strategic partners to support this effort.
182.	Existing Research Artifacts: How recently were user research assets like personas and journey maps created? Could you share more details (e.g., number of personas, primary segments covered), and will these be made available to the selected vendor?	Previous personas developed by various teams are now outdated and inconsistent. We're moving forward with a unified, organization-wide set to ensure cross-division alignment and guide future initiatives, including the website redesign. We are currently seeking strategic partners to support this effort. Existing research assets will be available to the selected vendor.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
183.	Can you provide more details on the personas expected for this project? Will you be conducting stakeholder interviews to inform the design process?	Previous personas developed by various teams are now outdated and inconsistent. We're moving forward with a unified, organization-wide set to ensure cross-division alignment and guide future initiatives, including the website redesign. We are currently seeking strategic partners to support this effort. Existing research assets will be available to the selected vendor.
184.	Is personalization already in use in the implementation?	No, personalization is not already in use in the implementation.
185.	Do you already have user tracking and behavioral data for personalization?	Yes, Covered California has analytics through Google Analytics and Tag Manager. Integration with our Salesforce CRM will be necessary to provide personalization on the website.
186.	What content management system currently powers CoveredCA.com? Please provide the specific platform, version number, and any custom plugins or modifications. What programming languages and frameworks are currently used?	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as the Content Management System (CMS).
187.	Could you describe the current content management and customer data platforms supporting the current technical environment (coveredca.com, hbex.coveredca.com and	Covered California currently utilizes CloudCannon as the Content Management System (CMS) for both websites.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
188.	What are your current website performance benchmarks including: page load speeds, uptime statistics, and any performance bottlenecks you've identified? What performance targets should the new website achieve?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
189.	Please provide a complete list of all systems that currently connect to or exchange data with CoveredCA.com, including enrollment systems, eligibility verification, payment processing, CRM systems, and any third-party tools. Also, include the method of connection (API, database sync, etc.) for each.	CoveredCA.com does not include integrations with enrollment systems, eligibility verification or payment processing. Covered California utilizes Salesforce as our CRM, though no integration currently exists on CoveredCA.com. The selected vendor will receive access to further data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
190.	What specific Google Analytics events, conversion goals, and custom tracking are currently implemented? Please provide a list of all analytics tools currently in use and any required tracking for compliance or reporting purposes.	Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and CrazyEgg. Basic integrations need to be maintained to provide base level analytics. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions. The selected vendor will receive access to further data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
191.	Are APIs or data contracts currently defined?	No, APIs or data contracts are not currently defined.
192.	Which tools are used for analytics and reporting (e.g., GA4, Hotjar, Looker)?	The current analytics and reporting tools being used include Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and CrazyEgg.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
193.	What third-party services does your website currently depend on (payment processors, translation services, chatbots, etc.)? Please include contract terms, costs, and technical requirements for each service.	The site does not necessitate a payment processor. Currently translation services are done manually. The chatbot is a separate product and product team and integrated through Google Tag Manager.
194.	What external platforms or tools currently integrate with the City's website (e.g., payment portals, GIS, meeting agendas)?	Covered California's currently integrate with Google Maps API.
195.	The RFP mentions CDP integration and cross-product data flow. Can Covered California identify the systems currently in use (e.g., marketing automation platforms, eligibility systems, analytics tools) that the new CMS and website will be expected to integrate with?	The new website should integrate seamlessly with Salesforce to maintain customer 360. The site currently utilizes Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and CrazyEgg for analytics.
196.	How does your current user authentication work for the "Create Account/Log In" functionality? What user data is currently stored, and what are the technical requirements for maintaining user accounts during the transition?	This component of the website is owned and operated by a different team.
197.	What Covered California internal systems (HR, finance, legal databases, etc.) currently provide data to or receive data from the website? Please specify data types and update frequencies.	All web data flows to Google Analytics and are then processed by a data team for business use cases.
198.	How is the existing website currently maintained and enhanced? Where is it hosted, and are any external vendors or organizations involved in its maintenance and operations?	The current website utilizes GitHub as our repo, CloudCannon as our visual Content Management System (CMS), and is hosted on Azure Cloud. The current website is designed, built, and maintained in-house.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
199.	Is Covered California currently using a CMS for either CoveredCA.com or hbex.coveredca.com, and if so, which platform(s)? Is the Contractor expected to migrate content from these legacy systems?	Yes, CoveredCA.com is currently managed in CloudCannon. The selected vendor will be responsible for leading content migration to the new Content Management System (CMS). Migration from hbex.coveredca.com may also be included, depending on final scope.
200.	What is the CMS currently used for Covered California's primary website? Are there known challenges or limitations with the platform? If a new CMS is being considered, what goals would Covered California like to achieve with the transition?	The current Content Management System (CMS) in use is CloudCannon, which has served us well for basic content management and publishing needs. However, several limitations have prompted the consideration to replatform, including: • Limited support for complex, multi-stage workflows • Scalability challenges with large and complex content • Insufficient granular role-based access controls • Limited integration capabilities with backend systems • Inadequate audit logging for compliance needs • Suboptimal editorial experience for non-technical users • Dependency on static site generation limiting agility
201.	What Is the current website stack? Is it a custom build? What is the current CMS?	The current website utilizes GitHub as our repo, CloudCannon as our visual Content Management System (CMS), and is hosted on Azure Cloud. The current website is custom designed, built, and maintained in-house.
202.	How frequently does site content change?	Depending on the time of year, updates can be made several times a week and/or daily.
203.	What are the current traffic metrics the sites log today? For example 5k requests per minute on average.	The traffic averages 8M+ views/year and varies daily depending on the time of year and peaks during open enrollment (October through January). Peak usage is 200K+ sessions/day.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
204.	Can you share website traffic statistics? How many visits per year, average monthly page views etc.	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
205.	Can you please provide the site's average monthly traffic (units and source)?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
206.	What is the expected amount of traffic?	Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
207.	Is the https://apply.coveredca.com/static/lw-web/login login portal being managed by a separate entity?	Yes.
208.	Is Covered CA currently utilizing a Customer Data Platform? If so, which platform is being used?	The website is not currently integrated with our organization's Salesforce CDP, though the future website should be.
209.	Have you conducted recent accessibility audits? Please provide any existing VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template) reports, known accessibility issues, or compliance challenges from your current website.	The current website undergoes weekly audits through a web crawler, Lumar. This collects and logs bug fixes related to WCAG standards. There is no VPAT report currently in use.
210.	Has any recent user research been done that will be available to the selected vendor?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
211.	What website-related research or user insight gathering has been conducted so far? Are there any findings—qualitative or quantitative—that can help us understand what you've heard from your audiences to date?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
212.	Have you completed any recent user research or audience / behavior research that we could leverage to help inform our initial strategy and design recommendations?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
213.	Are there existing analytics or user behavior insights that can be shared to inform UX and content strategy during discovery?	Yes, the selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
214.	Is there an **existing content governance model** (workflows, editorial policies, authoring roles) that should inform the new CMS setup, or is the vendor expected to define this from scratch?	Although there is an existing structure in place, we are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
215.	What CRM is currently used for form fills?	The current CRM used for form fills include Salesforce, Help on Demand.
216.	In Task 2.1, how recent are the existing UX/UI assets available from Covered California?	It's a mix of both newer and legacy components.
217.	Are there any known UX concerns/complaints coming from your users that you wish to address as part of this redesign?	No, there are no known UX concerns/complains.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
218.	What are the biggest pain points with the current website and CMS?	The current Content Management System (CMS) in use is CloudCannon, which has served us well for basic content management and publishing needs. However, several limitations have prompted the consideration to replatform, including: • Limited support for complex, multi-stage workflows • Scalability challenges with large and complex content • Insufficient granular role-based access controls • Limited integration capabilities with backend systems • Inadequate audit logging for compliance needs • Suboptimal editorial experience for non-technical users • Dependency on static site generation limiting agility • Cumbersome content updates • No built-in workflows or user roles • Poor translation management • Limited flexibility and scalability • Inconsistent user experience
219.	Are there existing pain points or performance issues in the current site to be addressed?	Below are some of the pain points/performance issues that need to be addressed: • High bounce rates on key pages • Inconsistent navigation and user flow • Limited mobile optimization • Manual, time-consuming content updates • Gaps in accessibility and multilingual content management

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
220.	User Experience and Operational Challenges: Beyond the stated purpose of unifying hbex.coveredca.com with the main site, are there known challenges or specific pain points—either on the front-end (UX) or back-end (content/admin management)—that you are looking to address?	Below are some of the known challenges and/or specific pain points that Covered California is looking to address: • **Unclear user journeys**: There's no clear, actionable path to coverage; users are left to navigate on their own. • **Too much text and forced education**: Users have to click through too much content to get started. • **Overly graphic-heavy**: Excessive use of colors, buttons, and visual treatments creates a dense and overwhelming interface. • **Poor mobile experience**: The content-heavy design doesn't translate well to mobile, where over 60% of users access the site. • **Site is too large**: Many rarely visited pages could be eliminated or consolidated. • **Redundant content sections**: Overlapping areas like the Learning Center, Support Center, blog, and Let's Talk Health cause confusion. • **Lack of clear help direction**: It's unclear when users should call Covered California vs. an agent—help options aren't well guided.
221.	What is the current ticketing system platform currently in use?	The current ticketing system platform is Service Now.
222.	Is the Find an enroller connected through an API? If so, will we have access to it?	Find an Enroller utilizes a Google Maps API. Yes, access can be granted during onboarding after contract execution.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES	
223.	What are the top 5 challenges with the current CMS?	The top 5 challenges are: 1. Limited Workflow Capabilities 2. Manual Content Management 3. Scalability Constraints 4. Multilingual Limitations 5. Lack of Structured Content
224.	What limitations or challenges with the current CMS platform(s) have prompted the decision to explore a new solution?	The current Content Management System (CMS) in use is CloudCannon, which has served us well for basic content management and publishing needs. However, several limitations have prompted the consideration to replatform, including: • Limited support for complex, multi-stage workflows • Scalability challenges with large and complex content • Insufficient granular role-based access controls • Limited integration capabilities with backend systems • Inadequate audit logging for compliance needs • Suboptimal editorial experience for non-technical users • Dependency on static site generation limiting agility

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
225.	Are there known performance, uptime, or technical debt issues we should be aware of?	The current Content Management System (CMS) in use is CloudCannon, which has served us well for basic content management and publishing needs. However, several limitations have prompted the consideration to replatform, including: • Limited support for complex, multi-stage workflows • Scalability challenges with large and complex content • Insufficient granular role-based access controls • Limited integration capabilities with backend systems • Inadequate audit logging for compliance needs • Suboptimal editorial experience for non-technical users • Dependency on static site generation limiting agility
226.	Are there any prior pain points with vendors or processes that you'd like us to improve on?	We are looking for a partner who's collaborative, proactive, and solution-oriented, with the best interest of Californians as the priority.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
227.	What specific business, technical, and audience pain points is this RFP intended to address? What can you share about those pain points and their underlying causes?	This RFP is intended to address the following key pain points: 1. **Business**: Inflexible content workflows, inconsistent branding, and time-consuming updates have limited our ability to respond quickly to policy and program changes. 2. **Technical**: The current static site setup lacks scalable architecture, multilingual support, structured content, and integration flexibility, making enhancements difficult. 3. **Audience**: Users face confusing navigation, uneven content quality, and poor mobile usability, which contribute to high bounce rates and reduced engagement. These issues stem from limitations in our Content Management System (CMS), legacy design patterns, and fragmented governance processes. The goal is to modernize the platform to better serve consumers, internal teams, and future initiatives.
228.	Are there known SEO or tracking issues (e.g., duplicate content, missing schema, attribution gaps)?	Currently, Covered California does not have a formal SEO strategy or comprehensive tracking framework in place. As a result, there may be issues such as duplicate content, missing schema, inconsistent tagging, and attribution gaps. Part of the goal of this project is to establish a stronger foundation for SEO and analytics moving forward.
229.	Do you currently have an SEO strategy in place, or specific tools in use (e.g., SEMrush, Moz, Yoast)?	Currently, Covered California does not have a formal SEO strategy or comprehensive tracking framework in place.
230.	Are there keyword targets or existing content gaps we should be aware of?	There are no formal keyword targets in place, and a comprehensive content gap analysis has not yet been completed.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
231.	Are there any known risks or dependencies the contractor should be aware of that could impact the timeline or deliverables (e.g., approval delays, third-party systems)?	Covered California does not anticipate major delays or third-party system dependencies that would impact the timeline. The only potential dependency is finalizing the new Content Management System (CMS), which will be done in close collaboration with the selected vendor.
232.	Platform Limitations: Are there opportunities Covered California would like to explore to improve the user experience that are currently not achievable with the existing platform?	Yes. With the current platform, we're limited in our ability to support scalable content workflows, structured content, multilingual management, and personalized user experiences. The new platform presents an opportunity to improve content governance, streamline updates, and deliver a more intuitive, accessible experience across devices and languages.
233.	Are you able to disclose which three CMS' are being explored as candidates for the new site?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. Covered California will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection after contract execution.
234.	In Task 1.3, it is indicated that Covered California is undergoing an evaluation of multiple CMS platforms. What CMS's are currently being evaluated for this project?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. Covered California will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection after contract execution.
235.	Will the consultant be providing advice only on the platforms currently under consideration, or will they be able to suggest additional platforms?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. Covered California will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection after contract execution.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
236.	Are there any CMS platforms that are purposely NOT being considered?	Covered California has have a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. Covered California will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection after contract execution.
237.	Given that Covered California is currently evaluating "three industry-standard CMS options" for this project and expects the vendor to "have expertise and work proficiently in any of them", could Covered California provide more specific details about these three CMS options currently under consideration (e.g., their names, current versions, or high-level functional requirements) to allow vendors to better tailor their proposed approach and demonstrate relevant expertise?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. Covered California will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection after contract execution.
238.	How many content editors work within the system?	There are four (4) content editors.
239. .	Is there a demo log-in to evaluate the post-sign-in user experience (eligibility tools, account management, renewals, etc.)?	Yes, this will be made available to the selected vendor after contract execution.
240.	Do you already have a CI/CD process and technology in place and if so can you define for us what those tools are at a high level? If you have a preferred source control would you also be able to share that with us?	Covered California utilizes Azure Cloud, Azure Pipelines, and GitHub. These tools are preferrable for the future build.
241.	How frequently does site content change?	Site content is updated regularly, with some sections—like announcements, resources, and enrollment information—changing weekly or monthly, especially during open enrollment periods. Other areas, such as static informational pages, are updated on an as-needed basis based on policy changes.

