

## **Enterprise Architecture Design and Implementation RFP**

### **Q&A Response and Addendum**

July 29, 2025

The purpose of this document is to inform bidders on the approach FAME has used to respond to the submitted question for the RFP, provide guidance on how to navigate the answers, and provide several important clarifications that are pertinent to all bidders.

### **General Information**

FAME assembled a multi-disciplinary team from across the organization to review and answer the questions submitted by bidders. Due to specific nuances in the questions submitted we have opted to respond to all questions, grouping similar questions and providing answers giving different answers where additional clarification is warranted.

Bidders are encouraged to review all the answers provided by FAME as the information may further inform how to respond to this RFP.

### **Important RFP Clarifications**

There are four specific clarifications to the RFP that FAME would like to make sure all bidders are aware of when creating their responses. Please review all answers for additional clarifications.

1. Phase 1 Marketing Scope

The information provided in the “Artifact E – Marketing Business Details” represents the full Target State set of capabilities desired over the course of the modernization. We have included a separate document called “Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification” to inform bidders of capabilities needed for this RFP. Bidders should consider the long-term objectives of our marketing needs to ensure their proposed solution will scale to support the future needs defined by FAME.

2. Implementation Range Estimate

For Phase 1 Implementation Cost portion of the submission, FAME will accept a range of +/- 15% from bidders. FAME will use the midpoint of this range for scoring.

3. Appendix D – Cost Proposal Form

On “Appendix D Cost Proposal Form” we omitted to include instruction to provide the monthly burn rate and rate card for the “Ongoing Support Costs”. Please refer to “Part II Scope of Services – Ongoing Support Model” on Page 11 of the RFP for instructions.

4. Appendix E – Cyber Risk Management Requirements

“Appendix E” was mistakenly referred to as “Appendix D” in two locations within the RFP contents.

- PART VI - Proposal Submission Package, page 24, File 1 Vendor Certification contents.
- The “FAME Supplier Cyber Risk Management Questionnaire” that was included in the Supporting Documentation zip file also refers to Appendix D.

**Questions and Answers**

The full list of Questions and Answers begin on page 3 of this document.

#	Referenced RFP Section	Referenced Page #	Question	Response
1	Artifact A Guiding Principles	35-36	Can FAME clarify its expectations for centralized authentication and identity management for internal and external users?	FAME currently uses Entra ID as our employee identity provider and expects to continue to do so in the future. FAME also uses Okta/Auth0 as an identity provider for some (not all) of our existing customer / partner systems. FAME anticipates the Auth0 solution may either be expanded or replaced by alternative solutions during design and implementation of the new architecture. Artifact A - Guiding Principles lists acceptable modern open standards for authentication.
	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	44	What authentication protocols and identity providers should CRM integrate with for customer-facing portals?	
2	Part II: Scope of Services	11	Are there any constraints or preferences around platform complexity or number of systems used for automation?	Workflow tracking and automation capabilities are likely to be enabled by more than one platform. We are looking for a pragmatic approach that meets FAME's needs, can be implemented at a reasonable cost, and maintained over time, as opposed to technically complex solutions.
3	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	44	What automation capabilities are expected in the Digital Experience Platform (e.g., self-service, status tracking)?	The Digital Experience Platform (which we view as a "capability" and not necessarily a single system) should be designed to enable customers to perform self-service activities, understand status of interactions they have with FAME, discover informative content, initiate engagement with FAME, etc. These are examples, not specific requirements. The requirements and design will be an ongoing activity during each phase of the modernization.
4	Artifact E: Marketing Business Details	72	What automation features are expected in the Marketing domain (e.g., campaign workflows, triggered messaging)?	Please see "Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification" document that has been provided as an addendum to the RFP.
5	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	7-11;	Can FAME clarify whether the Loan Management System (LMS) and Grants Management System (GMS) are expected to be separate platforms or a unified solution?	The Loan Management System (LMS) and Grants Management System (GMS) are intended as capabilities. There is no expectation that these be separate platforms or a unified solution. FAME is not currently aware of any customizable off the shelf solutions that could serve both capability needs.
6	General Question	N/A	We understand that there is a target solution in the documents. Please verify if this is firm, or if there is room for collaboration.	The target state solution is a result of strategic roadmap planning and is a conceptual model. It has not been fully analyzed against business requirements and constraints, and has not been paired up against candidate solution realities. It is intended as a suitable design target, but is open for collaboration and refinement, as needed to achieve our goals.

7	ARTIFACT B	37	You have provided candidate platforms and asked the Bidders to evaluate these. If none of them are deemed fit-for-purpose (for any variety of reasons, can additional platforms be considered?	Short answer is "yes". FAME expects bidders to recommend platform selections based on FAME's business needs and the bidder's own strengths and capabilities with specific solutions. Artifact B lists options of candidate platforms for consideration - to indicate possible solutions, and to potentially simplify selection while avoiding extensive technical "bake-offs" but remains open to all options. Final selection occurs collaboratively during Phase 1 design.
	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	41	Are there any existing licenses, preferences, or constraints that would influence platform selection among these candidates?	Based on the application inventory provided in the RFP, bidders can determine what existing vendor relationships FAME currently maintains. As for preferred components, FAME has explored but has not actively considered specific enterprise platforms, and has no specific preferences in these areas. Note that FAME makes very limited use of Salesforce in a segmented business area (Maine Funding Network), which FAME thinks could potentially be expanded upon to serve core functionality. However, this tool serves a very isolated business case, our experience with this tool is very limited, and other tools may serve FAME better. Bidders should note that FAME's use of Salesforce for the Maine Funding Network does not indicate a preference for using Salesforce as our CRM. We anticipate any constraints will be identified during business requirements definition and design. FAME expects bidders to recommend platform selections based on FAME's business needs and the bidder's own strengths and capabilities with specific solutions. Artifact B lists options of candidate platforms for consideration, only - to indicate possible solutions, and to potentially simplify selection while avoiding extensive technical "bake-offs" but remains open to all options. Final selection occurs collaboratively during Phase 1 design.
	Artifact B Target State Capabilities	37-46	What enterprise platforms (CRM, data warehouse, workflow, etc.) are currently under consideration or preferred by FAME?	
8	N/A	N/A	Are there any pre-selected or preferred tools for components such as CRM, Workflow Management, or Document Management?	
	N/A	N/A	Are there any existing platforms, tools, or vendor relationships that FAME prefers to retain or integrate with?	
	N/A	N/A	Existing Licensing & Vendors: Do you have existing licenses or preferred vendors for COTS components (e.g., document management, analytics) that we should incorporate?	
9	N/A	N/A	Are there any preferred middleware or integration platforms (e.g., Mulesoft, Dell Boomi)?	No
10	N/A	N/A	What is FAME's preferred architecture for the data warehouse - cloud-native (e.g., Snowflake, Redshift) or hybrid/on-premise?	Please see Artifact A - Guiding Principles.
11	N/A	N/A	Does FAME have any preferences or restrictions on cloud providers (e.g., AWS, Azure, GCP)?	FAME makes limited use of Azure and AWS based hyperscaler solutions today, and anticipates solution design will likely make use of one of these solutions. However, we have no specific preferences of one solution over the other. Bidders should consider FAME's size and complexity as well as its ability to support the solution in the long term when recommending a hyperscaler solution.

