



Companies and Intellectual
Property Commission

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NOTICE TO SERVICE PROVIDERS

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) FOR CHARACTER RECOGNITION SOLUTION (OCR)

CIPC RFI NO: 001/2018/2019

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE RFI

Respondents are hereby invited for the supply information for character recognition solution (OCR) for CIPC. This RFI is neither a tender, RFP nor RFQ. No award shall be made in terms of this RFI. No conclusions will be drawn between respondents. There is no commitment from CIPC to procure system from any of the suppliers. The purpose of this request is to gather information and acquire a clear understanding of what the market has to offer regarding a technical for character recognition solution (OCR). The description of the process is summarized in the Terms of Reference that will be made available to respondents during the briefing Session. The same information can be requested via email see contact details below

2. RFI PROCEDURE

- Service providers to note that the RFI is published in the **Government Bulletin** and the **National Treasury Portal** and **Newspapers**
- The RFI Terms of Reference will be made available on **CIPC WEBSITE UNDER TENDERS**,
RFI: www.cipc.co.za OR can be requested via email addresses below

2.1 RFI RESPONSE FORMAT

2.2 SCM QUERIES / REQUESTING OF TOR TO BE ADDRESSED TO

Ms Ntombi Maqhula OR Mr Solomon Motshweni

Email address: nmaqhula@cipc.co.za / smotshweni@cipc.co.za

2.3 TECHNICAL QUERIES TO BE ADDRESSED TO

Mr Sello Ndhlovu: *Technical and System issues*: Email: sndhlovu@cipc.co.za

Ms Lunghile Mbedzi: *Technical and System issues*: Email: lmbedzi@cipc.co.za



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3 TIMEFRAME

Below is the timeframe for the RFI

OPENING DATE:	20 FEBRUARY 2019
CLOSING DATE:	22 MARCH 2019
LAST DATE FOR QUESTIONS:	15 MARCH 2019

DETAIL OF THE BRIEFING SESSION

BRIEFING SESSION: (<i>NOT</i> A COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSION)	DATE:	08 MARCH 2019
	TIME:	11:00 AM
	VENUE:	VENUE: CIPC OFFICE, THE DTI CAMPUS, BLOCK D, DG 30, 77 MEINTJIES STREET, SUNNYSIDE, "THE DTI" CAMPUS, PRETORIA.

RFI



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1. CIPC OVERVIEW

1.1. BACKGROUND

CIPC came into existence in May 2011 after being established by the Companies Act, 2008 (Act 71 of 2008), herein after referred to as the Companies Act, as a juristic person to function as an organ of state within the public administration, but as an institution outside the public service.

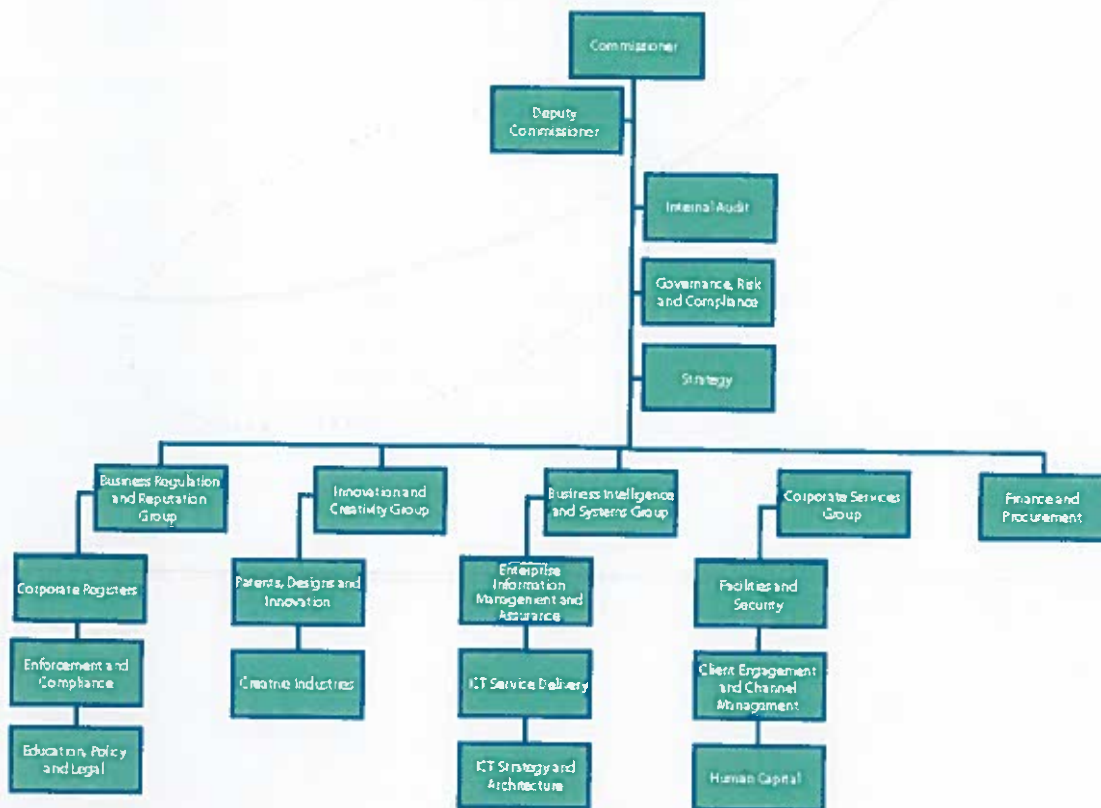
- The functions of the CIPC are the following:
- Registration of Companies, Co-operatives and Intellectual Property Rights (trade marks, patents, designs and copyright) and maintenance thereof
- Disclosure of Information on its business registers
- Promotion of education and awareness of Company and Intellectual Property Law
- Promotion of compliance with relevant legislation
- Efficient and effective enforcement of relevant legislation
- Monitoring compliance with and contraventions of financial reporting standards, and making recommendations thereto to Financial Reporting Standards Council (FRSC)
- Licensing of Business rescue practitioners
- Report, research and advise Minister on matters of national policy relating to company and intellectual property law