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, HIPAA, AND PII		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
242.	What security testing requirements beyond HIPAA must be met? Should vendors include third-party security assessments?	Covered California will evaluate the vendor's proposal to ensure that it follows industry security best practices.
243.	Beyond HIPAA compliance mentioned in the RFP, what other specific security frameworks or regulations must the website comply with (NIST, FISMA, state-specific requirements)?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
244.	What are the third-party security policies, penetration testing protocols, or vulnerability scans that the vendor must adhere to before go-live?	Covered California will evaluate the vendor's proposal to ensure that it follows industry security best practices
245.	To align with the compliance requirements outlined in the RFP, including handling of sensitive data (PII/PHI), we would appreciate confirmation on the following: Please confirm the background clearance expectations for vendor personnel involved in this engagement. Specifically: a. Are fingerprinting or DOJ/FBI checks required? b. Do these apply to all project staff, including remote or offshore resources (if permitted)? c. Is there a standard process or vendor portal Covered California uses for background verification?	a. Yes, fingerprinting and DOJ/FBI background checks will be required for any individual who has access to PII in any Covered California information security systems. This a requirement under Govt Code 1043. b. Yes, anyone with access to Covered California information security systems and PII will be required to undergo fingerprinting and background checks. Additionally, PII should not be accessed or stored offshore. c. Background check information can be found in the Model Contract in Exhibit A.
246.	Can you clarify whether vendor staff will have access to systems or environments that involve Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Personal Health Information (PHI), or Federal Tax Information (FTI)? If yes, please indicate: a. The nature and extent of access (e.g., admin, read-only) b. Applicable systems or environments c. Any specific data handling or transmission protocols we are expected to follow	Access to systems or environments involving PII, PHI, or FTI by vendor staff will be determined based on the specific project requirements and finalized in coordination with Information Technology. The nature and extent of access, applicable systems, and data handling protocols will be defined accordingly to ensure compliance with all relevant security and regulatory standards.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, HIPAA, AND PII		
247.	Can you provide a list of all third-party integrations required for the redesign (e.g., payment processors, eligibility verification, customer support platforms, CRM systems)?	The website does not necessitate a payment processor or eligibility verification. The future website should include integration with the CalHEERS website.
248.	How many people are currently involved in managing and updating the website? Are these full-time staff members, or do you rely on contractors/vendors?	The website is managed by a small cross-functional team made up of full-time staff from IT and Communications. This includes the Website Product Manager, Product Owner, developers, content strategists, and UX/UI support.
249.	Will the redesigned website need to integrate with existing internal tools or external platforms (e.g., data systems, analytics platforms, APIs)?	Yes, the redesigned website needs to integrate with existing internal tools and external platforms.
250.	Is there a requirement for a headless CMS architecture or API-driven systems for greater flexibility and scalability?	Currently no requirements for headless architecture or API-driven systems, though depending on final design of the solution both should be considered.
251.	Are there any specific cybersecurity standards that must be followed for data protection, particularly regarding consumer health data and personal identifying information (PII)?	California's data privacy and security standards, which align with state and federal requirements. Additional requirements may be outlined during contract finalization and vendor onboarding after contract execution.
252.	Is there a need for single sign-on (SSO) functionality, especially for internal and external stakeholders accessing the website?	Yes, the new site will mirror current Content Management System (CMS) functionality which utilizes SSO for content contributor access across the organization.
253.	What security measures should be implemented for handling user data, payments, and other sensitive information related to insurance purchases?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
254.	What are the specific data privacy and security compliance requirements (e.g., certifications, audit processes) that the vendor and the new system must adhere to beyond HIPAA and general security protocols?	The selected vendor and system must meet Covered California's data privacy and security standards, which align with state and federal requirements. Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, HIPAA, AND PII		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
255.	Will this require a renewal of the Cal Information Security Certification?	Covered California will work with the selected vendor to ensure all documentation and security requirements are met in coordination with the state's compliance processes.
256.	Is FedRAMP Moderate or equivalent security compliance expected for environments managed by the vendor?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
257.	What specific security protocols or compliance standards must the new website adhere to (e.g., HIPAA, FedRAMP, NIST)?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
258.	Will penetration testing and vulnerability scans be required?	Penetration testing and vulnerability scans will be aided by ISO team and existing processes. The vendor can participate as needed.
259.	Are there requirements for SSL certificates, encryption, or firewall configurations?	SSL certificates, encryption and firewall configurations will be completed in collaboration with Covered California Web Team, Infrastructure, Cloud Ops, and the selected vendor.
260.	The RFP mentions integration with external DHCS systems for Shop and Compare, Apply, Create Account/Log In, and Renew functions. Please provide detailed technical specifications, and security requirements for these integrations.	Technical documentation and API references for these systems are not publicly available but may be made accessible to the selected vendor through coordination with the CalHEERS team, pending appropriate approvals. Covered California will work with the vendor to identify integration needs and facilitate access where possible.
261.	What are your current security requirements including: user authentication methods, IP restrictions, VPN requirements, multi-factor authentication, and any government security standards that must be followed?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
262.	What are your specific requirements for data backup frequency, retention periods, and disaster recovery response times? Are there any regulatory requirements for data backup and recovery procedures?	These requirements will be outlined with the selected vendor as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
263.	What security certifications must the vendor's development hosting environment maintain?	Covered California will evaluate the vendor's proposal to ensure that it follows industry security best practices.

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, HIPAA, AND PII		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
264.	Do you have existing protocols for security audits, backups, or encryption we need to align with?	These requirements will be outlined with the selected vendor as part of project onboarding after contract execution
265.	What specific HIPAA compliance requirements or data security protocols need to be addressed in the CMS implementation?	The Content Management System (CMS) must follow industry best practices to safeguard personal information and to secure the website. Where applicable, secure data handling, user authentication, role-based access controls, audit logging, and encryption in transit and at rest.
266.	Are there any **security certifications or compliance standards** (e.g., FedRAMP, SOC 2) required for the vendor's development and staging environments?	No.
267.	We acknowledge that the project must comply with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) and multiple California codes cited in the RFP. To ensure our team fully aligns with Covered California's expectations, could you clarify how these cited codes are expected to impact our technical implementation or project deliverables? a. Content accuracy and presentation? b. Data storage or processing locations? User workflows or access control?	Compliance with the PPACA and California laws cited in the RFP is required. Bidders are expected to consult their own legal counsel to determine how compliance with the law will impact their technical implementation or project deliverables.
268.	Are there any specific tools, systems, or protocols that Covered California requires or recommends for ensuring HIPAA, PII, or PHI compliance during project execution (e.g., secure file transfer systems, encryption standards, logging mechanisms)?	Covered California does not mandate specific tools, but expects vendors to follow industry security and privacy best practices.
269.	How is customer data currently stored? Which CDP is currently in use?	The data is stored in CalHEERS system.
270.	Will this project involve working with HIPAA data?	No. Covered California is not a HIPAA covered entity, so HIPAA does not apply to Covered California PII.
271.	Is HIPAA required? If so, can you explain this requirement in more detail?	No. Covered California is not a HIPAA covered entity, so HIPAA does not apply to Covered California PII.

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, HIPAA, AND PII		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
272.	Would a BAA suffice in place of HIPAA?	Covered California is not a HIPAA-covered entity, so a BAA is not appropriate.
273.	What specific compliance standards must we meet (e.g., HIPAA, Section 508, data encryption)?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
274.	Can you clarify whether Covered California is open to storing healthcare information on an external server if it's still accessible via API?	Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
275.	What are the existing security and compliance processes to determine requirements we need to build into the planning and proposal? Security and compliance will be a major choice factor with the tech stack, CMS, and application architecture we may propose. We would expect any SaaS provider to pass your internal scans and support that process as well as code verification during CICD processes etc. So we are trying to understand what our options might be and how we should think about the hosting and technology choices as they pertain to hosting, infrastructure, and CICD	Covered California's policies require compliance with an extensive array of federal and state requirements, including: • **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-53**, especially for controls related to authentication, access control, audit, incident response, and system integrity Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP for additional requirements.
276.	Do you require a Web Application Firewall (WAF)?	Yes, a Web Application Firewall is required.
277.	Will you be leveraging SSO? Which IdP / does it support SAML?	Yes, Covered California utilizes Microsoft which supports SAML.
278.	Do you have specific requirements for HTTPS/SSL?	Yes, SSL certificates, encryption and firewall configurations will be completed in collaboration with Covered California Web Team, Infrastructure, Cloud Ops, and the selected vendor.
279.	Will you be connecting your CMS(s) to any internal systems behind firewalls?	Yes, our Salesforce CDP.
280.	What authentication method (e.g., OAuth, SAML) will be used for integration with these systems?	Most likely SAML through Microsoft EntraID, though we are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, HIPAA, AND PII		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
		expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
281.	Are there any specific data privacy requirements or compliance regulations (e.g., CCPA) that must be incorporated into the website's design and data handling?	Refer to Privacy and Security Requirements within the contract section of the RFP.
282.	Is Single Sign-On (SSO) or multi-factor authentication (MFA) required for internal Covered California editors or admin access to the CMS?	SSO through Microsoft
283.	Will the site include user authentication (e.g., login, SSO, identity provider integration)?	SSO through Microsoft
284.	How will access control be managed within the CMS and integrations (role-based, ACLs)?	Most likely role-based, though we are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
285.	Is there a release/upgrade cadance applicable for the CoveredCA internal infrastructure we will need to adhere to ensure development servers stay up to date with the production environment? *References Section/Page: Model A: D.1.c.2.ii General Scope or Tasks*	CoveredCA internal infrastructure for the website works and releases on an Agile cadence. These two (2) projects will mirror each other as necessary.
286.	What user authentication protocols are in use or expected (e.g., SAML, OAuth, Single Sign-On) for partners, internal users, or brokers?	SSO and SAML through Microsoft EntraID
287.	Please confirm whether the vendor is expected to develop the solution entirely outside of Covered CA's IT systems and then collaborate with the Covered CA IT team to migrate it before launch	The vendor can utilize current IT systems or outline an alternative. We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the solution and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
288.	What accessibility standards are required (e.g., WCAG 2.1 AA or higher)?	WCAG AA is required

QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTILINGUAL CONTENT		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
289.	How many languages are currently supported and will this continue?	Seven (7), including English. Yes, it will continue.
290.	Is there a need for integration with automated or manual translation services?	Yes, Covered California is currently exploring the best solution for our needs.
291.	How are multilingual content workflows currently handled? Is there a requirement for real-time parity between English and other supported languages across all site sections, particularly during open enrollment?	Multilingual workflows are currently managed manually, with translations coordinated through internal teams and external vendors. Real-time parity is not always possible, but during open enrollment and other critical periods, maintaining alignment between English and supported languages is a priority.
292.	What in-language machine translation service/platform is currently being used, and do you intend to keep using it, or has a new one been selected?	Covered California does not have one currently but are exploring our options.
293.	Will Covered California provide in-language reviewers for translated content QA, or should the vendor include those roles in the proposal?	Covered California can provide in-language reviewers for some languages, but not others.
294.	There are a few languages/translations on your current site that are not mentioned in Exhibit A. Do these need to be supported, as well?	Covered California currently supports seven (7) languages : English, Spanish, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Farsi.
295.	Task 3.2 mentions integrating a translation platform for "machine-translation" of six specific languages for MVP. Beyond this, what are Covered California's expectations for human review, editing, and ongoing quality assurance of this translated content, and what internal resources or processes will be available to support the vendor in achieving high-quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate content for California's diverse population?	Covered California is exploring options for machine and AI-driven translation solutions and is committed to delivering a high-quality, culturally appropriate experience for all users. While human review may be applied in some cases, we are not currently committing to full human translation or review. The selected vendor will help assess and implement an efficient, scalable translation workflow that supports language access across the site.
296.	How many languages need to be supported and will any of them require a RTL visual experience?	Covered California supports seven (7) languages: English, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Farsi. Of these, only Farsi requires a right-to-left (RTL) visual experience.
297.	What are the required languages for multilingual support, and are there specific	Covered California supports English, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Simplified

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTILINGUAL CONTENT	
	translation or in-language review processes we should account for in the content strategy?	Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Farsi. Covered California is exploring machine and AI translation options and are committed to a high-quality, culturally appropriate user experience. Specific translation and review processes are still being defined and will be developed in collaboration with the selected vendor.
298.	The RFP mentions the vendor must "ensure the front-end is adaptable to culturally and linguistically diverse audiences." Can you explain what this means to you? Simply dynamic content and multi-language support, or something more?	It means more than just dynamic content and multilingual support. The front end should reflect cultural relevance through language, imagery, examples, and tone that resonate with California's diverse populations. It should also support accessibility, right-to-left layouts (for Farsi), and clear navigation for users with varying levels of digital and health literacy.
299.	Exhibit A mentions "in-machine language translation service." Is the expectation that you would rely solely on software to do on-the-fly translation? Will this be used to supplement formal translations provided/uploaded by Covered CA? Or will this be used for all translations?	Covered California is exploring the use of in-machine translation to support multilingual access at scale. We have not yet finalized whether this will fully replace or supplement formal translations. The goal is to ensure a high-quality user experience across all supported languages, and the selected vendor will help assess and implement the most effective and sustainable approach.
300.	Will Covered California provide in-language reviewers for translated content QA, or should the vendor include those roles in the proposal?	Covered California has limited in-language review capacity and may not be able to support full QA for all languages. Vendors are encouraged to include in-language review roles in their proposals to ensure quality and cultural accuracy across all supported languages.
301.	Are there any preferences or restrictions regarding machine translation platforms (e.g., Google Translate, Amazon Translate), or should the vendor recommend a solution?	Covered California has no predetermined preference or restriction on machine translation platforms. Vendors should recommend a solution based on quality, scalability, integration capabilities, and support for right-to-left languages.
302.	What is your current approach to translation/localization — and what tools or vendors do you use?	Currently, translation and localization are managed manually using a mix of internal staff and external vendors. Covered

	QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTILINGUAL CONTENT	
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
		California does not use a dedicated translation management system (TMS) or machine translation platform at this time. Tools and workflows are being evaluated as part of this project to improve scalability and efficiency.
303.	What are the key requirements for multilingual content support within the CMS? Should the CMS include automated or human-assisted translation workflows?	The Content Management System (CMS) must support multilingual content management for seven languages, including right-to-left formatting for Farsi. It should enable structured workflows for managing, editing, and publishing translated content.
304.	Will you provide human translation services for critical content, or is the expectation solely on machine translation?	Human translation services are available for critical content to ensure accuracy. While machine translation may be used for general purposes, we do not rely on it exclusively for sensitive material.
305.	Is there a **preferred translation workflow** following the machine translation process with human review (by specialist agencies for cultural nuance)? For efficiency, would it make sense to leverage existing multi-cultural agency partners who are already steeped in the account, rather than bring in additional partners with an overlapping role? For purposes of the scoping, should we assume that the human review aspect of the translations would be redundant to existing agencies and out of scope?	Leveraging our existing multicultural agency partners who know the account well makes sense for both efficiency and consistency. Covered California is currently evaluating tools and processes, and we're looking to collaborate with the selected vendor to help shape and refine the approach. For scoping purposes, you can assume that human review will be handled by existing partners and is out of scope for additional vendors.
306.	Do you have a preferred translation management system or API for multilingual support?	Currently, translation and localization are managed manually using a mix of internal staff and external vendors. We do not use a dedicated translation management system (TMS) or machine translation platform at this time. Tools and workflows are being evaluated as part of this project to improve scalability and efficiency.
307.	Should costs for translation services (human or machine-aided) be included in the base proposal, or considered separately?	Translation service costs—whether human or machine-aided—should be considered separately and not included in the base proposal. We'll address those needs and

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTILINGUAL CONTENT		
		associated costs in a separate scope if/when applicable.
308.	Are there any preferences or restrictions regarding machine translation platforms (e.g., Google Translate, Amazon Translate), or should the vendor recommend a solution?	Covered California is open to vendor recommendations for machine translation platforms, but we have a high standard for cultural relevance and accuracy given the nature and criticality of our content.
309.	Will Covered California provide direct access to users from multilingual and accessibility communities for research and testing, or should vendors plan to recruit those populations?	Both are options that can be considered once the user testing process, research parameters and costs/budgets are determined.
310.	How do you currently manage translations for the 6 required languages? Do you have existing translation vendors, approved terminology lists, or content review processes? What is your current annual translation budget?	Translations for the six (6) required languages are currently managed through a combination of internal bilingual staff and external translation vendors. We have some existing terminology resources and glossaries, but no centralized translation management system or standardized workflow. The annual translation budget varies by year and is managed across multiple teams; specific figures can be shared with the selected vendor during onboarding after contract execution.
311.	Who reviews and approves translated content before it goes live? Please describe the complete workflow for multilingual content including review timelines and quality assurance steps.	Currently, translated content is reviewed by internal bilingual staff or external translation vendors, depending on the language and content type. The workflow is largely manual and varies in timing based on priority and capacity. There is no formal Content Management System (CMS)-supported translation workflow in place today. As part of this project, Covered California is seeking to define a more structured, scalable process to support multilingual content review and quality assurance.
312.	What are the primary and secondary languages that must be supported at launch? Are there specific translation workflows (e.g., internal reviewers, external vendors) that must be supported in the CMS?	Covered California supports English, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Farsi. Covered California is exploring machine and AI translation options and are committed to a high-quality, culturally

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTILINGUAL CONTENT		
		appropriate user experience. Specific translation and review processes are still being defined and will be developed in collaboration with the selected vendor.
313.	Is Covered CA currently using a machine translation platform, or should evaluating and recommending one be included in the scope?	Currently, translation and localization are managed manually using a mix of internal staff and external vendors. We do not use a dedicated translation management system (TMS) or machine translation platform at this time. Tools and workflows are being evaluated as part of this project to improve scalability and efficiency.
314.	Is the future strategy intended to have full site copies in all languages, mirroring every page of the English version?	Yes.
315.	Are there specific multilingual or localization requirements we should anticipate?	Yes. The website must support seven (7) languages, including right-to-left formatting for Farsi. Content should be culturally appropriate, accessible, and easy to manage across languages.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CHATBOT AND GENAI		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
316.	Are there specific use cases or expectations for the chatbot and GenAI integration (e.g., FAQ, guided enrollment)?	Chatbot functionality is not within the scope of this project.
317.	Should the chatbot support multilingual queries?	Chatbot functionality is not within the scope of this project.
318.	From an Gen AI perspective, do you have any specific features/capabilities in mind yet?	We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their expertise.
319.	What policies do you have regarding a vendor's use of generative artificial intelligence to automate any of the tasks outlined in your scope of work, assuming they are subject to human review?	Proposer needs to complete Attachment 7 and return it as part of the proposal package. Additionally, in Exhibit C of the Model Contract, Section TT. GenAI Disclosure and Conditions, there is more information about the use of GenAI.
320.	What policies do you have regarding the use of generative artificial intelligence to provide site functionality (e.g., search, translation, etc.)?	See response to question 319.
321.	Are there any specific AI tools that you are authorized or required to use (e.g., Gemini, OpenAI, etc.)? Are there any tools that you are not allowed to use?	Covered California has internal instances of AI tools that staff are allowed to utilize.
322.	Do you have a DAM and Video provider? If not, should the proposal consider implementation for a DAM etc.?	Covered California has Adobe products in-house, though we are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the future-state solution and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their expertise.
323.	Do you already have a CI/CD process and technology in place and if so can you define for us what those tools are at a high level? If you have a preferred source control would you also be able to share that with us?	Azure DevOps
324.	Is the current chatbot experience expected to be updated and redesigned, and possibly incorporate GenAI, as part of this effort?	Chatbot functionality is not within the scope of this project.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CHATBOT AND GENAI		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
325.	Would the Chatbot ever be expected to capture any PII for an individual? *References Section/Page: Model A: D.1.c.2.iii General Scope or Tasks*	Chatbot functionality is not within the scope of this project.
326.	Does the chatbot integrate into any kind of KMS system? *References Section/Page: Model A: D.1.c.2.iii General Scope or Tasks*	Chatbot functionality is not within the scope of this project.
327.	Are there any new features or modules planned (e.g., live chat, chatbot, eligibility calculator)?	No.
328.	What specific chatbot and GenAI functions does Covered California envision for the website? Should vendors include costs for AI platform licensing, training, and ongoing AI model updates?	Chatbot functionality is not within the scope of this project.
329.	Are there any use cases for GenAI that your team does not want to consider?	No.

QUESTIONS ABOUT USER TESTING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
330.	Regarding Task 2.1.3, does Covered California have a total number of usability testing participants in mind (in addition to the 25 from Spanish-dominant-speaking households)? Will Covered California handle participant recruitment and compensation, or should the vendor plan to include that in the cost proposal?	See response to question 308.
331.	Is accessibility testing currently performed in-house or via a third party? Will the selected vendor be responsible for achieving final WCAG 2.1 AA compliance across code, content, and UX?	Accessibility testing is currently performed in-house, with third-party support as needed. The selected vendor will be responsible for ensuring WCAG 2.1 AA compliance across code, content, and UX as part of project delivery.
332.	What level of testing is expected—across devices, browsers, screen readers, etc.?	Vendors are expected to conduct thorough testing across modern devices, major browsers, and screen sizes, as well as compatibility with screen readers and assistive technologies. Accessibility testing must meet WCAG 2.1 AA standards. Covered California may conduct additional validation during UAT.
333.	In Task 2.1, is the vendor responsible for the recruitment of qualified user testing participants, or will they be recruited and scheduled by Covered California?	See response to question 309.
334.	For UX/UI design, the scope requires conducting "at least two rounds of consumer usability testing" including "at least 25 participants from Spanish-dominant-speaking households". For QA, User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with "approximately 25 internal stakeholders (including in-language vendors)" is required. Could Covered California clarify the level of support or responsibility for recruitment of these specific user and stakeholder groups, and the expected commitment and availability of internal stakeholders for UAT sessions?	See response to question 309.
335.	Will Covered California facilitate access to user groups for research purposes, including multilingual and accessibility-focused testing participants?	See response to question 309.

	QUESTIONS ABOUT USER TESTING	
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
336.	How will performance and quality assurance be measured during the QA and accessibility testing phases?	Performance and quality assurance will be measured through a combination of functional testing, accessibility audits (WCAG 2.1 AA), browser and device compatibility checks, and adherence to technical and content requirements. Covered California will validate deliverables during UAT and may conduct spot checks or request remediation as needed.
337.	Does Covered California have a preferred tool or testing suite that establishes compliance for WCAG 2.1 AA considerations?	Accessibility testing is currently performed in-house, with third-party support as needed. The selected vendor will be responsible for ensuring WCAG 2.1 AA compliance across code, content, and UX as part of project delivery.
338.	Beyond WCAG 2.1 AA, are there specific accessibility requirements for government partnerships or federal compliance we should plan for? What's the expected approach for accessibility testing throughout development - internal testing, third-party audits, or user testing with disabled participants?	Beyond WCAG 2.1 AA, the project must align with Section 508 and State of California accessibility standards. Accessibility testing is primarily handled internally, with third-party audits used as needed. While user testing with disabled participants is not currently required, vendors are encouraged to include inclusive testing practices where feasible to ensure a fully accessible experience.
339.	In how many languages do you expect to conduct user testing?	User testing will primarily be conducted in English, with limited testing in other languages as capacity allows. Spanish is the most likely secondary language for in-language testing. Covered California does support seven (7) languages including English and Spanish.
340.	Do you have an A/B testing framework/service in place?	No, Covered California is open to recommendations as part of the new platform strategy.
341.	Can you please share any user testing of the website across target audiences (English and multilingual)? Importantly, we're looking for where people drop out of the user flow. Also, on the plus side, what's working for the users who do convert?	Covered California has conducted limited user testing in recent years, primarily in English. While we have some insights from past usability studies and analytics, we do not currently have comprehensive, up-to-date data on multilingual audiences or detailed user flow drop-off points.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT USER TESTING		
		Identifying pain points and successful conversion patterns is a priority for this redesign
342.	Will the contractor be responsible for conducting accessibility testing throughout the project, including both manual audits and the use of automated tools (e.g., WAVE, Axe)?	Yes, the vendor will be responsible for conducting accessibility testing throughout the project using both manual audits and automated tools such as WAVE, Axe, or similar. Deliverables must meet WCAG 2.1 AA, Section 508, and State of California accessibility standards.
343.	Will Covered California provide resources (e.g., feedback, testing tools) for accessibility, or will the contractor be fully responsible for ensuring compliance?	Covered California will provide guidance and feedback, but the contractor will be fully responsible for ensuring accessibility compliance. This includes conducting testing, addressing issues, and meeting all WCAG 2.1 AA, Section 508, and State of California accessibility standards.
344.	Will your team be involved in the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) process? If so, how do you envision the involvement and timeline?	Yes, Covered California's team will be actively involved in the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) process. We will conduct structured reviews of key deliverables, provide timely feedback, and validate that functionality meets requirements. UAT will be coordinated with the vendor and scheduled in alignment with major project milestones.
345.	What is the expected timeline for user testing, feedback, and iteration cycles? Will Covered California provide focus groups or gather feedback from internal stakeholders throughout the design and development phases?	User testing, feedback, and iteration cycles will be coordinated around key project milestones, with timelines refined in collaboration with the selected vendor. Covered California will gather feedback from internal stakeholders and may provide access to limited user testing or focus group opportunities, depending on capacity and timing.
346.	Will Covered California support recruitment for usability testing participants, particularly those from multilingual or accessibility-sensitive groups?	User testing, feedback, and iteration cycles will be coordinated around key project milestones, with timelines refined in collaboration with the selected vendor. Covered California will gather feedback from internal stakeholders and may provide access to limited user testing or

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT USER TESTING		
		focus group opportunities, depending on capacity and timing.
347.	UX/UI & Design Standards Should the vendor conduct new user research or usability testing as part of the redesign?	Yes, vendors are encouraged to conduct new user research and usability testing as part of the redesign. Existing research will be made available but fresh insights are welcome to inform design decisions.
348.	What environments are expected (Dev, QA, Staging, Production)?	A minimum of 3-4 environments would be ideal.
349.	Is there a preferred CI/CD pipeline or DevOps methodology to be followed?	Azure DevOps utilizing Agile methodology.
350.	Who is responsible for QA/testing, and what kind of testing is expected (unit, integration, UAT)?	The vendor is responsible for QA and testing, including unit testing, integration testing, accessibility testing, and functional validation. Covered California will lead UAT in collaboration with the vendor.
351.	What level of technical support can Covered California's IT team provide during the project? Please describe available internal resources for testing, content population, and technical coordination.	Covered California's Digital Experience Team (DET) will provide support across testing, content population, and technical coordination—leveraging CCA IT for technical tasks such as integrations, environment setup, and troubleshooting, and the Communications team for non-technical tasks including content updates, reviews, and approvals.
352.	The scope notes two rounds of consumer usability testing with participants from specific regions and at least 25 Spanish-dominant speakers. Can Covered California please clarify who will be responsible for participant recruitment, incentive payments, and interview moderation? If the vendor is expected to manage this, are there any existing recruiting panels or vendors currently used by Covered California that we must work through?	Covered California will work closely with the vendor to determine the best and most cost-efficient user/usability testing process and research parameters. However, proposers will be responsible for participant recruitment, payments and any moderation made through a recruitment panel or research vendor. We do not have any preferred or required research vendors.
353.	Will Covered California provide any support for physical testing facilities, translation services, or recording tools for usability testing sessions? If these are expected to be vendor-provided, are there any compliance	Covered California will work closely with the vendor to determine the best and most cost-efficient user/usability testing process and research parameters. The vendor will be responsible for covering any costs associated with this