12	N/A	N/A	Do the platforms need to be on the government cloud environment(s)? Or can solutions that meet the provided requirements in the Supplier Cyber Risk Management Questionnaire be utilized even if they are not specific government cloud products?	FAME prefers government cloud solution environments when available due to more stringent compliance and infrastructure security controls that these environments offer. FAME recognizes that not all solutions may be available on government cloud offerings, and requests bidders make note of potential conflicts between this preference for government cloud solutions and our other business requirements.
13	Part III: Technology	15	Does FAME give preference to specific cloud Hyperscalers ( AWS, Azure, GCP) or require multi-cloud neutrality?	FAME makes limited use of Azure and AWS based hyperscaler solutions today, and anticipates solution design will likely make use of one of these solutions. However, we have no specific preferences of one solution over the other. Bidders should consider FAME's size and complexity as well as its ability to support the solution in the long term when recommending a hyperscaler solution.
14	Artifact C: Commercial Business Details	54	Accommodate internal and external approval steps: What internal approval levels and external stakeholder interactions must be supported in automated workflows?	Approval levels will be outlined by rule and policy, and work in tandem with the underwriting automation on an "as needed" basis on new transactions. Changes to existing records as allowed also to be defined by policy. External stakeholders interaction tracking: A need to track/document CEO/BOD involvement within the workflow as need arises. FAME works with its BOD and other external partners to approve loans. The number of transactions that require external approval are relatively minimal. External access for approval not mandatory.
15	Artifact C: Commercial Business Details	53	What specific roles (internal/external) are involved in current workflows that automation must support?	There is not a simple answer to this question currently. For example, the swimlane diagrams and descriptions provided in the Commercial section demonstrates activities performed by internal and external actors. While not complex, it does involve multiple actors, systems, and manual activities. As part of the design activity, workflow should be improved in general, and opportunities for automation identified.
16	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	7-11;	What are FAME's expectations for the Automated Underwriting System (AUS) referenced in the target state architecture?	The Automated Underwriting System mentioned in the referenced document is a piece of the conceptual target state architecture and represents the review and approval/denial of an application for Loan or Loan Insurance. By "automation" the expectation is that the underwriting function will have a simplified ability to gather necessary data and the ability to have rules based recommendations/decisions.
17	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	41	What are the expectations for audit trails and compliance tracking within automated workflows?	FAME expects design and implementation supporting full audit trail and compliance tracking capabilities that aligns with our business requirements. Bidders should be prepared to work with FAME collaboratively to elicit requirements and implement these items during Phase 1.

18	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	13-15	What are FAME's expectations for the Compliance Management System referenced in the target state architecture?	This is not in scope for Phase 1, but the capability is a target state outcome for future phases. Some desired functionality includes: tailored legislative and regulatory alerts, contract and policy templates with audit trail, track policy update and approval process and provide annual review reminders, track, report, and analyze exceptions to policy, provide ease of access across the organization to most recent policies and procedures, maintenance of approved standardized language and document templates with audit trail.
19	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	4-5, 15	What are FAME's expectations for the Marketing Content Management system (e.g., Adobe Cloud, Content Stack) and its integration with campaign tools?	This is not in scope for Phase 1, but the capability is a target state outcome for future phases. Please see "Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification" document that has been provided as an addendum to the RFP.
20	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	45	What payment platforms or financial systems must CRM integrate with to support payment history tracking?	FAME uses Blackbaud FE NXT as our general ledger system. FAME anticipates payment platform would integrate with the Loan Management System (LMS) and LMS, among other systems. Bidders should be prepared to work with FAME collaboratively to elicit requirements in this area during Phase 1.
21	Data Concepts	N/A	Is FAME open to using third-party tools in the data governance and quality area? If yes, are the solutions you prefer? If yes, what criteria do you use to determine preferences (e.g., price, functionality, ease of use, etc.). For custom developed tools, is Microsoft Tech Stack (C#, Azure DevOps, SQL Server, Data Bricks, Fabric, Bower BI, etc.) preferred and/or acceptable?	Yes. We have no preferred solutions. Proposed solutions should align with our size and complexity, and consider total cost of ownership, functionality, ease of use, and similar factors. FAME currently lacks standardized tooling and practice in this area, and anticipates leaning on the partner to lead in develop this capability to an appropriate level to inform the transformation.
22	N/A	N/A	Existing Documentation: Will FAME supply current process maps, data models, and architecture blueprints, or should we budget time to develop these artifacts from scratch?	Some of these artifacts exist; some may be needed to be developed from scratch. Please refer to RFP to gather insights into the extent of existing documentation.
23	N/A	N/A	Is a system interface inventory or data flow diagram available?	No.
24	N/A	N/A	Are there existing standards or naming conventions we must follow for data mapping or endpoints?	No, but they should be established during Implementation.
25	N/A	N/A	Does FAME have a defined enterprise data model or should the vendor develop one during Phase 1?	FAME does not have a defined enterprise data model. Vendors should plan to develop this during Phase 1.
26	N/A	N/A	Does FAME already have any tools or processes for data profiling, cleansing, and validation?	No

27	N/A	N/A	Are there existing data stewards or a data governance framework that we must align with?	Data Stewardship roles have been recently establish but true data governance does not exist at this point.
28	N/A	N/A	What is the expected data volume for each integrated system (daily/monthly transactions)?	Current volumes from our primary integrations include: ISIR records: ~ 100,000 records per year; DRVS birth records: 1,000 records per month; Firstmark: ~ 25,000 transactions per month; BNY: 125,000 records daily; ML: 1,000,000 records daily; Nelnet: 75,000 records daily; Web forms: ~5,000 submissions annually.
29	N/A	N/A	What types of data are expected to be housed (e.g., customer, loan, grant, education, engagement)?	To be determined during design. RFP materials provide guidance on types of data. Your list is roughly aligned.
30	Part II: Scope of Services	10	What dependencies exist between workflow automation and CRM, document management, or reporting systems?	Not sure we understand the question... the only direct dependency would be the ability to integrate if/where necessary to satisfy a business need.
31	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	6-11;	Does FAME expect the selected vendor to recommend and implement a centralized Document Management System, or integrate with existing tools like Perceptive and DocuSign?	Perceptive lacks modern document management capabilities and is delivered on-premise. FAME does not expect vendors to integrate with Perceptive, but does expect modern document management capabilities be part of the design and implementation. FAME is open to either centralized document management that closely integrates with Loan Management System (LMS) and Grant Management System (GMS) capabilities, or document management capabilities distributed across CRM, LMS and GMS systems. DocuSign integration is not an expectation at this time, but this could change as business requirements are developed in Phase 1.
32	Section 2	66	Can FAME provide examples of specific referenced "vulnerable populations" within their education constituency that need to be considered for the "digital-first, not digital-only" approach requiring ongoing "personalized, high-touch support"? We assume this to include traditional learners, first-generation college students, rural students but would like to confirm if these are accurate and if there's a wider set to consider.	In addition to traditional learners, first-generation college students, and rural students, FAME would also call out as vulnerable pupulations adult learners, students from families who are considered low-to-moderate income as well as our immigrant population. Maine has a significant foreign-born population with varying legal residency statuses including but not limited to permanent residents, asylum seekers, and refugees.
33	Guiding Principles	Page 42	To enable student lifecycle analytics for longitudinal tracking what are the specific data points or milestones to track over time to measure workforce development outcomes (e.g. FAFSA completion, program application history, disbursement records, loan repayment status, grad data, others)?	Longitudinal tracking would include designation as an Alford Grant recipient at birth, a NextGen 529 account holder, participation in FAME education affordability outreach events, FAFSA completion, FAME program applicant/recipient, post-secondary enrollment (National Clearinghouse Data), graduation, and employment in Maine.