CIPC is currently implementing the Microsoft SharePoint technology to facilitate the centralization and internal management of documents and records, collaboration and further allow for the introduction of workflow. There is a need to improve on electronic document processes and disclosure of these documents to the public and CIPC Stakeholders. By introducing the concept of Character Recognition Solution, this will assist CIPC in ensuring that personal information such as Identity documents, copies of companies directors are not disclosed to the public domain and also to comply with certain legislation such as Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) of 2013.



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1.2. CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE; AND



1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

2.1. PROJECT GOALS

CIPC is engaged in a process of rapid, fundamental transformation. It is imperative for it to respond to the needs of its globalised, fast changing environment in order to both deliver value to its stakeholders and remain relevant to South Africa's developmental and economic needs. This transformation process has to happen at the same time that CIPC delivers on its immediate imperatives, which is to implement a balanced regulatory regime and to serve its customers efficiently and effectively.

In order to increase the scope of CIPC's role in the economy (as envisaged in the Companies Act, 2008) and to play a meaningful role in the new legal dispensation impacting business entities and intellectual property in South Africa, CIPC identified, as one of its key priorities, the need to improve its credibility with Customers and other stakeholders. To give effect to this, four initiatives have been identified, namely:



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- Improving the reliability and integrity of the information in CIPC's registries;
- Improving the relevance and value of CIPC's services to its Customers and stakeholders
- Improving compliance with the laws that CIPC administers.
- Demonstrate CIPC's economic impact

2.2. OBJECTIVES

Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) is issuing this RFI to gain a better understanding of industry best practices and vendor capabilities in addressing CIPC's business and technology requirements. Specifically, CIPC is seeking approaches, architectures and solutions for the implementation of the Character Recognition solution (OCR) to egress from all the files that are sitting on the file shares which will only be accessed through SharePoint 2016 once the SharePoint connector is configured. Majority of the files sitting on the above-mentioned repositories are not full-text searchable, therefore the SharePoint search functionality will not be optimal. These files are company documents that are scanned into tiff images and as part of the information disclosure and compliance with Protection of Personal Information Act, Identity Documents of companies' directors must be excluded from images that are disclosed to the public and all CIPC stakeholders. CIPC also have old companies documents files stored from an offsite document storage (DocuFile). When files are requested by the public users or stakeholders, scanning on demand needs to be factored into the proposed solution.

CIPC understands that in developing such business capability, the business requirements, processes and people factors are just as critical as the technical solution. Due to the complexity of implementing transformation projects such as this, CIPC is also seeking responses on vendor experiences and successes with similar projects for other clients. The responses from this RFI process may be used in the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the procurement of an OCR solution. However the issuance of this RFI does not represent a commitment to issue an RFP, and/or award of contract. The costs of preparing this RFI will be borne by each vendor and it is not reimbursable by CIPC.

