

UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Request for Information

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has a 9.6 terabyte (raw) production storage array that is over 5 years old. Although component failures are infrequent, the storage array is at end-of-life and the probability / impact of a significant outage is higher than the UIS is willing to accept.

The storage array provides shared storage for production, staging and test servers. This includes:

- A document repository / file server for digital documents of the Montreal office; including statistical data files for use in statistical applications such as SPSS, STATA, R, and MS Excel, as well as small ad hoc MS Access databases.
- A server hosting corporate statistical databases in SQL Server.
- Frontend and backend servers for several web based sites and applications.
- Servers for infrastructure services.

In parallel:

- the UIS has taken the strategic decision to migrate most of its computing requirements into the MS Azure Cloud. Establishing a production presence in the cloud began in 2016 and has been very successful. The UIS is in the process of analyzing and planning the migration of remaining production applications and databases to the cloud over the next 3 years.
- UNESCO Paris has taken the strategic decision to migrate to Office 365 (exchange migration has been successfully completed). The next project in this area is to establish an Intranet/Extranet environment utilizing Sharepoint Online/OneDrive/Skype for Business and Powell 365.

These parallel changes will have a significant impact, over the medium term, on the need for, capacity of, and capabilities of, an in-house storage array.

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics is seeking to mitigate the risk of a storage array failure affecting core production systems. In doing so, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics also wishes to avoid purchasing IT equipment that will no longer be required in the medium term as a result of the cloud and Office365 initiatives.

The UIS is seeking cost-effective options, including but not limited to, the option to replace its existing shared server storage with a new storage solution that can be fully integrated with its current server environment and allow it to upgrade to the latest version of VMWare. The existing solution being replaced is an MSA P2000G3 loaded with 8x300gb and 12x600gb 10k 2.5" SAS drives and is connected to a 3 server VMWare 5.1 cluster (HP Proliant DL360p G8 servers) and a single staging server (HP Proliant DL360p G8). Each server is connected by 2 SAS cables for redundancy.

Specific requirements:

The new solution must:

1. Provide at least 6.54TB of usable storage.
2. Be sufficiently redundant to ensure that there is no single point of failure.
3. Ensure no data loss or corruption in the event of a failure, including a power failure.
4. Perform at least as fast as the current solution (IOPS, disk latency, throughput, etc).
5. Be easy to use and maintain, requiring minimal administrator intervention once initial configuration is complete.
6. Include performance and health monitoring and alert functionality.

And include all necessary:

1. Hardware, including all cables and components required to integrate the solution into our environment.
2. Software licenses, including support and upgrades for at least 5 years.
3. Warranties (5 year parts and labor with 4 hour response within business hours [9-5, 5 days per week]).
4. Installation and configuration of the system into our environment.
5. Migration of existing virtual servers from production (18) and staging (2) to the new solution.
6. Testing, implementation and roll-out.
7. Documentation:
 - a. on the implemented solution,
 - b. detailed documentation on the final configuration;
 - c. how-to documentation on the most common administrator tasks (preventative and reactive).
8. Administrator Training in order that he/she is self-sufficient and is able to reliably perform the most common administrator tasks
9. Post go-live support and maintenance (preventative and reactive)

All hardware and software must be from industry leading manufacturers with a proven track record of excellent reliability and after sales support.

The purpose of the Request for Information (RFI) is to identify potential suppliers who are willing and capable of providing the above solution and to gain knowledge on the estimated costs and timeline.

The prospective contractor is required to:

- Provide recommendations that respond to the needs expressed in this document.
- Provide estimated costs
- Provide a high level workplan with timelines
- Provide information about the contractor including references and examples of similar past projects.

Prospective contractors are strongly encouraged to respond to this inquiry as this information will be instrumental in preparation of the solicitation documents and shortlisting of the potential partners.

This request is strictly a mechanism for gathering information and will not constitute a procurement process. No award(s) will be made as a result of this inquiry.

The responses must be submitted to uis.procurement@unesco.org indicating UIS RFI Storage Renewal in the subject line, no later than 17:00 EST, August 30, 2018

*** The UNESCO Institute for Statistics is under no obligation to invite any potential supplier who has expressed interest in this procurement notice to participate in the subsequent bidding process ***