34	N/A	n/A	Describe the communications and reporting requirements between FAME and the university, college or k12 institutions themselves in addition to constituent learners as it relates to referenced education programs, disbursement and processing. Related, is the FAME learner experience referenced solely focused on the education programs managed by FAME financially or also including a part of the state institutions education programs themselves today, specific to managing lifecycle of constituent experience?	Communications related to education affordability, financial wellness, and managing student loan repayment is a push using general distribution channels and not always sent to specific contacts. Communications related to the administration of specific education finance programs occur between FAME and PSE partners via our EPIC system and are not part of state institution's education programs. Communications to program applicants will also occur via traditional communications channels such as email and US Post.
35	Data Concepts	N/A	It appears that your custom-built applications are Win32, Click-Once, and web applications. Does FAME wish for these to all be moved to a single, web-based platform?	FAME is not seeking to simply refactor, re-home, or "lift and shift" existing applications. FAME seeks comprehensive integrated architectural design and implementation.
36	Artifact A Guiding Principles	36	Can FAME clarify its expectations for minimizing the number of platforms while maintaining functional coverage?	The guiding principles artifact is intended to provide bidders with a comprehensive view into FAME's high-level technology preferences. The rationale for minimizing the number of platforms relates to the desire to minimize technical complexity and skills required to maintain the target state. However, FAME is generally opposed to having platforms customized to perform tasks beyond their intended functionality simply to reduce the number of platforms.
37	Artifact D: Education Business Details	66	What integration expectations exist for CRM to interface with third-party platforms like FirstMark STAR or CampusDoor?	First, implementing these specific integration aspects to support Education program delivery is out-of-scope for Phase 1 implementation. More generically, the ability to integrate and resolve customer data issues across internal and external sources as well as defining the enriched customer data that will reside in the CRM system/data warehouse is a design consideration for target state.
38	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	6-11, 14	What are the key integration scenarios that must be supported in Phase 1 (e.g., LMS to CRM, CRM to reporting, LMS to payment gateway)? Does FAME have a preferred Integration Platform (e.g., Mulesoft, Azure Logic Apps) or should vendors propose one as part of the architecture?	The integration scenarios should will be dictated by the requirements, design, and capabilities of the overall architecture. While there are some logical scenarios that exist we do not want to pre-define these and perhaps influence bidder responses. Bidders should propose a flexible integration approach suitably sized for FAME's needs. Please refer to Artifact B for additional details. FAME does not have a current or preferred integration platform, and vendors should propose one as part of the architecture.
39	Data Concepts	N/A	How does FAME see data from SaaS platforms coming into the future system?	We may not understand this question. However, we expect that any data in our SaaS solutions can incorporate into our data warehouse (or other systems) where required. The approach for enabling this will be a design decision.
40	Data Concepts	N/A	Is FAME open to using integration tools like MuleSoft, Boomi, etc.?	Yes.



41	N/A	N/A	Integration Standards: Which existing enterprise integration frameworks, API gateways, or middleware platforms (beyond MuleSoft) must we align with or leverage?	Bidders should propose a flexible integration approach suitably sized for FAME's needs. Please refer to Artifact B for additional details. FAME does not have a current or preferred integration platform, and vendors should propose one as part of the architecture.
42	N/A	N/A	Are flat file exchanges, database views, or APIs currently used to access data?	Yes, all of these methods are currently in use.
43	N/A	N/A	Are real-time, near real-time, or batch integrations required?	Yes, these will likely all need to be supported.
44	N/A	N/A	Do you have a middleware solution available or preferred to be used to support integrations?	No.
45	N/A	N/A	What authentication mechanisms are expected for system integrations (e.g., OAuth 2.0, SAML, API key)?	All of these are expected. SFTP file retrieval is commonly used in current integrations.
46	N/A	N/A	Are there standard practices for error handling, retries, or integration failure alerts?	FAME has both code and informal practice in these areas. FAME expects to develop its maturity in this area as part of Phase 1.
47	N/A	N/A	Are asynchronous messaging patterns (e.g., event queues or webhooks) acceptable or preferred for certain interfaces?	TBD during Design.
48	N/A	N/A	Will any third-party partners (e.g., banks, servicers, institutions) require secure data exchange via portals, SFTP, or API?	Yes.
49	N/A	N/A	Are there SLAs for data latency or synchronization frequency across integrated systems?	No, SLAs currently do not exist for this
50	N/A	N/A	Are data transformation rules or mappings already documented for key systems?	Generally this documentation exists only in code.
51	N/A	N/A	Are there existing ETL/ELT tools in use today that vendors should consider?	No
52	N/A	N/A	Will integrations need to support historical data migration as well as ongoing data exchange?	TBD during design. Anticipate Yes.
53	N/A	N/A	What audit logging or traceability requirements exist for integrated data exchanges?	Full auditing and traceability is required.
54	N/A	N/A	What are the primary systems and external partners that will feed into the data warehouse?	TBD during design.
55	N/A	N/A	Are there any constraints or security requirements around data movement from external partners (e.g., banks, loan servicers)?	Yes.

56	N/A	N/A	What is the expected frequency of data ingestion: real-time, near real-time, or scheduled batch loads?	TBD during Design.
57	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	40	What are the specific data sources and systems that must be integrated to achieve the 360° customer view?	CRM, Loan Management System, Grant Management System, Marketing automation for emails, texts, etc., website and social media activity, event attendance, digital marketing data, survey data (currently we use Constant Contact, HubSpot, Signal Vine, Survey Monkey, and Event Brite), etc. Please also see "Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification" document that has been provided as an addendum to the RFP.
58	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	40	What relationship hierarchies and entity types should be modeled in the CRM for business programs?	Bidders should refer to the Commercial and Education details provided for insights of the types of relationships FAME maintains which will influence the ultimate design. Bidders should also expect to work with FAME to define these models as part of business requirements and design scope.
	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	40	What are the key relationship types and hierarchies across students, parents, and institutions that must be supported in CRM?	
59	Artifact E: Marketing Business Details	71	What business rules or data points should be used to identify cross-program eligibility or engagement opportunities?	During the design phase we hope to capture ideas on how to "cross sell" between education and business borrowers and students within programmatic structures. Data elements like Personal Identifying Information (DOB, SSN, Address) Credit Score, NextGen account ownership, Alford Grant status, Invest in ME Reads survey participation, Enrich online financial education participation, graduation from Post Secondary Education and occupation. Essentially we want to allow for cross programmatic opportunities to be identified and pursued easily.
60	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	40	What specific use cases or workflows should be supported between CRM and Adobe Creative Cloud?	We are not clear on the question, however, this is not in scope for Phase 1. Please see "Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification" document that has been provided as an addendum to the RFP.
61	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	5, 13, 15	Can FAME confirm whether a single CRM platform is expected to serve both marketing and operational needs across all business units, or if separate systems are acceptable?	To date, FAME has limited consideration of CRM to a set of capabilities. We have not considered whether CRM capabilities could be delivered through a single CRM platform or multiple platforms. For example, we anticipate off the shelf operational solutions serving Loan Management System and Grant Management System capability needs might also include basic CRM capabilities to serve operational needs. FAME's expectation is that such systems would seamlessly connect their CRM capabilities with the CRM platform serving marketing and communications capability requirements.
62	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	5, 13	What criteria will FAME use to evaluate candidate CRM platforms (e.g., Salesforce, HubSpot, MS Dynamics) for enterprise-wide adoption?	Evaluation will consider cost, functionality, integration, usability, and compliance. Scalability is a consideration (but not a concern) across these platforms.