QUESTIONS ABOUT USER TESTING	
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	or procurement restrictions we should consider?	research/testing. Any procurement process will need to follow all relevant California regulations or laws.
354.	The scope mentions UAT with ~25 internal stakeholders, including in-language vendors. Can you please confirm whether Covered California will provide the UAT test scenarios or if the vendor is responsible for drafting them?	Covered California will provide the UAT test scenarios. The vendor will then execute the testing based on those scenarios.
355.	How many Covered CA subject matter experts will participate in UAT?	We expect approximately 6–8 subject matter experts from across the Digital Experience Team, IT, and Communications to participate in UAT, with additional stakeholders involved as needed based on the features being tested.
356.	How many non-production environments should we plan for? Should we assume two non-production environments and one production environment?	Dev, QA, Staging, and Production
357.	Is there an existing pool of research participants, or would the vendor need to recruit and build the research pool?	User testing, feedback, and iteration cycles will be coordinated around key project milestones, with timelines refined in collaboration with the selected vendor. Covered California will gather feedback from internal stakeholders and may provide access to limited user testing or focus group opportunities, depending on capacity and timing.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
358.	How many forms (e.g., contact, permit, service request) exist on the current site, and should they be migrated or rebuilt?	The current website has a small number of forms. They will need to be evaluated individually to determine whether they should be migrated as is, redesigned, or rebuilt for the new platform.
359.	What is the estimated volume of content to be migrated from hbx.coveredca.com and CoveredCA.com (e.g., number of pages, assets, or data records)? Are there existing content audits or inventories available?	CoveredCA.com currently has approximately 1,600 URLs. The estimated volume of content to be migrated includes webpages, PDFs, media assets, and translated language variants. A full content audit and inventory will be conducted with the selected vendor. Migration of hbex.coveredca.com content is not guaranteed and would be handled as an addendum to the contract if included in scope.
360.	In Task 3.2, what is the approximate amount of content to be migrated (pages, PDFs, other static files)?	Task 3.2 involves migrating approximately 1,600 URLs from CoveredCA.com, including HTML pages, PDFs, media files, and multilingual content. A full audit will determine the exact number of assets to be migrated and their priority.
361.	If the scope were to increase to include content migration, how well documented is the content? Would everything need to be migrated as is, or does a content evaluation process need to take place first?	The content is not fully documented, and a content evaluation process will need to take place before migration. This will help determine what should be migrated, consolidated, rewritten, or retired. A full audit and inventory will be conducted in collaboration with the selected vendor.
362.	Will the City provide new/revised content, or is the vendor expected to audit, rewrite, and migrate existing content?	Covered California will provide revised content and lead the copywriting and editing process. The vendor is expected to support the content audit, make strategic recommendations, and lead the migration and implementation in collaboration with our internal team.
363.	The link hbex.coveredca.com links to another site with relevant content (board.coveredca.com). Should this content be considered as part of the migration effort?	Migration of hbex.coveredca.com is not guaranteed and would only be included if added to the contract as an amendment. No inventory currently exists.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
364. p	Is there an existing content inventory or audit of current site content that can be shared during the discovery phase?	A full audit will be conducted in collaboration with the selected vendor during the discovery phase.
365.	Will content migration include hbex.coveredca.com in full, and can you provide an inventory of anticipated content (pages, assets, templates)?	Migration of hbex.coveredca.com is not guaranteed and would only be included if added to the contract as an amendment. No inventory currently exists.
366.	Could you clarify the scope of content migration from hbex.coveredca.com? For example, how many pages or assets are anticipated to be migrated?	The scope of hbex.coveredca.com migration is not yet defined and is not guaranteed to be included in the project. If added, the specific number of pages and assets will be determined through a content audit conducted during discovery.
367.	Who will be responsible for content authorship via the CMS?	Content authorship in the Content Management System (CMS) will be handled by the Covered California Communications team.
368.	Do you have an existing content strategy, messaging framework, or editorial guidelines?	Covered California has an existing style guide and editorial standards but does not have a formal, organization-wide content strategy or messaging framework. Developing a unified approach is a goal of the website redesign project.
369.	Will you require any data migration, other than CMS content?	No, Covered California does not anticipate any data migration beyond Content Management System (CMS) content for this project.
370.	The RFP says it is looking for vendor to provide "contract restructuring." Can you further explain what the vendor responsibilities would be vs. those of Covered CA when it comes to creating and refining content?	Covered California will handle copywriting and editing; the vendor will handle information architecture, organization, and implementation in the Content Management System (CMS).
371.	Will the Covered California team provide a list of current URLs or a sitemap of the content to migrate?	Yes, the Covered California team will provide a list of current URLs or a sitemap to guide the content migration.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
372.	Will Covered California provide a list of must-have features and workflows to define MVP, or do you expect us to propose it from research?	Yes, Covered California will provide a list of must-have features and known workflows to help define the MVP. However, Covered California also expects the selected vendor to inform and refine the MVP through user research and best practices.
373.	The document notes that upon completion of the MVP, the vendor will migrate all assets to Covered California's internal hosting environment, and Covered California will then assume all responsibility for live production hosting. What level of ongoing support and maintenance is expected from the Contractor after the migration is complete? The deliverables for Task 3 and Task 6 mention a support and maintenance plan and a technical consultation report, but more detail would be helpful.	The vendor is expected to provide a support and maintenance plan, along with technical consultation, through the end of the contract term.
374.	Task 7, "HBEX Site Migration," is listed as an amendment option. What factors would trigger the addition of this task, and is there an estimated timeline or budget allocated for it?	The decision to exercise the amendment for Task 7 will be made by Covered California executive leadership and Board. There is currently no expected timeline. The budget is a maximum of $500K.
375.	Should the vendor be prepared to fully migrate the CMS and content into Covered California's internal hosting environment at project close, or will a hybrid hosting model be acceptable?	The vendor should be prepared to fully migrate the Content Management System (CMS) and content into Covered California's internal hosting environment by project close.
376.	Content Management System (CMS) How many content types, templates, and pages are to be migrated?	The Covered California team will provide a list of current URLs or a sitemap to guide the content migration.
377.	Will the vendor be responsible for all content migration?	Yes.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION	
378.	How many content pages are expected to be migrated from the existing website?	CoveredCA.com currently has approximately 1,600 URLs. The estimated volume of content to be migrated includes webpages, PDFs, media assets, and translated language variants.
379.	What is the total number of pages currently? More specifically, how many templates do you have currently?	CoveredCA.com currently has approximately 1,600 URLs. The estimated volume of content to be migrated includes webpages, PDFs, media assets, and translated language variants. Currently, there are no templates.
380.	What content types are most essential to your site (e.g., enrollment flows, help articles, success stories)?	Enrollment flows, help articles, and plan and program information are the most essential content types.
381.	Will the Contractor be responsible for content audit, rewrite, migration, or implementation only?	Covered California expects the vendor to evaluate the existing content and information architecture and provide strategic recommendations. Copywriting and editing will be handled internally by Covered California. The selected vendor will lead content migration and implementation, with support from the Digital Experience Team.
382.	Who manages or contributes to content internally, and what does the governance process look like?	Content is managed by the Communications team, including content strategists, editors, the Website Product Owner, and Product Manager. Other divisions contribute as subject matter experts. Governance involves collaborative drafting, stakeholder review, and approval workflows, with final decisions varying based on the content type and visibility.
383.	Are there specific requirements for legacy content remediation (e.g., format conversion, accessibility tagging) beyond WCAG 2.1 AA compliance?	No, there are no specific requirements for legacy

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION	
384.	Are there any content governance or workflow requirements we should consider when proposing CMS configuration (e.g., content approval chains, user permissions, audit logs)?	Yes, the Content Management System (CMS) should support flexible content workflows, role-based permissions, and audit logs. Approval chains vary depending on content type and visibility, so configurable workflows will be important. Covered California open to recommendations on how best to structure this within the selected platform.
385.	Can you clarify the scope of the optional Task 7 (HBEX Site Migration)? Specifically, what content and functionality from hbex.coveredca.com are anticipated to be integrated into the redesigned platform?	Migration of hbex.coveredca.com is not guaranteed and would only be included if added to the contract as an amendment. Anticipated elements may include relevant static content (e.g., informational pages, FAQs, policy documents), key user-facing tools, and navigation or design components to support a cohesive site structure. The final scope will be defined during the planning phase, contingent upon approval of the contract addition.
386.	The migration and integration of the HBEX site content is identified as an "optional amendment" with an additional budget cap. Could Covered California provide more insight into the anticipated timeline or criteria for exercising this optional amendment for Task 7, and how this decision will impact the overall project timeline and resource allocation for the core CoveredCA.com redesign project?	If Covered California chooses to exercise the optional amendment option for Task 7, it would be incorporated very early in the project (ideally within 6 months or less of execution) so that the overall project timeline would not have to be revised beyond the two (2) year contract term.
387.	How many people are responsible for publishing and maintaining content on your site?	There are four (4) people responsible for publishing and maintaining content on the site.
388.	Is there a preference for a specific content audit methodology or tools?	No, there is no preference for specific content audit methodology or tools.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
389.	Can you confirm the exact scope of content migration required from hbex.coveredca.com to CoveredCA.com, particularly in terms of content structure, volume, and any additional multimedia content (images, videos, etc.)?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
390.	Are there any specific features on the current websites (CoveredCA.com, hbex.coveredca.com) that must be preserved, enhanced, or removed during the redesign?	We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
391.	Will the contractor be responsible for content creation, or will Covered California provide the necessary content for migration and development?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
392.	Is apply.coveredca.com included in this?	No, apply.coveredca.com is not included in this.

Project Scope and Deliverables What subdomains among the following 137 are included in this scope? 1. www.divs.coveredca.com 2. view.marketing.coveredca.com 3. www.coveredca.com 4. www.scgp.coveredca.com 5. www.test01.private.services.coveredca.com 6. www.extranet.coveredca.com 7. news.coveredca.com 8. smtp007.coveredca.com 9. data.coveredca.com 10. token-signing.coveredca.com 11. www.cp1.coveredca.com 12. www.learning.coveredca.com 13. private.services.coveredca.com 14. www.eowa.coveredca.com 15. www.event.coveredca.com 16. test.cdn-apply.coveredca.com 17. www.apply.coveredca.com 18. divsd01.coveredca.com 19. learning.coveredca.com 20. www.servicecloud.coveredca.com 21. privatechatgpt.coveredca.com 22. cloud.marketing.coveredca.com 23. www-1.coveredca.com 24. www.data.coveredca.com 25. dev01.private.services.coveredca.com 26. www.my.coveredca.com 27. rcgp.coveredca.com 28. hbexafd.coveredca.com 29. smtp006.coveredca.com 30. ep1.coveredca.com 31. www.gp.coveredca.com 32. scd-aws-connect-test.coveredca.com 33. apply.coveredca.com 34. gisportal.coveredca.com 35. www.gis02.coveredca.com 36. passwordreset.coveredca.com 37. smtp001.coveredca.com 38. hbex.coveredca.com 39. servicecloud.coveredca.com 40. ep2.coveredca.com 41. ivr.services.coveredca.com	CoveredCA.com and potentially hbex.CoveredCA.com

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45. eowa.coveredca.com
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47. itslifecare.coveredca.com
48. www1.coveredca.com
49. www.ivr.services.coveredca.com
50. www.token-signing.coveredca.com
51. www.ep1.coveredca.com
52. adfs.coveredca.com
53. smtp005.coveredca.com
54. token-decrypt.coveredca.com
55. events.coveredca.com
56. gp.coveredca.com
57. www.test01.services.coveredca.com
58. dataconnect.coveredca.com
59. serviceportal.coveredca.com
60. www.perf.private.services.coveredca.com
61. mta.marketing.coveredca.com
62. smtp004.coveredca.com
63. smtp008.coveredca.com
64. www.passwordreset.coveredca.com
65. www.internal.apply.coveredca.com
66. scd-aws-connect.coveredca.com
67. helpme.coveredca.com
68. perf.private.services.coveredca.com
69. privategpt.coveredca.com
70. divss01.coveredca.com
71. dev01.coveredca.com
72. traps.coveredca.com
73. www.helpme.coveredca.com
74. www.www-1.coveredca.com
75. divst01.coveredca.com
76. divsp04.coveredca.com
77. www.anyconnect.coveredca.com
78. extranet.coveredca.com
79. mktg.coveredca.com
80. www.private.services.coveredca.com
81. www.serviceportal.coveredca.com
82. origin.cdn-apply.coveredca.com
83. emy.coveredca.com
84. aichat.coveredca.com
85. cppm.coveredca.com
86. divsp01.coveredca.com

87. www.services.coveredca.com
88. owa01.coveredca.com
89. styleguide.coveredca.com
90. board.coveredca.com
91. agent-finder.coveredca.com
92. www.dataconnect.coveredca.com
93. divsp02.coveredca.com
94. anyconnect.coveredca.com
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98. www.eadfs.coveredca.com
99. socure.cdn-apply.coveredca.com
100. salesforce.coveredca.com
101. divsp03.coveredca.com
102. cp1.coveredca.com
103. jobs.coveredca.com
104. click.marketing.coveredca.com
105. my.coveredca.com
106. smtp002.coveredca.com
107. dev03.coveredca.com
108. redirect.cdn-apply.coveredca.com
109. www.cp3.coveredca.com
110. smtp003.coveredca.com
111. www.cppm.coveredca.com
112. storefronts.coveredca.com
113. www.intranet.coveredca.com
114. www.dev01.private.services.coveredca.com
115. cp3.coveredca.com
116. ccmd.coveredca.com
117. divst02.coveredca.com
118. test01.services.coveredca.com
119. securegpt.coveredca.com
120. cclearning.coveredca.com
121. cdn-apply.coveredca.com
122. dev04.coveredca.com
123. www.owa01.coveredca.com
124. myccsb-staging.coveredca.com
125. www.storefronts.coveredca.com
126. gis02.coveredca.com
127. services.coveredca.com
128. test01.private.services.coveredca.com
129. image.marketing.coveredca.com
130. archive.coveredca.com