The key long-term benefits that CIPC seeks from this exercise are:

- Leading customer service and products
- Operational efficiency through increased revenue and lower costs operational cost
- Reliable and accurate information
- Effective enforcement
- Safeguard confidentiality of customer and stakeholders information



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2.3. SCOPE OF WORK

CIPC is seeking for qualified software vendors that would be able to implement an OCR platform. This would be used in detailing the Enterprise Architecture framework and describe the environment under the following domains:

- The Business Architecture domain;
- The Application domain comprising the Core and non-core Systems;
- The Data Architecture domain comprising the databases supporting the Applications; and
- The Technology domain comprising the Hardware and Network supporting the Applications and data

Information needed from the supplier

VENDOR DETAILS FOR THIS RFI

The vendor should identify their products and service offerings that address the issues raised under scope, and define their solutions based on its capability as detailed below:

- Automated conversion of images into fully-searchable PDFs through Optical Character Recognition;
- High Fidelity conversion of different file types;
- Information Classification;
- Document Indexing
- Scanning on Demand
- Seamless integration with SharePoint 2016 or any other document management system; and
- Reporting Capability.

Vendors should explain how their product, services or solution meets the specific requirements documented here. Vendors should not respond by simply attaching stock product or service brochures. At this RFI stage, the CIPC will consider information from vendors who are able to deliver the whole solution or any of the major components or activities. The vendor must clearly identify the scope offered in their response if they are unable to deliver the entire solution. Vendors can provide alternative structures of the solution or delivery approach if they deem them to be more appropriate.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Provide in your response your understanding of the solution requirements listed in this RFI, and based on your experience, your recommended approach and the key issues in implementing your proposed solutions. This includes any Enterprise Architecture (EA) framework, application development approaches or COTS (Commercial off the Shelf) solutions for all solutions you can provide when a detailed RFP is provided. We would also like vendors to offer suggestions as to implementation time frames, number of resources required and recommended support available from the vendor after start of operations, such as online website, toll free numbers and helpdesk support.

SUPPLIER'S VIABILITY AND CAPABILITY

Provide in your response references to equivalent IT Solution implementations and include which of the solutions listed in your response are included in those references. Include information such as solutions provided and implementation time frames. In order to proceed further with any vendor providing information in response to this RFI, CIPC must be assured of their financial strength, stability and continuing viability.



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2 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The following outline is offered to assist in the development of your response. You should include:

- A cover letter - the cover letter should include a brief summary of your response, such as indicating to which areas you are responding and must also indicate if supporting documentation is included in your response.
- The response itself, must cover any or all of the areas of information requested by this RFI. The information should be provided so that the evaluation against the Issues raised and the Solution Requirements is facilitated easily.
- If required, provide a glossary that maps terminology used in your response to CIPC's standard terminology as contained in this RFI.

Although CIPC does not limit the size of responses, you are asked to consider limiting the size of your response (not counting any supporting documentation) to approximately 50 pages. If you consider supporting documentation to be necessary, please indicate which portions of the supporting documentation are relevant to this RFI.

3 RFI SCHEDULE

RFI key dates are the following:

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(NOT A COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSION)	DATE:	08 MARCH 2019
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RFI RELATED QUESTIONS / CLARIFICATIONS / SUBMISSION

SCM queries / REQUESTING OF TOR TO BE ADDRESSED TO

Ms Ntombi Maghula OR Mr Solomon Motshweni

Email address: nmaghula@cipc.co.za / smotshweni@cipc.co.za

TECHNICAL QUERIES TO BE ADDRESSED TO

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Basic partners must ensure that the proposal is delivered in duplicate and received at the following address before the FRI closing date.

Sealed proposals will be received at the Tender Box at the Reception, 77 Meintjies Street, Sunnyside, the dti campus, Block F.

Proposals should be addressed to:

Manager (Supply Chain Management)

Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office

Block F, the dti Campus, 77 Meintjies Street,

Sunnyside

PRETORIA

Any notices with respect to this RFI should also be mailed to the above Contact and Address.

Liabilities of CIPC

This RFI is only a request for information about potential products / services and no contractual obligation on behalf of CIPC whatsoever shall arise from the RFI process. This RFI does not commit CIPC to pay any cost incurred in the preparation or submission of any response to the RFI.