63	Artifact B: Target State Capabilities	40	What marketing-specific data attributes and segmentation logic should be supported in CRM?	Bidders should be prepared to work with FAME collaboratively to elicit requirements and implement these items during Phase 1. Please see "Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification" document that has been provided as an addendum to the RFP.
	Artifact E: Marketing Business Details	72	What are the expected differences in data structure, permissions, and workflows between B2B and B2C CRM usage?	
	Artifact E: Marketing Business Details	72	What are the key lifecycle stages and touch points that should be tracked in the CRM for journey mapping?	
64	Artifact D: Education Business Details	66	What identity resolution strategy does FAME envision for linking customer records across systems and programs?	This is an area where FAME expects our partners to provide guidance on best practices to achieve this outcome.
65	FAME Technology Analysis 2024.pdf	6-11, 14	Can FAME clarify whether the Payment Processing System is expected to be a standalone platform or integrated into LMS/GMS?	Our requirements define multiple scenarios for Payment Processing across business areas. Regardless of where this function lives in target state it will likely need to integrate with multiple systems.
66	Part I: Introduction, Purpose and Background	6	Can you share current volumes (loan/grant applications per year, portal log-ins, etc.) to size CRM and data components. Can FAME provide current data volumes & record counts per legacy system to inform migration sizing?	<p>1. FAME lending partners combined for 252 new Commercial Loan Insurance applications (Online Answers (OLA) and paper combined). Monthly data update logins occur by up to 40 unique lending partners. LBU (Loan Balance Update) and OLA functions have approximately 400 registered users.</p> <p>2. Education loan and repayment program combine for approximately 325 applications annually.</p> <p>3. FAME receives approximately 87,000 ISIR records from the US Department of Education per year that are processed against eligibility rules to determine grant or scholarship awards to be delivered through financial aid offices at higher education institutions.</p> <p>Please see Commercial and Education program sections (Artifact C and D) for additional details an annual and total volumes for each program.</p>
67	N/A	N/A	Security & Compliance Baseline: Beyond FOAA, GDPR, and FedRAMP Moderate, are there additional encryption at rest, tokenization, or audit logging requirements we must satisfy?	Yes. To keep it simple, FAME has implemented typical security controls as those used by other financial and government institutions.
68	N/A	N/A	Are there compliance requirements (e.g., FERPA, GDPR) that affect data retention, encryption, or access in the warehouse?	Yes.
69	Part III	14	Do you anticipate more than 100K authenticated users per month on any customer/constituent-facing portal? If you have any additional information on anticipated monthly volumes, please share.	No. FAME has three customer and partner facing web portals that currently experience a combined average volume of under 40,000 visits per month.

70	FAME Org Structure Diagram	4	Of the 65 FAME employees, how many users will need access to Loan Management capabilities v. general CRM/data warehouse/reporting capabilities? How many users will need access to Grant Management capabilities in the future? Education program capabilities?	FAME anticipates access to Loan Management System and the Grant Management System capabilities to be by relatively distinct user groups, served by a common operations and customer service team. These systems are estimated at 30 total users, each, with a similar number accessing data warehouse reporting. FAME anticipates that there would be very few employees (less than 15) who would not need CRM access outside of read-only capability.
71	N/A	N/A	Concurrent User Loads: What are the expected peak and average concurrent user counts for internal staff (e.g., FAME employees) and for external users (e.g., licensees, public portal consumers)?	FAME anticipates this answer will depend on solution design and which solutions serve which users, the timing of feature deployment, and several other factors. FAME offers the following data points to provide perspective into current system use to inform your estimates. We have a 15 concurrent seat limit for Nortridge NLS loan management system; 20 concurrent seat limit for Hyland Perceptive Content document management system; 76 total user count for Office 365; FAME has approximately 68 employees and a relatively small number of users who operating on temporary or contract basis.
72	N/A	N/A	Please provide the number of external users (grant recipients) who will need access to the system and how much grant funding is typically distributed to the users in a given fiscal year?	FAME delivers the majority of its education grants through financial aid offices at higher education institutions. FAME has approximately 700 financial aid office users that interact with FAME systems to deliver these grants. Maximum potential limited to number of Title IV institutions. FAME's 21,000 education grant recipients must generally file a FAFSA to be eligible, and these ISIR records are used to determine eligibility. This is largely automated within current FAME systems and this functionality should be replicated/enhanced in future state. Consumer and other grants number approximately 700+. NextGen grants are quantified within the RFP materials. Note that FAME does not anticipate that all of these individual grant recipients will require access to a customer portal interface served by a grant management system. FAME anticipates this requirement would be further refined during design activities in Phase 1.
73	Artifact D: Education Business Details	62-63	What are the expectations for exception handling in automated workflows (e.g., manual overrides, escalations)?	There should be an expectation that workflows include exception processing, multiple paths, escalations, conflict avoidance, commit/rollback, retry, etc. The extent these will be implemented will be determined during the requirements and design phase.
74	Section 3: Pricing Structure	17	Phase 1: Ongoing Support Costs (T&M Estimate per month) - Scope of support activities performed by team - Anticipated roles and utilization to support the proposed components - Provide monthly burn rate for the proposed team - Provide a rate card for resources proposed These last two bullets were left off the Appendix D Cost Proposal Form, (page 31) was this intentional?	This was an oversight on the form. Please include both rate card information and an anticipated monthly burn rate for Ongoing Support Costs.

75	Appendix D	N/A	Could FAME Please clarify if vendors should answer the Appendix D - FAME Cyber Security Risk Management Questionnaire in the document provided or should vendors answer the questions in a separate document?	<p>For this RFP bidders are expected to provide answers for the 6 questions outlined on page 1, "For Proposal Submission". Bidders may choose to use the provided Word document to respond or a separate document, however the responses should be clearly traceable to the questions posed.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: On Page 24 of the Submission instructions, the Cyber Security Questionnaire to be submitted in File 1 content was erroneously referred to as Appendix D. It is Appendix E. The separate Cyber Security Risk file had the same naming mistake in it's header.</p>
76	Appendix D	N/A	Could FAME please confirm if vendors should provide proof of the points mentioned in Appendix - FAME Cyber Security Risk Management Questionnaire?	Proof is not required in your proposal. Full validation against FAME's vendor risk management program will be performed with finalists, which will include artifact review.
77	N/A	N/A	Are there any mandatory requirements that may deem a proposal no responsive if not fulfilled such as no prior financial experience?	Bidders will be evaluated against the Evaluation Matrix provided in the RFP.
78	N/A	N/A	Can firms provide commercial experience and references in their response?	Yes. Please provide relevant experience and references.
79	Part I, Section A	6	FAME has referenced a budget of \$5M over 3 years. Is that budget for Phase 1 design and implementation or future phase(s) as well? If not only for Phase 1, is there a specified budget for phase 1 and can FAME share what that is?	<p>The \$5M investment budget figure described in the Introduction is for delivery of services over the entire modernization effort. We request licensing costs be provided separately, and is not part of that amount.</p>
	Part I: Introduction, Purpose and Background	6	Can you please confirm the three-year US \$5M investment figure covers services only, or should proposers also include platform licenses?	
	A. Purpose and Background	7	Does FAME have an estimated budget range for this multi-year technology modernization initiative? If so, can that budget range be shared?	
	General Question	6	Are expenses for software, hardware, and services included within the RFP budget?	
	Part 1: Introduction	6	RFP states \$5 million investment in design and implementation services over three years - is that exclusive of licensing costs? Is the amount referenced equal to the anticipated TCO for platform selection? Would FAME be willing to share TCO budget earmarked for this investment?	
80	N/A	N/A	Budget Guardrails: Can you share any internal budget allocations or cost ceilings (fixed price vs. T&M caps) that should guide our staffing and deliverable estimates?	The \$5M investment budget figure described in the Introduction is for delivery of services over the entire modernization effort. A specific Phase 1 budget (scope of this RFP) has not been set.