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
	131. scd-aws-connect-admin.coveredca.com 132. www.salesforce.coveredca.com 133. intranet.coveredca.com 134. internal.apply.coveredca.com 135. www.adfs.coveredca.com 136. www.traps.coveredca.com 137. prd.verify.coveredca.com	
393.	What type of documentation is expected for deliverables, especially for content migration, design specifications, integration details, and any technical configurations?	Covered California expects documentation that covers key areas such as content migration, design, technical setup, integrations, and governance. The format can be aligned with the vendor's standard approach, as long as it supports clarity, usability, and long-term maintenance.
394.	Will there be any specific SEO considerations for migrating content from hbex.coveredca.com, including redirect strategies and preserving search rankings?	The final scope, including SEO, will be defined during the planning phase, contingent upon approval of the contract addition.
395.	Are there any unique content types (e.g., calculators, comparison tools) that need to be preserved, updated, or redesigned during the migration process?	The selected vendor and Web Team will collaborate on migration strategies for necessary portions of the site as part of project onboarding and initial design phases after contract execution.
396.	Approximately how many pages and how much content (e.g., file size or volume) does the current website have?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
397.	Current size of files directory?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
398.	How large is the current media library (images, documents, videos), and should all assets be transferred to the new CMS?	The selected vendor and Web Team will collaborate on migration strategies for necessary portions of the site as part of project onboarding and initial design phases after contract execution.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
399.	In what formats is the current content available (e.g., HTML, PDF, images, video, CMS data)?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
400.	Is original content creation expected within the scope?	No, there is no original content creation expected within the scope of this contract.
401.	Where will assets like photography, video, etc. come from? Is there an existing content library for photos or videos?	Yes, there is an existing content library for photos and videos.
402.	Content Management System (CMS) Will content migration from the current system to the new CMS be in scope?	Yes, content migration from the current system to the new Content Management System (CMS) is in scope.
403.	What is the estimated volume of content (e.g., number of articles, documents, media files) that will require migration and remediation?	A recent crawl identified approximately 2,200 URLs on CoveredCA.com. This includes webpages, PDFs, media files, and assets across multiple languages. While not all of these represent unique content requiring migration, we anticipate that between 1,200–1,500 content assets will require review and remediation. A comprehensive audit during discovery will confirm the final scope.
404.	How many total pages, documents, and media files currently exist on CoveredCA.com? What database system is currently used, and what is the approximate size of your content database?	CoveredCA.com is currently a static site built and managed using Azure, GitHub, and CloudCannon. This includes roughly 2200 urls including static pages and files (images, PDFs, etc.).

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTENT AND MIGRATION		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
405.	Who are the current content editors and administrators? Please describe the process for how content gets created, reviewed, approved, and published on your website today. How many people are involved in this process?	The core content team sits within Communications and includes content strategists, editors, the Website Product Owner, and the Website Product Manager. Additional reviewers may include subject matter experts from Policy, Legal, or Marketing depending on the topic. Content is created or updated by the content team, reviewed by relevant stakeholders, and routed for approval before being published via CloudCannon. Typically, 2–4 people are involved in each content workflow, with the Product Owner and Product Manager overseeing prioritization, coordination, and approvals.
406.	Which website content or features require real-time data updates (plan pricing, eligibility rules, etc.)? What are the acceptable data refresh intervals for different types of content?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
407.	Section 3.2 references the migration and integration of hbex.coveredca.com content as part of the Contractor's scope but also states that it may be added through an amendment. Can Covered California confirm whether this work is expected as part of the base contract deliverables, or if it will only be exercised at Covered California's discretion?	This work isn't included in the base contract deliverables but may be added in the future, pending additional funding.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
408.	Does Covered CA have a preference for a specific technology stack, such as .NET, Java, or PHP?	The selected vendor and Web Team will collaborate on setting tech stack specs for the new site as part of project onboarding and initial design phases after contract execution.
409.	Is there a preference for Open Source versus Commercial WCMSs?	The selected vendor and Web Team will collaborate on setting tech stack specs for the new site as part of project onboarding and initial design phases after contract execution.
410.	Are there any specific tools or technologies (e.g., Figma, Adobe XD) that Covered California prefers for design and collaboration?	Figma is Covered California's preferred design tool due to its collaborative features and flexibility.
411.	Is Covered California open to Open source CMS (such as Wordpress and Drupal) with a composable setup for CDP, personalization, etc.?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
412.	Given the references to AEM, WordPress VIP, and Microsoft Sharepoint/.net throughout the RFP, are these the three CMS platforms that are being considered? Is Covered California open to other CMS platforms?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
413.	What would be the desired editorial experience for the CMS of choice? Are you expecting a full visual editor experience or can editors work comfortably with a user-friendly interface?	The desired editorial experience prioritizes ease of use, flexibility, and efficiency. While a full visual editor is not strictly required, the Content Management System (CMS) should offer a user-friendly interface that enables content editors to create, update, and manage content with minimal technical support.
414.	What collaboration tools do you prefer (e.g., Slack, Figma, Asana, Google Docs)?	Figma and Google Docs are preferred.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
415.	Does Covered California have **preferred analytics or CDP tools** beyond GA4 that the vendor should plan to configure for personalization and reporting?	Salesforce Core and Marketing Cloud
416.	How many staff members will need CMS training, and what training formats are preferred (e.g., in-person, remote, recorded)?	Approximately 14 staff members will require training, ideally delivered remotely with access to recorded sessions for future reference and flexibility.
417.	Should the CMS solution support headless or hybrid deployment models, or is a traditional monolithic implementation preferred?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
418.	Are there specific technical requirements or preferred platforms for the CMS evaluation?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
419.	Any particular CMS you are looking at? You mention AEM, is this preferred?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
420.	Will Covered California require regular project updates and progress reports? If so, what is the preferred format and frequency for reporting?	Yes, project updates and progress reports, developed in conjunction with the Covered California Web Team will be required. Format, frequency, etc will be determined collectively by the CC Web Team and vendor.
421.	Are there any preferred tools or templates for project reporting, sprint tracking, or stakeholder communications?	Covered California is open to using the vendor's preferred tools, as long as they support transparency, collaboration, and clear reporting for all stakeholders.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
422.	Is there a preference for local vendors?	The only preference/incentive points being offered are Small Business (SB) and/or Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) preference/incentive points. More information about these Programs can be found in RFP 2025-01, Section 6. Preference and Incentive Programs.
423.	Is Covered California open to a WordPress VIP-based CMS solution, or does it prefer other enterprise-grade platforms such as AEM or Drupal?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
424.	Is there a preferred target date or quarter for MVP deployment within the contract timeline?	Yes, but Covered California is open to refining this timeline collaboratively based on the vendor's input and project planning.
425.	Is there a preferred CMS platform for the redesign?	We have a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
426.	Do you have any preferences or constraints for the CMS (open-source vs. proprietary)?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
427.	Is there a preferred format or template for the Excel version of the Cost Worksheet, or can we design our own as long as it mirrors the structure?	Proposers should complete Exhibit B, Attachment 1 for the Cost Worksheet.
428.	What is Covered California's preferred approach for CMS vendor support - direct vendor support, third-party support, or in-house support? How should ongoing CMS maintenance costs be structured in the proposal?	Direct support is ideal, though quality and cost are the main decision factors. Options for support could be discussed early in the onboarding process after contract execution.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
429.	What is the preferred go-live approach - immediate cutover, phased rollout, or parallel operations?	This decision will be made in collaboration with the selected vendor.
430.	Is there a preferred cloud provider or architecture pattern (e.g., containerized apps, serverless, microservices)?	Covered California currently utilizes Microsoft Azure infrastructure (Front Door, resources, etc.). This would be the most cost effective future solution.
431.	Will the CMS be headless, decoupled, or traditional? Are there CMS preferences (e.g., Drupal, WordPress)?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
432.	Will Covered California provide any tools, licenses, or environments that we should exclude from costing (e.g., Google Analytics, hosting during dev)?	Yes.
433.	Are there any example websites (from peer cities or otherwise) that you find inspiring or want to emulate?	Some example websites include: • Athena: https://www.athenahealth.com/ • Maven Clinic: https://www.mavenclinic.com/lp/maven-clinic-home • Blue Shield of California – blueshieldca.com • UnitedHealthcare (UHC) – uhc.com • Mayo Clinic – mayoclinic.org • Coda – coda.io

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
434.	Are there any specific examples of other healthcare marketplace websites that Covered California considers aspirational?	Some example websites include: • Athena: https://www.athenahealth.com/ • Maven Clinic: https://www.mavenclinic.com/lp/maven-clinic-home • Blue Shield of California – blueshieldca.com • UnitedHealthcare (UHC) – uhc.com • Mayo Clinic – mayoclinic.org • Coda – coda.io
435.	What are the two three industry-standard CMS platforms that Covered California is currently evaluating? Please provide the specific names so vendors can tailor their technical approach accordingly.	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
436.	What are the 3 industry-standard CMS's currently being evaluated by Covered CA?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
437.	Should vendors propose a CMS platform in their response, or will CMS selection be conducted jointly during discovery? If the latter, will Covered California consider proprietary vs. open-source platforms?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
438.	Would you consider Drupal, the open source content management system, as a CMS solution for the new website?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
439.	Are there required or preferred CMS platforms (e.g., AEM, SharePoint, WordPress VIP)?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
440.	Does Covered California have a preferred CMS (Drupal, WordPress etc.) or openness to headless/hybrid CMS architectures? Are there restrictions on open-source platforms?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
441.	Does Covered CA have any preferred WCMS, such as Adobe Experience Manager, WordPress, Sitecore, Drupal, or Optimizely?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
442.	Does the City have a preferred CMS (e.g., WordPress, Drupal), or is the vendor free to recommend a platform?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
443.	Is there a preferred CMS platform or short list of CMS solutions that Covered California is considering as part of this redesign? Or would you prefer vendors to propose three potential options for consideration?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
444.	Is there an existing CMS preferred or in use today (e.g., WordPress VIP, AEM, etc.)?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
445.	Does Covered California have a preferred CMS platform in mind for the redesigned site, or is the selected vendor expected to recommend a platform as part of the engagement?	Covered California a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
446. .	Does Covered California have a preferred CMS platform for this project, or will the Contractor lead the evaluation and selection process?	Covered California has a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria. We will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate requirements and finalize the CMS selection.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA'S PROJECT TEAM		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
447. .	How large is the team that manages this content?	A team of four (4) people.
448.	How many stakeholders will make decisions on CMS Selection and Design direction?	A small group of key stakeholders will guide Content Management System (CMS) selection and design direction, including the Website Product Manager, Product Owner, and IT partners. With necessary approvals from leadership.
449.	Do you have an internal technical team responsible for website development?	Yes, there is an internal technical team responsible for website development.
450.	Please identify all Covered California staff who will be involved in this project including their roles, decision-making authority, and estimated time commitment. Who has final approval authority for each project phase?	The Website Product Manager and Website Product Owner will lead the project, with the Product Owner managing day-to-day coordination and backlog prioritization. A cross-functional Digital Experience Team will provide input throughout. Final approval for each phase rests with Covered California executive leadership, informed by recommendations from the Product Manager + Owner and Digital Experience Team. Time commitments will vary by phase and role.
451.	Will Covered California provide a dedicated Product Owner or liaison for sprint planning and approvals?	Yes, Covered California will provide a dedicated Product Owner/liaison for sprint planning and approvals.
452.	Are there dependencies on external stakeholders (e.g., IT, compliance teams) that could impact the project schedule?	No, there are not any dependencies on external stakeholders (e.g., IT, compliance teams) that would impact the project schedule.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA'S PROJECT TEAM		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
453.	**Process** Could you provide clarity on how the Enterprise IT, Legal, and Executive steering review and approval cycles currently work? I.e. Expected turnaround times for each group, approval layers, decision makers, etc.	Key stakeholders include Covered California's executive leadership, the Digital Experience Team (IT and Communications), and representatives from Marketing, Policy, and Legal. Stakeholders will be integrated throughout the project via regular checkpoints, reviews, and working sessions. The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will ensure alignment across teams and escalate decisions as needed.
454.	Who are the key stakeholders for this project and how integrated into the process will they be?	Key stakeholders include Covered California's executive leadership, the Digital Experience Team (IT and Communications), and representatives from Marketing, Policy, and Legal. Stakeholders will be integrated throughout the project via regular checkpoints, reviews, and working sessions. The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will ensure alignment across teams and escalate decisions as needed.
455.	Who are the primary stakeholders who will help drive this work forward, and who are the decision makers that will influence the direction of the project?	The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will lead the work day to day, supported by the cross-functional Digital Experience Team. Key decisions will be informed by input from stakeholders across the organization, with final approvals handled by the appropriate leadership based on the nature of the deliverable.
456.	Can Covered California clarify which internal teams will be actively involved (e.g., marketing, IT, compliance) and the level of access to subject matter experts and decision-makers throughout the project?	Covered California's core project team includes IT and Communications, which together form the Digital Experience Team (DET). When appropriate, Marketing, Policy, Legal, and other divisions will be consulted. The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will facilitate collaboration and ensure access to subject matter experts as needed. Decision-makers will remain actively engaged, with executive leadership providing final approvals at key milestones.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA'S PROJECT TEAM	
457.	What is the size of your internal web team and what are their current titles or roles?	Covered California's internal team includes 14 staff responsible for website content, design, and development work. This cross-functional team brings skills in product management, content strategy, UX/UI design, front- and back-end development, accessibility, analytics, and project coordination. Together, the team supports both day-to-day operations and strategic initiatives.
458.	What is the composition and set of skills represented by Covered California's internal team?	Covered California's internal team includes 14 staff responsible for website content, design, and development work. This cross-functional team brings skills in product management, content strategy, UX/UI design, front- and back-end development, accessibility, analytics, and project coordination. Together, the team supports both day-to-day operations and strategic initiatives.
459.	Who are the key stakeholders (e.g., leadership, compliance, IT) we will coordinate with, and what is the expected frequency and format of engagement (e.g., workshops, sprint reviews)?	Key stakeholders include leaders from IT and Communications, with input from Policy, Legal, and Marketing as needed. The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will coordinate all engagement. Check-ins will happen at least biweekly, but more frequently during active phases, through workshops, sprint reviews, and working sessions.
460.	Who is on the board of decision makers who will be evaluating the proposals? If you can't provide the names, can you at least let us know the titles/roles?	Key stakeholders include Covered California's executive leadership, the Digital Experience Team (IT and Communications), and representatives from Marketing, Policy, and Legal. Stakeholders will be integrated throughout the project via regular checkpoints, reviews, and working sessions. The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will ensure alignment across teams and escalate decisions as needed.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA'S PROJECT TEAM		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
461.	Do you have an internal engineering team? If so, what is your internal expertise/team in the engineering space for CMS, your implementation, your applications, your infrastructure, and your DevOps capabilities?	Covered California's internal team includes 14 staff responsible for website content, design, and development work. This cross-functional team brings skills in product management, content strategy, UX/UI design, front- and back-end development, accessibility, analytics, and project coordination. Together, the team supports both day-to-day operations and strategic initiatives.
462.	How will your internal team be involved throughout the redesign process? What specific roles will complement our team (e.g., content, development, QA)?	The internal team will work collaboratively with the selected contractor in areas including content, design, development, and quality assurance.
463.	Will we coordinate with an internal IT or InfoSec team during implementation?	Yes, the selected vendor will have to coordinate with an internal IT team during implementation.
464.	How many internal stakeholder groups will need to be engaged during the discovery and requirements gathering process?	Key stakeholders include leaders from IT and Communications, with input from Policy, Legal, and Marketing as needed.
465. .	Can you identify the number and roles of stakeholders who will participate in the discovery and approval phases?	10 key stakeholders include leaders from IT and Communications, with input from Policy, Legal, and Marketing as needed.
466.	What meeting cadence or collaboration style works best for your team?	Check-ins will happen at least biweekly, but more frequently during active phases, through workshops, sprint reviews, and working sessions.
467.	How are final approvals for design and development sign-offs managed internally?	The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will lead the work day to day, supported by the cross-functional Digital Experience Team. Key decisions will be informed by input from stakeholders across the organization, with final approvals handled by the appropriate leadership based on the nature of the deliverable.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA'S PROJECT TEAM		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
468.	What level of involvement do you expect from your internal team in daily Agile ceremonies?	The internal team provides updates on work completed and in progress during thrice-weekly Agile ceremonies.
469.	Who will be the day-to-day contact and executive stakeholder on your team?	The Website Product Manager and Product Owner will lead the work day to day, supported by the cross-functional Digital Experience Team. Key decisions will be informed by input from stakeholders across the organization, with final approvals handled by the appropriate leadership based on the nature of the deliverable.
470.	Who will be the primary point of contact from Covered California for project communications, and how will communication between the contractor and Covered California's internal teams be structured?	The Website Product Manager will serve as the primary point of contact for project communications. Communication between the contractor and internal teams will be structured through regular check-ins, sprint ceremonies (if Agile is followed), and collaborative work sessions. The Product Manager and Product Owner will coordinate input from key stakeholders and ensure alignment across teams.
471.	What collaboration tools or methods should be used for sharing designs, content, and project updates?	The selected vendor should expect to use Figma and DevOps for sharing designs, content, and project updates.
472.	Would you prefer us to propose ongoing maintenance covering the entire period from launch to the end of the two year contract, or should we create a plan that involves handing off a completed product to your team to manage with the needed training? If the latter, what does your team structure and skillset look like?	It would be the latter. The Proposal should include a plan that involves handing off a completed product to the Covered California team to manage with the needed training. The Covered California team contains content authors, UX designers, developers, and analytic experts.

QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERED CALIFORNIA'S PROJECT TEAM		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
473.	What does an ideal engagement model look like for you? Are there preferred rhythms or practices—such as milestone reviews, sprint cadences, or embedded collaboration—that you've found most successful? *We're particularly interested in understanding the makeup and involvement of both your internal* **creative** *and* **technical** *teams.*	An ideal engagement model for us is collaborative, transparent, and milestone-driven. We operate within an Agile framework, working in two-week sprints, with regular ceremonies such as sprint planning, standups, and reviews to maintain alignment and momentum. Embedded collaboration—particularly during strategy, design, and key decision-making phases—has proven very effective.

QUESTIONS ABOUT REQUIRED TRAINING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
474.	How many staff members need CMS training, broken down by user type (administrators, editors, approvers)?	There are 14 administrators that will need training.
475.	What is the preferred training delivery method - in-person, virtual, recorded, or written materials?	Covered California prefers a blended approach—combining virtual sessions with written materials—is likely to be the most effective and scalable option.
476.	How many content editors will need training	Four (4) content editors.
477.	How many developers or technical staff will require training to support and maintain the system?	There are 14 staff members who will need training.
478.	Will the internal team require training to manage SEO or analytics post-launch?	Depending on the tools and platforms chosen, some level of training might be beneficial for the internal team to manage SEO or analytics effectively post-launch.
479.	Do you anticipate ongoing support needs after go-live (e.g., enhancements, training, maintenance)?	Yes, Covered California anticipates ongoing support needs after go-live.
480.	Can you describe the internal team's familiarity with specific CMS platforms or expectations around training and knowledge transfer?	The internal team has varying levels of familiarity with Content Management System (CMS) platforms, but we're adaptable. Specific training and knowledge transfer needs will depend on the platform selected.
481.	Will the Contractor be responsible for training Covered California staff on the new CMS and governance workflows?	The selected vendor will only be responsible for training the internal team that will run the website.
482.	How many people will require training to manage and update the new website post-launch?	There are 14 staff members that will require training.
483.	What type of training do you envision (e.g., content management, analytics, security)?	Covered California envisions training that covers core areas such as content management, user permissions, and basic site maintenance. Additionally, we may also require guidance on security best practices and system administration for select technical staff. The goal is to ensure our team can effectively manage the platform and maintain long-term sustainability.
484.	Will training documentation or sessions be required for any user levels besides	Yes, training will be required for the internal team that will run the website.

QUESTIONS ABOUT REQUIRED TRAINING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
	Administrators (i.e. CMS training for those entering content). *References Section/Page: Task 3 Deliverables*	
485.	Is user/admin training part of the scope?	Yes, user/admin training is part of the scope.
486.	Should knowledge transfer sessions be conducted for internal IT staff?	Yes, knowledge transfer sessions will need to be conducted for internal IT staff.
487.	How many users are required to be trained?	There are 14 staff members that will need training.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MAINTENANCE FOR SITE AFTER LAUNCH		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
488.	What level of documentation is required at handover (architecture, user manual, code)?	Covered California would like a solid baseline of documentation at handover, including system architecture, a user manual for content editors, and high-level code documentation. The goal is to ensure the internal team can manage and maintain the platform confidently post-launch. We can discuss the specific level of detail and format with the hired vendor.
489.	What are the expectations for post-launch support (bug fixes, minor enhancements, performance tuning, etc.)?	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established.
490.	Will the vendor be responsible for ongoing maintenance and content updates, or will this be handled internally?	No, this will be handled internally once the contract term ends.
491.	Is there a clear definition of "warranty period" support vs. paid support?	"Warranty period" refers to support included with the initial contract, typically covering post-implementation issues for a defined time. "Paid support" refers to a separate contract for ongoing support after the warranty period ends.
492.	After the website launches and is transferred to Covered California's internal hosting, what level of ongoing vendor support do you anticipate needing? Please describe your internal capacity for website maintenance, content updates, and technical support.	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MAINTENANCE FOR SITE AFTER LAUNCH		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
493.	What support hours and response times are required during launch? Should vendors provide dedicated support staff?	During launch, Covered California expects extended support hours, including availability outside standard business hours to promptly address any critical issues. Timely response and resolution will be essential, especially during the initial go-live period. While dedicated support staff may be needed, this will be determined in collaboration with the selected vendor to best meet project needs.
494.	How many optimization sprints are expected post-launch?	The exact number will be based on post-launch needs, user analytics, and stakeholder priorities.
495.	What level of autonomy and flexibility do you want your internal team to have post-launch?	It's critical that the internal team is fully prepared to assume full control of the website before the contract term concludes.
496.	Is the vendor expected to provide ongoing maintenance after launch? If so, what level of support is anticipated?	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established.
497.	Will the vendor be responsible for ongoing CMS maintenance and support post-launch, or will that be handled by internal staff?	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established. It's critical that the internal team is fully prepared to assume full control of the website before the contract term concludes.
498.	Will the vendor be responsible for **ongoing CMS maintenance and governance post-**	Duties will fully transition to the Covered California internal team.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	launch, or will those duties fully transition to Covered California's internal team after handoff?	
499.	Is there an expectation for ongoing support or maintenance after the two-year contract term ends?	No, there is not an expectation for ongoing support or maintenance after the two (2) -year contract term ends
500.	Beyond site analytics, how will **project success be measured post-launch**—for example, call center deflection, improved accessibility scores, or enrollment lift?	The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
501.	Are there specific experience KPIs that need to be achieved post-launch?	The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
502.	What is the expected level of ongoing support and maintenance post-launch? Will it include tasks such as content updates, feature enhancements, bug fixes, security patches, and performance optimization?	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established. It's critical that the internal team is fully prepared to assume full control of the website before the contract term concludes.
503.	What is the expected duration of post-launch support? Will Covered California handle ongoing maintenance in-house, or will the contractor provide long-term support?	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established. It's

QUESTIONS ABOUT MAINTENANCE FOR SITE AFTER LAUNCH	
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
		critical that the internal team is fully prepared to assume full control of the website before the contract term concludes.
504.	Will Covered California provide any internal teams for support, or is the contractor expected to handle 24/7 support for urgent issues during the maintenance period?	Post-launch, Covered California expects to need vendor support for occasional troubleshooting, updates, or complex enhancements. Our internal team can manage routine maintenance, content updates, and basic support. The exact level of ongoing support will be defined in collaboration with the selected vendor once the final solution is established. It's critical that the internal team is fully prepared to assume full control of the website before the contract term concludes.
505.	Are there any SLAs for uptime, bug fixes, and high-priority issues that need to be met postlaunch?	Covered California expects to define SLAs for uptime, bug fixes, and high-priority issues as part of the vendor contract. While current expectations align with industry standards (e.g., 99.9% uptime, rapid response for critical issues), specific service levels will be negotiated and finalized during the contracting phase.
506.	Does Covered California anticipate further integrations or functionality expansions for the website after the initial launch? For example, will there be new health insurance plans, expanded outreach tools, or further integrations with governmental or external systems?	Covered California is designing the new website with flexibility and scalability in mind to accommodate future needs. While there are no immediate plans for major functionality expansions or new integrations, the site architecture will support potential future updates as priorities evolve.
507.	Will the vendor be responsible for accessibility audits post-launch?	The budget includes maintenance and/or support (including accessibility) until the end of the contract term.
508.	Do you need the vendor to provide maintenance support for ongoing bug fixes and minor enhancements?	The budget includes maintenance and/or support until the end of the contract term.
509.	Are there any ongoing maintenance or support costs beyond the redesign phase? If so, how	The budget includes maintenance and/or support until the end of the contract term.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MAINTENANCE FOR SITE AFTER LAUNCH		
No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	should these costs be reflected in the proposal?	
510.	Will Covered California require our team to remain available for long-term maintenance or will it be transitioned to their internal team?	No, maintenance will be transitioned to Covered California's internal team.
511.	Does the budget allocated for this project include ongoing maintenance for the website for all years, or will maintenance be a separate budget item?	The budget includes maintenance and/or support throughout the term of the contract.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
512.	Who are the primary audiences the City wants to serve with the new site (e.g., residents, businesses, tourists, developers)?	The primary audiences that Covered California wants to serve with this new site include: • Individuals and Families • Small Businesses and Employees • Licensed Agents and Brokers • Community Organizations and Advocates • Policymakers and Regulators
513.	Are there expectations for performance metrics (e.g., Core Web Vitals, load speed)?	Yes, there are expectations for performance metrics to ensure an optimal user experience.
514.	Are there any known accessibility challenges or feedback from current users that should be addressed in the redesign?	No, there are no known accessibility challenges or feedback from current users that needs to be addressed in the redesign.
515.	Can you provide more details about the primary target audiences for both the consumer-facing site (CoveredCA.com) and the business site (hbex.coveredca.com)?	The primary target audiences for CoveredCA.com, the consumer-facing site, are individuals and families seeking health insurance coverage, including first-time enrollees, those renewing their plans, and users looking to understand subsidy options. This site is designed to provide easy access to enrollment tools, subsidy calculators, and educational resources to empower consumers in making informed decisions. **hbex.coveredca.com**, by contrast, is designed primarily as a **resource and collaboration hub for external partners**, such as agents, enrollment counselors, and stakeholders. It supports document sharing, training materials, policy guidance, event coordination, and partner-specific updates.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
516.	Are there **specific underserved or priority demographics** (e.g., Spanish-dominant households, Medi-Cal eligible users) whose UX needs should drive the redesign strategy?	Covered California serves a diverse user base, but the current website experience is heavily geared toward self-service, which doesn't align with the majority of users who seek enrollment assistance. Non-English speakers—especially those outside the Spanish-speaking population—face a fragmented and often inaccessible experience due to limited translation and inconsistent navigation.
517.	Can you describe your core user groups and how they currently engage with the site?	Our core user groups include California consumers seeking health insurance and certified partners such as agents and enrollment counselors who assist them. Consumers engage primarily through enrollment, plan management, and self-service tools, while partners rely on the site for training, resources, and program updates to support their work. The selected vendor will receive access to more detailed data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
518.	What are the key differences in functionality, audience, and content types between CoveredCA.com and hbex.coveredca.com that the vendor should consider for the potential migration and integration?	**CoveredCA.com** serves as the primary consumer-facing platform for California's health insurance marketplace. It includes enrollment portals, plan comparison tools, eligibility calculators, and multilingual support, offering full transactional capabilities for applicants and enrollees.