81	Bidder Conference	N/A	In the bidder's conference on 7/15/25 it was mentioned that the State worked with a partner in 2024 to develop your high-level roadmap. Is that partner eligible to bid on this RFP?	Yes. The scope of the roadmap effort was limited to strategic planning. As FAME follows State of Maine open procurement standards, FAME's partner for that engagement is eligible to bid on this RFP. To provide a level playing field for all bidders, FAME has made available key deliverables from that effort within the RFP.
82	A. Purpose and Background	7	Why did you choose to issue a public RFP for this effort versus working with your existing incumbent vendor(s)? What other vendors helped to create the RFP or helped to create the supporting documents? Are those other vendors eligible to bid on this RFP?	As a quasi-independent state agency, FAME follows State of Maine public procurement rules, ensuring transparency and best value for strategic technology investments. FAME engaged the services of a consultant with expertise in this subject area to assist in preparation of the RFP and supporting documents. This consultant is not eligible to bid. In 2024, FAME issued an RFP to select a vendor to guide FAME's strategic roadmapping effort. Materials from that engagement have been included in the RFP, and that vendor is eligible to respond.
83	General Question	N/A	How many vendors have been invited to participate in this opportunity, and how many proposals does FAME expect to receive?	FAME invited several firms - including those that participated in the 2024 RFP for strategic roadmap creation and those that we've had related scoping conversations with over the past two years. The RFP is public, and any qualified organization may respond. At this point we do not have a clear estimate on how many proposals we will receive.
84	III Pricing Structure	17	Many modern tools are moving to capacity pricing. This can make upfront annual pricing difficult to estimate without an investigation into quantity of data and run times of processes. If Capacity based tools are a part of the recommendation, is it sufficient to list two figure; 1) the recommended starting point price to quickly evaluate long term capacity pricing and 2) Average costs we've seen from similar customers in similar industries?	Yes, this is an acceptable approach. Finalists may be asked to work with FAME to further detail these anticipated costs.
85	Part III: Pricing	16	Is it possible to clarify acceptable T&M range width ( e.g., +/- 20%) for implementation estimate?	Yes. An acceptable range width is 15% and FAME will use the mid-point for scoring.
86	Part III Section 3: Pricing Structure	17	Can FAME clarify whether software licensing costs should be included in the fixed fee or broken out separately?	We request licensing costs be provided seperately from professional services.
87	PRICING	17	The RFP asks for Software Component Costs as part of the submission packet. To what degree of specificity does FAME expect these estimates? And will FAME provide current costs/run rate for technologies already being used during Orals or Alignment conferences?	FAME seeks estimated licensing costs to use for budgeting purposes and to compare solutions across vendors, with the understanding that these costs will be fluid and impacted greatly by design decisions. FAME does not anticipate providing current costs for running the existing technology stack.
88	Artifact B Reporting Capabilities	42-43	Will FAME provide access to the Commercial and Education report inventories referenced in the RFP?	During the engagement with our selected partner will have access to existing applications, reports, and source code if requested.

89	General Question	N/A	Please clarify if this request is for a design-/architecture-only solution or design with implementation.	Proposal scope should include design, implementation, and ongoing support.
90	Part I: Introduction and Part II: Scope of Services, where FAME discusses current-state challenges w	11	What reporting or BI tools are in use today, and how are reports typically created or consumed (manual Excel, canned reports, dashboards, etc.)?	FAME does not make use of modern BI tools today. Most reports and dashboards are created using SQL Server Reporting Services and Excel. This is quantified in depth within the RFP materials.
	N/A	N/A	Which BI/reporting tools are currently in use (e.g., Power BI, Tableau, Excel)?	
91	Part I: Introduction and Part II: Scope of Services	10-12;	Is there any CRM currently in place, even if it's partial or informal (e.g., spreadsheets, Access DBs, or siloed apps)?	FAME uses a combination of SugarCRM, Constant Contact, HubSpot, Excel spreadsheets, etc., The RFP materials provide additional context on the use of these CRM tools.
92	Part I (Introduction) and Part II (Scope of Services) where outlines current state	6 & 10	How are data currently flowing between systems? Is there any middleware or integration layer in place today?	Data flows between systems using a variety of methods, generally using custom.NET application code performing direct SQL query manipulation, record imports from structured file exchange, API data exchange, etc. There is a very limited .NET custom middleware layer in place today for some custom components.
93	N/A	N/A	Are there any existing data warehouses or lakes currently in use? If so, what platforms or tools are involved?	FAME currently maintains a SQL Server database that takes regular automated snapshots of many production data tables to support data analysis and reporting. FAME expects bidders to propose a modern data warehouse solution that would replace and extend this as a comprehensive foundational capability, integrated with and enabling the other enterprise architecture components.
	N/A	N/A	Are there any existing data lake or data warehouse solutions in place today that must be reused or replaced?	
94	FAME Data Concepts.pdf	11, 13, 15, 22 & 23	Can FAME clarify its expectations for implementing a centralized data warehouse and semantic layer for unified data access and analytics?	FAME's primary goal is to create a scalable, centralized data architecture that consolidates fragmented data across systems, improves data quality, and enables comprehensive and secure analytics for internal operations and external reporting.
95	N/A	N/A	Should the data warehouse support audit trails and lineage tracking for all ingested data?	Yes.
96	N/A	N/A	Should the data warehouse support predictive analytics or machine learning workloads in the future?	Yes.

97	N/A	N/A	Are vendors expected to recommend and license a data warehouse platform as part of Phase 1?	Bidders are expected to recommend platforms. Licensing will be FAME's responsibility.
98	General Question	N/A	Does FAME prefer the deployment of this environment to be via cloud-based infrastructure or on-premise?	Please refer to Artifact A - Guiding Principles, particularly part # 5.b. on page 36.
99	Part I: Introduction, Purpose and Background	6	Are there any specific programs or workflows where you're currently seeing the biggest inefficiencies or pain points?	See the artifacts provided.
100	Part I: Introduction and Part II: Scope of Services	10-12;	Which parts of the current stack are creating the biggest friction for internal teams (e.g., rekeying data, system workarounds, missed SLAs)?	All of the above. See artifacts provided.
101	Artifact C: Commercial Business Details	54	What are the current pain points in workflow visibility and coordination across internal and external stakeholders?	Systems that house loan and financial history in more than one place, and need to enter new and updated information in multiple systems by multiple people. The inability to document loan communications directly to loan for future reference, currently past conversations are hard to locate. The lack of consistent automated task reminders or triggers for all FAME processes. Manual decision reviews create a delay in processing and create added manual processes.
102	Part II: Scope of Services	8	Which manual processes are considered highest priority for automation in Phase 1?	Likely targets for automation include the processes and programs that are managed mostly/completely internally. The intent for automation is to streamline workflows and provide rule based decision making with a "human in the loop" on most workflows.
103	Part II: Scope of Services, specifically under Phase 1 Requirements and Collaborative Design	10	Are there any systems that were recently invested in that FAME intends to retain long-term?	FAME made recent investment in a Salesforce-based solution to support the Maine Funding Network initiative that brings together funding partners across the State. This solution is small and isolated from FAME's commercial lending business processes. FAME intends to retain this investment through Phase 1, but expansion or integration of this capability is not in scope for Phase 1. Bidders should note that FAME's use of Salesforce for the Maine Funding Network does not indicate a preference for using Salesforce as our CRM.
104	Part I: Introduction and Part II: Scope of Services	6 & 10	Are there areas where manual workflows are creating compliance or audit risks?	Yes. Manual workflows create audit and compliance risk in several instances, including but not limited to regulatory and grant reporting, underwriting, manual reporting and analysis of portfolio risk and inability to document or analyze exceptions in a meaningful way.



105	N/A	N/A	Is there an existing enterprise architecture roadmap that we should align with, or is the architecture to be defined from scratch?	We have provided the current extent of the target state enterprise architecture roadmap in the RFP materials.
106	N/A	N/A	Please help fill the gaps in our understanding of the current state by providing further information on the current DevOps Strategy for the agency, the current document management solution (if any) and a full list of current systems that would require integration, along with their integration capabilities (API, etc.). Please also denote the highest priority integrations for the initial phase to achieve the most significant impact on family student experience and which existing portals are critical to consolidate first.	FAME has two in-house developers and an analyst, with no DevOps strategy beyond a simple code repository. Current document management solution is Perceptive Content, with extensive use of DFS file shares across the organization. All major systems currently deployed have been listed in the RFP materials. Loan management activities for both commercial and consumer loans are prioritized in Phase 1.
107	Artifact G: Enterprise Application Mappings	81	Workflow system integration for approvals: Are there any existing workflow tools in use (e.g., Power Automate, Salesforce) that must be integrated or replaced?	All workflow is manual today, with the exception of some very basic workflow capabilities applied within our Perceptive document management system. Implementation of workflow capabilities is requested in Phase 1.
108	A. Purpose and Background	7	Is this primarily an IT-driven initiative or is this a business-driven initiative? Can you describe the sponsorship and engagement in this initiative by the business stakeholders? How will the business stakeholders be engaged throughout this initiative with regard to architectural decisions and prioritization?	This is both a business-driven and IT-driven initiative. Full sponsorship exists across the executive level of the organization, and the initiative is a cornerstone in our strategic plan and is central to our collective success moving forward. The entire organization is engaged in the initiative. Program managers and directors are engaged and prepared to execute during design and implementation. Subject-matter experts and other stakeholders will be consulted and informed about key decisions, and the CIO will largely be responsible for decisions.
109	ARTIFACT B	37	Is FAME agreeable to considering BPO (business process outsourcing) arrangements for certain business capabilities deemed suitable for these type of models?	FAME will consider BPO if it aligns with strategy and vision. FAME currently uses outsourced vendors for multiple functions.
110	Part 1 Introduction	8	Given the goal of increasing opportunities for educational advancement and becoming Maine's financial services ecosystem convener an economic impact analyzer, please describe how this modernization enable FAME to quantify its impact on actual educational attainment and workforce development outcomes beyond just program participation and indicate whether you are looking for recommendations specific to state, federal or other accreditation requirements we should consider in solutioning.	FAME would see a longitudinal data opportunity between its own data, enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse, and Maine Department of Labor data as the best way to quantify economic impact.
111	Part I	8	Is there any specific target 'end' timing for phase 1 before transitioning to future phases?	FAME anticipates a phase 1 timeline of 9 to 12 months, but recognizes that this will depend on scope and resources. FAME anticipates working collaboratively with the selected vendor to for both phase 1 as well as ongoing iterative improvements delivered in future phases of the modernization program.
	Part III Section 2: Timeline	16	What is the expected duration of Phase 1 implementation?	

112	Appendix D	31	When possible, would you prefer a larger team (higher burn rate) to move faster, or smaller team (lower burn rate) to move at a slower rate?	The team size and speed of delivery proposed by the bidder must be balanced against the ability of FAME's staff to support the initiative. Please see other responses regarding FAME resources to inform your approach.
113	II/IX Scope of Services/Artifacts	10-33;	Are there any external partners or third-party systems that must be integrated in Phase 1, and if so, which ones?	FAME does not anticipate significant third-party partner systems would be directly integrated during Phase 1 implementation. However, this may be impacted by Phase 1 business requirements and design activities. Note that FAME does not exchange real-time data with most of our partners at this time. FAME anticipates working with our partners to identify potential areas of improvement in data integration that can be implemented concurrently, but sees that as a likely future phase target.
114	Part I.A	7-8;	Can FAME provide a prioritized list of business capabilities or specific programs (e.g., CLI, Maine Loan, NextGen 529) that must be addressed in Phase 1 implementation?	FAME's focus in Phase 1 is on delivery of foundational enterprise capabilities and enabling loan / loan insurance management capabilities across the enterprise. Bidders should refer to the artifacts provided for Commercial, Education, and Marketing to identify and propose those business capabilities that can reasonably be enabled within the enterprise capability set delivered in Phase 1. We've identified likely targets in Artifact B - Target State Capabilities and Guidance. Beyond that, FAME's request for loan and loan insurance management business capabilities *IS* the priority. Bidders should expect to work with FAME to refine Phase 1 implementation deliverables target as business requirements and design are collaboratively developed.
115	N/A	N/A	Program Variations & Rules: Can you provide a detailed breakdown of each loan and grant program (e.g., CLI, Bond, NextGen 529), and expected configuration complexity?	FAME expects to work collaboratively with the vendor to apply program requirements to workflow design. Some variability exists across programs due to differences in a program design and external partner agreements. Artifact C provides insights into the Commercial Business Details and Artifact D provides insights into the Education Business Details. In general, program rules are relatively simple and documented.
116	N/A	N/A	Will any old data be migrated to the new solutions? If yes, can FAME please share a rough estimate of how much of the current data will need to be migrated? Is FAME able to provide support to clean data and ensure data quality and data in an expected format to ingest it in the new platform(s)?	Yes. FAME databases hold approximately 3 TB of data and anticipates the majority of this data will eventually be moved to new solutions, though not necessarily all in Phase 1. Customer records held within our SugarCRM database includes approximately 875,0000 active unique records. Note that this record count does not capture customer leads maintained in other systems (Constant Contact, etc.) Loan records to migrate include 14,000 commercial loans, of which 1,400 are active. FAME anticipates our internal developers will be fully engaged in supporting the design and implementation effort, including and utilization for locating and cleaning data and ensuring data quality is maintained during ingestion into the new platforms.