hbex.coveredca.com, by contrast, is designed primarily as a **resource and collaboration hub for external partners**, such as agents, enrollment counselors, and stakeholders. It supports document sharing, training materials, policy guidance, event coordination, and partner-specific updates. |

QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
519.	Audience Clarification: Exhibit A mentions public users (individuals and families), small businesses, internal staff, and agency partners. Are there additional user groups or stakeholders Covered California would like to ensure are considered in the design?	No, there are not any additional user groups or stakeholders, besides the ones explicitly stated in Exhibit A, that need to be considered in the design.
520.	How does Covered California envision the redesigned website aligning with its broader organizational goals (e.g., reducing uninsured Californians, health equity)?	The redesigned website is envisioned as a key tool in advancing Covered California's broader organizational goals, including reducing the number of uninsured Californians and promoting health equity. By delivering a more accessible, user-friendly, and inclusive online experience, the site aims to simplify the path to coverage, support informed decision-making, and reach underserved communities effectively. The redesign will prioritize clear communication, equitable access, and culturally responsive content to ensure all Californians can navigate their health insurance options with confidence.
521.	Can you provide historical and current performance metrics and desired future goals?	Selected historical and current performance metrics will be shared with the selected vendor after contract execution.
522.	How does the website support broader marketing, outreach, or operational efforts (e.g., call centers, offline enrollment)?	The website serves as a central hub supporting broader marketing and outreach efforts by providing accessible information, educational resources, and tools that drive engagement and enrollment. It complements offline initiatives such as call centers and in-person enrollment by offering seamless digital access and consistent messaging. This integrated approach ensures users can transition smoothly between online and offline channels for a cohesive experience.
523.	What are your most important analytics goals (e.g., conversions, plan selection, traffic sources)?	Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates.

	QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS	
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
524.	Are there any strategic partnerships, campaigns, or seasonal initiatives the site must support?	From a Marketing lens, the three (3) major campaigns that direct consumers to the website are Open Enrollment, Special Enrollment, and Utilization campaign. In addition, Marketing also deploys campaigns against Brand building, whose secondary KPI is to drive brand consideration via site traffic.
525.	What are the key milestones or deliverables before the full project completion, such as MVP launches, user testing, or specific feature approvals?	The key milestones and deliverables—such as MVP launches, user testing phases, and feature approvals—will be determined and finalized in collaboration with the hired vendor.
526.	How often are marketing campaigns run via the websites and socials?	Covered California runs media campaigns 365 days a year, ranging from full funnel to digital only, all with a primary CTA of visiting the website.
527.	What emotional or functional response should users have after visiting your site?	After visiting the site, users should feel confident, informed, and supported in navigating their health coverage options. Functionally, the site should provide a seamless and intuitive experience that makes it easy for users to find information, calculate subsidies, and complete enrollments or renewals efficiently. Emotionally, the goal is to foster a strong sense of trust in our organization, helping users feel reassured and empowered to make important healthcare decisions with clarity and peace of mind.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
528.	What KPIs or performance indicators will define success?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
529.	What performance benchmarks or KPIs does Covered California use to define success for site speed, uptime, or responsiveness?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
530.	What are the primary KPIs for Covered California's Website? What are Covered California's **most critical conversion goals** for the redesigned site (e.g., enrollments, renewals, subsidy calculators)?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
531.	Current KPIs: Does Covered California have existing KPIs or performance metrics for its current site? If so, where is the site currently performing well, and where might there be room for improvement?	Covered California tracks KPIs such as traffic, bounce rates, engagement, and conversion metrics tied to account creation and enrollment. The site performs well in driving traffic and awareness, but there is room to improve mobile usability, content findability, bounce rates, engagement time, and overall conversion. The redesign will focus on addressing these areas to better meet user needs and business goals.
532.	What are the key success metrics or KPIs for this website redesign project?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
533.	What specific metrics and KPIs are being used to measure website success?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TARGET AUDIENCES, GOALS, AND KPIS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
534.	Are there specific performance benchmarks (e.g., page load times, Lighthouse scores) that the redesigned website must achieve?	Covered California has not finalized specific performance benchmarks yet, but we expect the redesigned site to meet or exceed industry standards for accessibility, page speed, and overall user experience. This includes strong Lighthouse scores, mobile performance, and compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines.
535.	What are the key success metrics Covered California will use to evaluate the redesigned website?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.
536.	What are the specific performance metrics (e.g., page load times, user satisfaction scores) for the redesigned website?	The primary KPIs for Covered California's website focus on user engagement, conversion efficiency, and overall service effectiveness. Key metrics include website traffic, user session duration, bounce rates, and most importantly, enrollment numbers and renewal rates. The most critical conversion goals for the redesigned site are driving new enrollments, facilitating seamless renewals, and promoting the use of subsidy calculators and other self-service tools to empower users in making informed decisions.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
537.	What third-party systems or data sources must the website integrate with (e.g., CRM, CDP, eligibility tools)?	The website must integrate with CDP.
538.	What tools or systems does the new site need to integrate with?	The new site needs to integrate with Salesforce CDP.
539.	Are there any legacy technical constraints or dependencies that the new website must accommodate?	The infrastructure is built utilizing GitHub and Microsoft Azure technologies. Utilizing existing technology would save time and cost. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
540.	In section 3.2, Covered California indicates that the site will integrate with a number of APIs and other systems. Is there a comprehensive or partial list of systems to be integrated?	Yes, the selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
541.	Can you provide more detail on the CDP integration requirements referenced in the Scope of Work? Are there specific platforms in use today?	The website needs to integrate with Salesforce CDP.
542.	What existing systems and platforms must be integrated with the new website, and can Covered California provide any documentation for these?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
543.	Are there any third-party platforms, tools, or integrations that must be supported by the CMS (e.g., eligibility systems, CRMs, analytics tools)?	The website needs to integrate with Salesforce CDP.
544.	Will the redesigned site need to interact in real time with systems such as CalHEERS, Medi-Cal, or other eligibility engines?	Yes, the new site will need to interact with the real-time systems.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
545.	What specific functionalities or integrations are expected for cross-product data flows and real-time personalization? Are there preferred CRM, eligibility systems, or data platforms we should plan to integrate with?	An integration with Salesforce CDP is the main driver for cross-product data flows and real-time personalization. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
546.	What level of ADA compliance is required for the website redesign? Is it expected to meet WCAG 2.1 AA or a higher standard (e.g., WCAG 2.2 AA)?	Yes, the redesigned site must fully comply with all applicable **state and federal accessibility regulations**, including **Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act** and the **California Government Code Section 7405 and 11135**, which require conformance with the **WCAG 2.1 AA** standards. Accessibility is a core requirement, and all digital content, user interfaces, and functionality must be designed to ensure equal access for individuals with disabilities.
547.	Are there any specific state or federal accessibility regulations (e.g., Section 508, California state accessibility laws) that must be fully integrated into the accessibility requirements?	Yes, the redesigned site must fully comply with all applicable **state and federal accessibility regulations**, including **Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act** and the **California Government Code Section 7405 and 11135**, which require conformance with the **WCAG 2.1 AA** standards. Accessibility is a core requirement, and all digital content, user interfaces, and functionality must be designed to ensure equal access for individuals with disabilities.
548.	How should the website be designed to support future integrations seamlessly? Are there any specific systems or platforms that will need to be integrated in future phases of the project?	Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**

549.	Can you provide examples of websites that inspire you or align with the vision for your site? What specific features or elements from those sites do you find most appealing?	Below are some examples of websites:
		
		• Blue Shield of California – blueshieldca.com
		• UnitedHealthcare (UHC) – uhc.com
		  o Strong information architecture (IA)
		  o Effective persona-based navigation (individuals, existing members, agents/brokers, etc.)
		  o Homepages prioritize user direction over dense information
		• Mayo Clinic – mayoclinic.org
		  o Preferred for overall look and feel
		  o Visual direction would be guided by our brand refresh
		• Coda – coda.io
		  o Good example of a robust yet well-organized navigation
		  o Balances ample content with whitespace and graphics
		  o Though effective, we don't need to pack as much content into every page as they do
		• Headspace (headspace.com) offers a good example with a branded illustration style that balances representation, though they have increased the use of people imagery recently.

550.	Can you provide a list or description of the specific existing Covered California tools, data systems, and analytics platforms that the new website must integrate with?	An integration with Salesforce CDP and Snowflake are the main existing tools. We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
551.	Is there an existing design system that needs to be leveraged or updated, or is the vendor expected to create a new unified design system from scratch?	Covered California would like to create a new, more cohesive design system that better incorporates the org's brand with the goal of making the experience feel cohesive between marketing + website experiences. We open to leveraging existing libraries out there so that the vendor doesn't have to build one from scratch.
552.	Should the vendor price the integration work associated with CDP integration, or should it assume that integration comes standard with the selected CMS? *References Section/Page: 3.2 Purpose*	The vendor's portion of the Content Management System (CMS) and CDP integration work should be priced, though assistance will be proved from internal staff, existing systems integration vendor, and Salesforce vendor.
553.	Are there any proprietary or legacy systems involved that must be preserved or integrated?	Internal infrastructure is built utilizing GitHub and Microsoft Azure technologies. Utilizing existing technology would save time and cost. We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
554.	Integration with External Systems What external systems, databases, or APIs does the site currently integrate with (e.g., eligibility engines, payment systems, third-party health plan providers)?	The scope includes a comprehensive front-end redesign and Content Management System (CMS)-managed content updates, with potential plans to assess and gradually enhance backend functionality and integrations such as plan comparison, account creation, and eligibility tools.
555.	Are any new integrations expected in the redesign?	No new integrations are expected in the redesign.
556.	Will SEO optimization and performance tuning be within scope?	Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of these processes and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
557.	Which existing website content must be preserved versus what can be retired or consolidated? Are there any legal or regulatory requirements that determine what content must remain accessible during and after the migration?	Yes, Covered California must retain and maintain access to certain content due to legal and regulatory requirements. Outside of those obligations, we are open to fully revisiting, consolidating, and reworking content to better serve user needs and support the goals of the new site.
558.	API Integrations – Can you provide more details regarding the required API integrations mentioned in the RFP?	CDP, Google Maps, and Help on Demand are the main integrations for the current Covered California website.
559.	Does the scope include a complete rebuild of all CoveredCA.com functionality and backend integrations (e.g., plan comparison, account creation, eligibility tools), or is the redesign limited to the front-end and CMS-managed content?	The scope includes a comprehensive front-end redesign and Content Management System (CMS)-managed content updates, with potential plans to assess and gradually enhance backend functionality and integrations such as plan comparison, account creation, and eligibility tools.
560.	Are there existing APIs or data schemas that vendors should plan to integrate with for real-time personalization and user experience optimization?	An integration with Salesforce CDP is the main driver for cross-product data flows and real-time personalization. We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
561.	Can you provide technical documentation or API references for the following external DHCS systems: i.e., Shop and Compare, Apply / Create Account / Log In, Renew system?	Technical documentation and API references for these systems are not publicly available but may be made accessible to the selected vendor through coordination with the CalHEERS team, pending appropriate approvals after contract execution. Covered California will work with the selected vendor to identify integration needs and facilitate access where possible.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
562.	Are there existing integrations between Covered California's current CMS and external systems (e.g., eligibility tools, analytics platforms) that must be preserved or enhanced?	No. An integration with Salesforce CDP for cross-product data flows and real-time personalization. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
563.	Is there a technical roadmap or set of forward-looking requirements—such as accessibility, integration expectations, performance benchmarks, or scalability goals—that we should be aware of beyond what is already noted in the RFP or Exhibit A?	Salesforce is the focus of future integrations.
564.	Can you provide a list of all third-party integrations required as part of the redesign (e.g., eligibility tools, payment gateways, customer support systems, CRM systems)?	Salesforce is the focus of future integrations.
565.	What level of involvement is required for integrating with Covered California's internal data systems, such as health plan databases, user profiles, and other backend systems?	Salesforce is the focus of future integrations. The vendor's portion of the Content Management System (CMS)and CDP integration work should be taken into account, though assistance will be provided from internal staff, existing systems integration vendor, and Salesforce vendor.
566.	Are there any real-time data synchronization requirements for tools such as enrollment, plan availability, or user profiles?	Salesforce.
567.	Is there a need for headless CMS integration, or is the CMS expected to have an API-driven architecture to facilitate flexibility and scalability?	Headless is not a requirement, though could prove to be a useful solution. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
568.	Are there any anticipated future CMS migrations or expansions that the website must accommodate for long-term scalability and flexibility?	Yes.
569.	Will the new website need to consume real-time data (e.g., personalized plan recommendations, enrollment status)?	An integration with Salesforce CDP for cross-product data flows and real-time personalization is ideal. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
570.	Is there a requirement for bi-directional communication between the site and backend systems?	See response to Question 565.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
571.	What was the cost of the last website redesign? Are there any other significant past investments in the current website (e.g., hosting, development)?	No additional costs were incurred since the redesign was completed in-house.
572.	Can you provide details on your current hosting costs and platform? Are you considering any changes to the hosting environment in the future?	Hosting costs are absorbed by Covered California and are not a cause for concern in the current architecture. Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
573.	Is the current hosting cloud-based or on-prem?	The current hosting is Cloud-based
574.	Will Covered California be responsible for the cost of hosting infrastructure (cloud or on-premises)?	Yes, Covered California is responsible for the cost of hosting infrastructure.
575.	Will Covered California be responsible for the cost of hosting infrastructure (cloud or on-premises)?	Yes, Covered California is responsible for the cost of hosting infrastructure.
576.	Who is responsible for paying infrastructure-related costs such as servers, domains, SSL certificates, and CDN services?	Covered California is responsible for paying infrastructure related costs.
577.	Is the vendor expected to bear the cost of setting up and maintaining development/staging environments?	Covered California will absorb the cost for hosting, though the vendor should participate in establishment of environments and creation of processes that utilize environments to create, test, and validate solutions.
578.	Does Covered California have a preferred or required hosting environment moving forward (e.g., AWS GovCloud, Azure Government)?	Covered California currently utilizes Azure.
579.	Do you need the vendor to provide hosting services as well?	No.
580.	What is your current annual spend on hosting?	The selected vendor will receive access to this data as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
581.	The document notes that upon completion of the MVP, the vendor will migrate all assets to Covered California's internal hosting	Covered California would prefer a phased approach to support during vendor offboarding. Contact and