117	II/IX Scope of Services/Artifacts	10-33;	Will FAME provide data migration support, or is full responsibility for data migration expected of the bidder?	FAME expects the partner to play the lead role in this effort and FAME expects to be fully engaged in supporting the effort through access to SME's on the existing data and extracting current data for migration.
118	Artifact E: Marketing Business Details	70	What is the expected process for migrating and cleansing legacy contact data into the centralized CRM?	FAME recognizes that this is part of the overall effort. Bidders should expect to work collaboratively with FAME to define this process as part of business requirements and design scope.
119	N/A	N/A	Regarding data migration, Will this project require data migration from existing systems? If so, please describe the the current state of the data in as much detail to help us determine the scope of a migration effort. For example, are any legacy systems using non-relational formats, flat files, or custom logic? Are documents stored with naming conventions or file metadata that must be parsed or retained? Do document files need to be re-associated with specific records (e.g., applications, budgets, reimbursements), or just placed in a central repo?	Yes. Current state of most data to be migrated is generally from structured / relational SQL tables. Supporting the migration of unstructured files as supporting content from local DFS file storage is also likely, and will be determined during business requirements elicitation and design.
120	N/A	N/A	Reporting & Analytics Count: How many custom reports and dashboards do you anticipate in Phase 1, what level of complexity (multi source joins, advanced visualizations), and how many internal versus external users will consume them?	Please refer to the included Commercial and Education reporting inventory documents included with the RFP for details on existing reporting needs. Marketing reporting needs will need to be defined during the requirements gathering, though some insights can be gathered by reviewing the Marketing section of the RFP and Marketing Scope Clarification document provided. Note that the majority of Education reporting is out of scope for Phase 1, unless directly related to loans and loan insurance.
121	N/A	N/A	Test Data Provisioning: Will FAME provide representative or anonymized test data for integration and performance testing, or do we need to generate synthetic test data, if so, how many records/users should it simulate?	FAME intends to work collaboratively with the successful bidder to test and validate solutions, including generation of test data.
122	N/A	N/A	High Risk Interfaces: Are there any legacy modules or interfaces (e.g., CLUE, EPIC, GMS) with known performance or stability issues that require special mitigation, please indicate the number of internal and external systems impacted.	None known. Most data intended for migration is stored in SQL.
123	N/A	N/A	Can you provide a detailed list of all existing systems that will need to be integrated with the new system? Are any of these systems cloud-based or on-premises? What are the key use cases or data flows expected between these systems and the new system?	TBD during Design. All current systems are delivered on-premise. The primary cloud-based systems currently include HubSpot, Salesforce, and Constant Contact, the usage of which may be impacted by design. Key use cases or data flows expected TBD during Design.

124	N/A	N/A	Will vendors be granted access to test environments for all required third-party systems?	FAME does not anticipate this will be needed for Phase 1. However, FAME will work with our vendors to provide access to systems as required.
125	N/A	N/A	Is data migration from the existing systems to be migrated to new system?	Yes.
126	N/A	N/A	How many years of historical data are expected to be migrated into the new system?	All available from structured data.
127	N/A	N/A	Do you have an approximate count of active versus closed or inactive records in the current system?	No
128	N/A	N/A	Should we plan to migrate only active records, or are closed/inactive records also required?	TBD during Design.
129	N/A	N/A	Are closed or inactive records accessed frequently, or would it be acceptable to archive them separately from the core system?	TBD during Design.
130	N/A	N/A	What database or platform is currently used to store the data that will be migrated?	Microsoft SQL Server
131	N/A	N/A	Is all data stored in a single system, or are there multiple sources we should be aware of?	Please refer to the RFP
132	N/A	N/A	Is the data structured, and will a data dictionary or schema be available to support mapping and transformation?	Most data is in SQL tables. No data dictionary currently exists.
133	N/A	N/A	Are there documents, files, or attachments (e.g., PDFs, images, scanned forms) that need to be migrated along with the data? If so, do you know the approximate number of documents or the total file storage size involved? Are those files stored in the same database, in a separate file system, or managed through a document management solution?	Likely. TBD during design. Files are stored both in a SQL and separately on a DFS file share.
	N/A	N/A	Can you estimate the total number of records involved in the migration?	
134	N/A	N/A	Will there be any reports from the existing system that need to be rebuilt or replicated in the new system? If so, an approximate number or a sample list would be very helpful.	Yes. Please see the listing of reports for Commercial and Education in the RFP materials. These are generally included in or supported by the ~ 300 reports that are currently built in our SQL Server Reporting Services environment.
	N/A	N/A	What is the approximate volume of historical data that needs to be migrated?	

135	Artifact B CRM Capabilities	40-41	Are there existing master data management practices or plans for establishing a customer master record?	Establishing strong master data management practices and a customer master record model is a clear need for FAME and an expected outcome of the modernization effort.
136	N/A	N/A	Data Quality & Cleansing: What is the current state of data quality in legacy systems, and will FAME provide SME support for data cleansing or should we include full data cleansing effort in our LOE?	Most data quality in legacy systems is in moderate shape and adequate for current use. The proliferation of spreadsheets, lack of master data management practices, and customer data mastering are challenges to be addressed. Refer to the RFP materials for more detail. FAME anticipates some level of data cleansing effort will be required for the data migration.
	N/A	N/A	How would you describe the overall data quality - would you classify it as high, medium, or low?	
137	N/A	N/A	Will data cleanup or standardization be required as part of the migration process?	Yes
138	II Scope of Services	10	Can you clarify which specific legacy applications are prioritized for replacement or integration in Phase 1?	FAME is targeting the business capabilities currently enabled by SugarCRM, CLUE, OLA, and NLS for phase 1. Note that SugarCRM is integrated with other solutions, and may not be able to be fully decommissioned within phase 1. The business capabilities enabled by EPIC and FAME Central are not prioritized for replacement during a phase one effort.
139	N/A	N/A	Are there any systems or data sources that must be deprecated or replaced as part of Phase 1 integration?	Yes.
140	Part II	11	To what extent are marketing capabilities being enabled in Phase 1? Is it expected to integrate text, email, and social media marketing channels to content management and contact data management capabilities? Or just enable contact data and content capabilities for integration to marketing platforms?	Please see "Marketing Phase 1 Scope Clarification" document that has been provided as an addendum to the RFP.
141	General Question	N/A	What are FAME's expectations for this partnership? For example, do you prefer that the awarded vendor provides full-scale delivery or are there elements you wish to be more hands on with?	FAME expects the selected partner to bring full-scale delivery and expertise, while working collaboratively with FAME in a hands-on way through all stages of design, implementation, and on-going support.
142	N/A	N/A	Will technical points of contact be provided for third-party systems needing integration?	Yes.
143	N/A	N/A	Will FAME manage the coordination with external vendors during integration testing phases?	FAME will coordinate with external business partners during testing phases. For technical platform components being implemented by the partner they should take point on coordinating any support required and escalate to FAME if responsiveness is delaying delivery.

144	Part I: Introduction	6	What metrics or KPIs will be used to evaluate the success of automation efforts?	Primarily, FAME will measure success of the automation efforts by efficiency gains in time to process applications, ability to generate reports, reduction in errors, exception reporting and quality checks. FAME currently lacks sufficient metrics to track efficiency due to largely disconnected, manual processes and systems.
145	Part 1: Integration	6	Could FAME elaborate on the specific Key Performance Indicators or success metrics it will use to measure the better, faster, and more accessible services, specifically for education programs in the short-term (6-12 months) and long-term? For example please describe targets for application processing time, FAFSA completion rates, or constituent satisfaction scores for educational services.	Current processes require multiple human contact points and manual processing. A 50% decrease in time it takes to disburse funds from application receipt. Long term KPIs are: self service application status dashboard, electronic application status notifications, all automated and electronic communications between FAME and applicant, automated document generation, digital signatures on program acceptance documents, automated disclosures, automated communications and self-service to upload missing documents. KPI is a 10% increase in customer satisfaction scores. Note that education programs are largely out of scope for Phase 1, with the exception of loan and loan insurance programs.
146	N/A	N/A	Are there specific KPIs, dashboards, or reporting use cases that must be delivered in Phase 1?	Yes. Please review content provided in the RFP and separate reporting inventories provided.
147	Part II, Part III	10,15;	The RFP states that "bidders should propose a strategic subset of capabilities and business functions"; can FAME please elaborate on the degree to which bidders can take liberty with the "Program Scope Items" listed in the "Scope Alignment Table" if still aligned with the spirit of FAME's vision?	Bidders will be evaluated based upon their response to the scope defined in this RFP. If bidders wish to propose a secondary and alternative Phase 1 Scope they are encouraged to do so, provided they address their rationale, program impact, and alignment to the overall objectives of the modernization effort.
148	Appendix C Scope Alignment Table	30	Will FAME provide access to the completed Scope Alignment Table from internal planning to help vendors align their responses?	The Scope Alignment Table that was included in the RFP package was created to help bidders understand the primary focus of Phase 1. There are no additional details available at this time. FAME is requesting bidders complete the table, providing the requested clarity regarding your proposal for our evaluation.
149	Part II	11	What role would FAME anticipate to play in ongoing support (example: incidents, requests, access, infrastructure support)? Is FAME interested in upskilling FAME team members during the implementation to provide some capacity in the future towards ongoing enhancements, maintenance and support?	FAME anticipates playing a key role in ongoing support, long-term. FAME is interested in upskilling our employees during implementation to provide basic capacity towards ongoing enhancements, maintenance, and support. However, FAME also recognizes that internal personnel will not have the same familiarity and understanding of these systems and will also be needed to support implementation of future phased enhancements. For these reasons, FAME anticipates leaning on our partner, particularly during these future phases, to provide expertise and support for ongoing enhancements, maintenance, and support. Our longer-term vision includes a blended support model with the partner supporting the more technical aspects of the solution.

150	II Phase I Scope	10	When gathering business requirements, business interviews are often necessary. Can you provide roughly how many people, or groups, we should expect to interview to gather requirements?	FAME has 68 staff members, organized into five pillars. FAME expects to collaborate with the vendor to scope out the process of gathering business requirements and ensure that appropriate research is done into use cases, roles, and responsibilities that will inform the requirements needed to make the appropriate recommendations for solutions in this engagement.
151	Part II: Scope of Services	12	What assumptions should be made about FAME's internal capacity to support automation implementation?	Internal Capacity to support automation implementation from a training and change management perspective: we are yet to build this out, but it will involve increasing capacity for a transition period and longer term planning for support needs.
152	II/III Scope of Services/Proposal Content	10-13;	What level of user acceptance testing (UAT) support does FAME expect from the selected partner, if any?	Bidders should work with FAME to design UAT approach and support review and triage of identified defects.
153	N/A	N/A	Who will be responsible for extracting the data from the current system - your team, vendor, or someone else?	FAME expects to perform data extracts.
154	N/A	N/A	Who will be responsible for validating the accuracy and quality of the migrated data?	FAME anticipates this will be a shared responsibility.
155	N/A	N/A	Is it permissible to utilize resources based outside of the U.S.? If so, are there any constraints to locations that can be considered?	Remote and non-U.S. based labor resources may be utilized. FAME does give preference to Maine and USA based labor resources. Note that FAME is seeking cost effective solutions for implementation and support and expects resources that will be required to interface with FAME team members be available during FAME business hours: 8am - 4:30pm ET. Bidders should identify off-shore and near-shore resources and how they will be utilized in solution delivery. Bidders should clearly identify when referencing qualifications, experience, and references, whether these are attributed to the primary firm or a sub-contracted firm. Development of code and configuration and the hardware enabling those activities may exist outside the continental USA. However, production systems, storage of non-test data, and the hardware that supports those activities, must reside inside the continental USA. Finalists will be required to participate in a thorough risk management review to address potential risks associated with data security, compliance, quality control, communication barriers, etc.
	II Important Considerations for Bidders	12	If the need for external partners is necessary, do all consultants need to be on-shore or are off-shore consultants acceptable as well?	
	GENERAL	N/A	Is there anything limiting FAME's ability to leverage off-shore resources during the build or manage phases of the identified Phase 1 scope? Specifically either Indian or Eastern European resources.	
	N/A	N/A	What is FAME's preference regarding the use of remote, offshore, or on-site resources for this engagement?	
	N/A	N/A	Resourcing Constraints: Are there state or FAME policies around onsite vs. remote staffing, visa requirements, or background checks that will impact our resource planning?	
	N/A	N/A	Could FAME please clarify if firms can utilize subcontractors to meet the requirements of this opportunity and if primes can utilise sub's experience/references for the services mentioned in SOW?	

156	Part II	11,12;	Can you please elaborate on the connection, if any, between the FAME-owned Organizational Change Management Plan and the training for operational and technical resources? Does the OCMP capability at FAME include any end user training?	Training of our internal resources is part of the change management plan and will be informed by the solutions and decisions made during the design phase of the engagement. FAME expects product owners, subject-matter experts, and technical support roles will be engaged and participating in training. End user training will be conducted by resources organized by FAME, and informed by training, resources, documentation, and support provided by the vendor to product owners, subject-matter experts, and technical support roles.
157	N/A	N/A	The RFP excludes the execution of organizational change management (OCM), including communication plans and end-user training. Could you describe the State's OCM strategy, plan, and dedicated resources for this project to ensure user adoption?	See other related responses. The strategy for organizational change management is based on ADKAR steps. Internal resources include a governance committee, subject-matter experts, stakeholders, as well as change management and project management personnel. Other resources contracted as required.
158	II Scope of Services	11	For the OPEX model requested, what assumptions should we make about FAME's desired support/service levels?	FAME anticipates playing a key role in ongoing support, long-term. FAME is interested in upskilling our employees during implementation to provide basic capacity towards ongoing enhancements, maintenance, and support. However, FAME also recognizes that internal personnel will not have the same familiarity and understanding of these systems and will also be needed to support implementation of future phased enhancements. For these reasons, FAME anticipates leaning on our partner, particularly during these future phases, to provide expertise and support for ongoing enhancements, maintenance, and support. Our longer-term vision includes a blended support model with the partner supporting the more technical aspects of the solution.
	II Ongoing Support	11	Will FAME take over the long-term support of internal systems or do you expect to lean heavily on the chosen partner for the foreseeable future?	
159	Part II: Scope of Services, specifically under phase 1 Requirements and Collaborative Design	10	Do you have any preferred SLA hours and severity response times for post-go-live support?	FAME expects to consider SLA hours and severity response and resolution times for post-go-live support at a later date - during Phase 1 design. For estimation purposes, our preference for issue resolution would be: Critical/Sev1: 1 to 4 hours; Major/Sev2: 4 to 8 hours; Medium/Sev3: 1 to 3 business days; Minor/Sev4 issues: 2 to 4 weeks.
160	Part II Scope of Services Ongoing Support Model	11	What is FAME's preferred support model post-implementation (e.g., SLA-based, ticketing system, on-call)?	FAME's preferred support model post-implementation would leverage SLA-based support for critical systems, including ticketing system capabilities and business relationship management.



161	Part II: Scope of Services	11	What training expectations exist for end-users and technical staff regarding automated workflows?	See other related responses regarding training. Additionally, for automated workflows, FAME expects product owners and technical teams to understand and be able to provide first-line support and and changes to support automated workflows.
162	Part II	11,12;	For "Training for Operational and Technical resources at FAME", is FAME interested in a train-the-trainer approach? Or do you want the vendor to train all impacted FAME resources?	FAME anticipates playing a key role in training end-users (including customers and partners, as relevant) to use new systems, and expects bidders to provide appropriate training resources, documentation, train-the-trainer live training, and other procedural support to ensure successful adoption. FAME expects product owners, subject-matter experts, and technical support roles will be engaged and participating in training.
	N/A	N/A	Training Scope & Format: For end user and administrator training, what delivery modes (in person vs. virtual) will you require, and how many internal attendees (staff/admins) versus external attendees (licensees/public users) per session should we plan for?	