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
	QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING	
	environment, and Covered California will then assume all responsibility for live production hosting. What level of ongoing support and maintenance is expected from the Contractor after the migration is complete? The deliverables for Task 3 and Task 6 mention a support and maintenance plan and a technical consultation report, but more detail would be helpful.	support directly with hosting environment provider (i.e., Microsoft, CMS) would be ideal in creating a sustainable and streamlined support and maintenance process and line of communication.
582.	Is the current hosting cloud-based or on-prem?	The current hosting is Cloud-based.
583.	Can Covered California confirm whether the $1.5M cost ceiling is inclusive of all costs such as development, usability testing, hosting during build, accessibility testing, and post-launch support?	Yes, the $1.5M cost ceiling is inclusive of all costs including as development, usability testing, hosting during build, accessibility testing, and post-launch support.
584.	Should the vendor be prepared to fully migrate the CMS and content into Covered California's internal hosting environment at project close, or will a hybrid hosting model be acceptable?	Full migration or build within Covered California resources are a must to create an independent, self-sustaining hosting model.
585.	For vendor-hosted development, QA, and staging environments, are there any preferred cloud providers (e.g., AWS, Azure) or compliance requirements such as GovCloud or HIPAA-aligned infrastructure?	Azure and HIPPA-aligned infrastructure are preferred.
586.	What is the current technology stack for CoveredCA.com and hbx.coveredca.com (CMS, hosting environment, front-end/back-end frameworks)? Are there constraints on adopting new technologies or retaining existing ones?	The current site utilizes GitHub as our repo, CloudCannon as our visual Content Management System (CMS), and is hosted on Azure Cloud. The current site is designed, built, and maintained in-house. We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the new site and tech stack. The selected candidate should provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
587.	In Task 3.2, given that migration is part of the project, where is the current website hosted, and what is the current hosting environment (Apache, IIS, etc.)?	Azure Cloud

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING		
588.	What is the current web hosting environment (e.g., cloud vendor, on-premises infrastructure)?	Azure Cloud.
589.	Where are hbex.coveredca.com and CoveredCa.com currently hosted, and who is responsible for managing and supporting the websites?	The current website utilizes GitHub as our repo, CloudCannon as our visual Content Management System (CMS), and is hosted on Azure Cloud. The current website is designed, built, and maintained in-house.
590.	Could Covered California clarify the preference for "experience with CMS platforms in HIPAA-compliant hosting environments"? Are there specific CMS platforms or hosting providers that are currently in use or preferred by Covered California?	Data security is very important both in government and healthcare environments. This should be a consideration as solutions will be vetted by our ISO team to meet state standards.
591.	Will the Covered California IT team provide a target hosting infrastructure spec before migration?	Yes, the Covered California team will provide a target hosting infrastructure spec before migration.
592.	For the "Vendor-Provided Hosting (During Development)," could Covered California elaborate on the specific security and compliance standards required for this hosting environment, beyond what is generally stated, especially considering the eventual migration to Covered California's internal infrastructure?	Covered California's policies require compliance with an extensive array of federal and state requirements: • **State of California security standards**, including SIMM and NIST-aligned protocols • **HIPAA-aligned practices** for handling sensitive information, where applicable • **Data encryption** in transit and at rest • **Role-based access controls and audit logging** for content and user management The selected vendor can discuss strategy for vendor versus Covered California internal hosting as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
593.	Are there **additional regulatory constraints** (beyond HIPAA, WCAG, and	See response to Question 591.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
	state mandates) we should factor into the design, development, or hosting?	
594.	Under Section 2.1, the CMS Architect/Back-End Developer minimum qualifications reference experience with "enterprise-grade CMS platforms such as Adobe Experience Manager (AEM), WordPress VIP, or Microsoft SharePoint." We would like to clarify whether experience developing and maintaining enterprise-level websites using self-hosted WordPress on secure, scalable hosting environments (e.g., AWS) with features such as modular content architecture, governance workflows, accessibility compliance, and HIPAA-aligned configurations would be considered acceptable toward fulfilling this requirement, even if WordPress VIP specifically was not used.	Yes, as long as it includes enterprise-level features such as modular architecture, governance workflows, accessibility compliance, and HIPAA-aligned configurations. WordPress VIP was listed as an example, but similar enterprise-grade experience meets the requirement.
595.	Is the selected vendor expected to include pricing for hosting the new CMS within one of the approved/preferred hosting environments listed in the RFP?	No, the selected vendor is not expected to include pricing for hosting the new Content Management System (CMS) within one (1) of the approved/preferred hosting environments listed in the RFP.
596.	Does Covered CA have a preference for hosting the redesigned website on a specific cloud provider as opposed to on-premises?	Azure Cloud
597.	Is Covered California open to alternative hosting providers to what is referenced in the RFP under backend developer qualifications? (Adobe Experience Manager (AEM), WordPress VIP, Microsoft SharePoint)?	Yes, Covered California is seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the tech stack and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
598.	Do you have a need/desire to host CMS and presentation applications on internal infrastructure or do you have a solid cloud policy in place with vendors like AWS or MS Azure for example?	See response to Question 604.
599.	Will the City be responsible for ongoing hosting, or is the vendor expected to host the website as part of their solution?	Covered California will be responsible for ongoing hosting of the website. The

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING		
		selected vendor's role does not include hosting as part of their solution.
600.	What infrastructure are you running on now? Do you plan to continue with it?	Covered California plans to continue utilizing this infrastructure moving forward, as it meets our performance, scalability, and security requirements.
601.	Of the $1,500,000.00 budget, what portion will be allocated to cloud hosting?	None.
602.	Could Covered California confirm whether the $1,500,000.00 cap for the base contract (and $500,000.00 for the optional HBEX site migration) applies to: a. Services only (e.g., design, research, strategy, development labor)? b. Implementation costs (e.g., licenses, hosting, software integrations)? Or both combined?	The $1,500,000.00 cap for the base contract (and $500,000.00 for the optional HBEX site migration) applies to services only.
603.	Should any portion of the $1,500,000 budget be allocated to hard costs such as CMS licensing, hosting infrastructure, research tools, or translation services, or will these be funded separately?	No, those would be funded separately.
604.	Will the selected vendor be responsible for hosting and infrastructure setup/maintenance?	The selected vendor can discuss strategy for vendor versus Covered California internal hosting as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
605.	What is the current hosting environment (on-premises, AWS, Azure, etc.)?	Azure Cloud.
606.	Is there a preference or mandate for using state-approved hosting providers?	Azure Cloud.
607.	Could Covered California clarify the preference for "experience with CMS platforms in HIPAA-compliant hosting environments"? Are there specific CMS platforms or hosting providers that are currently in use or preferred by Covered California?	Covered California prioritizes secure, privacy-focused hosting that aligns with HIPAA standards where applicable. While we are not fully HIPAA-regulated, security and compliance are critical. We have a shortlist of preferred Content Management System (CMS) platforms based on our technical and strategic criteria and will collaborate closely with the selected vendor to validate

QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
		requirements and finalize the CMS selection.
608.	Will Covered California provide hosting, or should vendors propose? If the later, are there any specific security certifications or hosting environments (e.g., FedRAMP, HIPAA-compliant cloud providers) that vendors must meet or use as part of the solution?	See responses to Questions 603, 604, 605, and 606.
609.	Do you need the vendor to provide hosting services as well?	See responses to Questions 603, 604, and 605.
610.	What is your current annual spend on hosting?	See response to Question 610.
611.	Can you provide details on your current hosting costs and platform? Are you considering any changes to the hosting environment in the future?	Azure Cloud is very affordable. We are seeking a collaborative thought partner to support the development of the future tech stack and expect the selected candidate to provide informed recommendations based on their industry expertise.
612.	Please describe in detail your current hosting setup including server specifications, cloud provider (if applicable), content delivery network (CDN), backup systems, and disaster recovery procedures. What is your current monthly hosting cost?	The technology stack includes: • Azure Cloud for hosting and infrastructure • Azure Front Door for CDN and WAF services • Jekyll (static site generator) and CloudCannon (CMS) • Additional integrations with analytics and CRM tools Further discussion and documentation will be provided to the selected vendor as part of project onboarding after contract execution.
613.	What is the technical architecture of Covered California's internal hosting environment for final migration?	See response to Question 611.
614.	What is the current hosting environment for CoveredCA.com and hbex.coveredca.com (on-prem, cloud, hybrid)?	See response in Question 604.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SITE HOSTING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
615.	Does Covered California have a preferred or required hosting environment moving forward (e.g., AWS GovCloud, Azure Government)?	See response in Question 604.
616.	For vendor-hosted development, QA, and staging environments, are there any preferred cloud providers (e.g., AWS, Azure) or compliance requirements such as GovCloud or HIPAA-aligned infrastructure?	See response in Question 604.
617.	Will the selected CMS need to support a multi-site or multi-domain architecture?	No, the selected Content Management System (CMS) will not need to support a multi-site or multi-domain architecture.

QUESTIONS ABOUT BRANDING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
618. .	Are there any existing brand guidelines, design systems, or accessibility standards (beyond WCAG 2.1 AA) that the redesign must adhere to?	Yes, the brand guidelines that can be found in the Model Contract, Exhibit E. Marketing and Branding. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
619.	Is it your intention to adhere completely to the current Covered California design system and/or State of California Web Template?	Covered California is not required to adhere to the standard state website template. However, our branding and color palette are currently undergoing revision, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once completed, the approved brand guidelines will need to be followed throughout this project.
620.	Do you have existing brand guidelines or a visual identity system we should follow?	The brand guidelines can be found in the Model Contract, Exhibit E. Marketing and Branding. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
621.	Are there any elements of your current brand (e.g., tone, colors, typefaces) that must remain?	Our organization branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.

QUESTIONS ABOUT BRANDING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
622.	How do you envision the brand evolving through this redesign (e.g., more modern, inclusive, bold)?	Covered California envisions the brand evolving to feel more modern, inclusive, and user-centered, while maintaining the trust, accessibility, and clarity that are core to our identity. We aim to enhance the user experience with scannable content that supports quick comprehension, and bold, impactful visuals that engage users and reflect the diversity of the Californians we serve. The overall design should be visually engaging, easy to navigate, and supportive of users at every stage of their journey.
623.	Are there any websites (in or out of category) that you admire or dislike from a UX or brand perspective?	Some of the websites include: • Athena: https://www.athenahealth.com/ • Maven Clinic: https://www.mavenclinic.com/lp/maven-clinic-home • Blue Shield of California – blueshieldca.com • UnitedHealthcare (UHC) – uhc.com • Mayo Clinic – mayoclinic.org • Coda – coda.io
624.	Are you open to new creative assets such as photography, video, animation, or illustrations?	Yes, Covered California is open to new creative assets.
625.	How expressive or experimental can we be with design choices like motion, typography, or layout?	Vendors are encouraged to experiment with things like motion, typography, and layout, as long as these elements don't conflict with accessibility or brand guidelines.
626.	Does the City already have updated branding guidelines or visual identity materials the vendor should follow?	The brand guidelines can be found in the Model Contract, Exhibit E. Marketing and Branding. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.

No.	Bidder Questions:	Covered CA - Response:
QUESTIONS ABOUT BRANDING		
627.	Does Covered California have an existing design system or visual brand guidelines that the vendor will be expected to align with or evolve?	The brand guidelines can be found in the Model Contract, Exhibit E. Marketing and Branding. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
628.	Are there any specific expectations around the creation of a unified design system, such as compatibility with existing brand guidelines or state web templates?	Yes, compatibility with existing brand guidelines found in Exhibit E of the Model Contract. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
629.	Does your team have an existing brand style guide that will be leveraged with the redesign, or will a new style guide, in addition to the design system, be co-created as part of this process?	The brand guidelines can be found in the Model Contract, Exhibit E. Marketing and Branding. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
630.	Are there specific design systems, branding guidelines, or templates that must be followed?	The brand guidelines can be found in the Model Contract, Exhibit E. Marketing and Branding. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
631.	Are design prototypes or mockups expected during the proposal phase?	Yes, design prototypes and/or mockups are expected to be submitted as part of the proposal.

QUESTIONS ABOUT BRANDING		
No.	**Bidder Questions:**	**Covered CA - Response:**
632.	Is there an existing design system, brand guide, or visual language to follow or improve upon?	There is a brand guide, found in Exhibit E of the Model Contract. However, our branding and color palette are currently being revised, with updates being finalized by our marketing partners in collaboration with our Marketing Contractor. Once established, the finalized brand guidelines will need to be adhered to for this project.
633.	Can you identify the Marketing agency-of-record mentioned for design system collaboration?	Covered California's current marketing and advertising contractor is VML.
634.	What level of involvement will the Marketing Agency have in visual/UI decisions?	While Covered California may use visuals inspired by the current marketing campaign, our Marketing Contractor will not be involved in the decision to do so.