Confidentiality & RFI Ownership

This RFI is both confidential and proprietary to CIPC, and CIPC reserves the right to recall the RFI in its entirety or in part. Basic partners cannot and agree that they will not duplicate, distribute or otherwise disseminate or make available this document or the information contained in it without the express written consent of CIPC.

Basic partners shall not include or reference this RFI in any publicity without prior written approval from the client, which, if granted, shall be granted by the individual named above. Basic partners must accept all of the foregoing terms and conditions without exception. All responses to the RFI will become the property of CIPC and will not be returned.



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4 HIGH LEVEL BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

CIPC want to be able to extract, validate and disclose company documents without including Identity Documents for companies' directors to its customers in a more efficient and effective manner and so we will need a solution to enable this process.

This is essentially an Information Disclosure project which will see us moving away from our current manual process. We will be replacing the manual scanning process of files and be able to extract, protect personal information that is stored on our file share as TIFF images before disclosed to its customers without compromising director's personal information, not limited to information stored from our offsite document storage.

This is a very important project for CIPC and we are looking for a partner who can demonstrate their experience of having delivered these types of transformation programmes within similar organizations to CIPC. In light of the importance placed on this project we would value advice on how to set-up and prepare for this project. We would also like to understand how you could be of further assistance beyond the initial delivery. In your response please explain how you could meet these requirements.

We would expect our service provider to be able to bring innovative ideas around the use of OCR to enable CIPC to provide a world class service to all constituent groups. In your response please explain how you can demonstrate innovation in the area of OCR usage?

In order to achieve our objectives we need to be able to capture, validate, examine, store and interrogate all filings that we receive.

More detail of the functional requirements is provided in section 5.1 below.

The key attributes that we are looking for when meeting our requirements are:

- flexibility
- performance
- reliability

We are committed to adherence to certain legislation, such as PAIA and POPIA and are therefore expecting any solution provider to participate in these standards and to bring best practices and experience of these standards to our project. Over time our operating model will change and evolve so it is important that any solution we implement is able to support this evolution of our operating model and is able to cope with these changes.

In addition to changes to the data model, it is also likely that there will be a need for us to modify the rules we implement for filers and so we will also need a solution that can grow and adapt with any rule changes we may require.

Once the data has been captured it is important that the data is available quickly and that we can interrogate the data without the need to resort to cumbersome data warehouses.



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5 FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In order to deliver the above components, the solution must be built using commercial, off-the-shelf (COTS) products. OCR / Document Management Systems experience is also a mandatory requirement.

6 INFORMATION SECURITY REQUIREMENTS AND PRIVACY PROTECTION

We need to be able to guarantee the privacy and security of all of our data and so it is vital that the chosen organization has policies and procedures in place to ensure this. It is also vital that proper protection is in place in terms of user authentication, virus protection and other kinds of security breach.

Please explain your deployment model, in particular which elements of your solution are on-premise and/or cloud based.

7 AVAILABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The system should be available at all times during the business working day, so we would expect an availability of a minimum of 99.5%. This figure takes into account any routine maintenance slots which may be required.

8 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

We understand that there are several different ways in which this type of solution can be implemented. With this in mind we would like some guidance on the technical considerations we should pay attention to.

In the high-level requirements, we stated that we need a solution to capture, validate, examine, store and interrogate all filings that we receive. For each of these functional areas please provide the following:

- A description of the possible methods available to us
- A description of your preferred method of delivery

Please bear in mind that any solution should be based upon commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software as mentioned in 3.1.



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9 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The material contained in this document is proprietary to CIPC and is released for informational purposes only. No rights in said material are hereby transferred to any other organization. This material may not be disclosed, duplicated, or otherwise revealed, in whole or in part, without the written consent of CIPC and is subject to the terms of the [Non-Disclosure Agreement](#) executed by vendor and CIPC.

By agreeing to respond to this RFI, the vendor expressly acknowledges that CIPC business procedures, ideas, inventions, plans, financial data, contents of the RFI, and other CIPC information are the sole and exclusive property of CIPC. The vendor also agrees that it will safeguard such information to the same extent as it safeguards its own confidential material or data relating to its own business information that is of confidential or proprietary nature. The vendor shall not furnish the name of CIPC or any of the affiliated CIPC companies, as a reference or use the name of CIPC or any of the affiliated companies in any advertising or promotional materials without the prior written consent of CIPC.

10. OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Our chosen service provider must be able to provide comprehensive customer support backed by robust incident tracking and handling processes and procedures. This customer service must be provided within agreed service levels. This is a key requirement since CIPC must maintain and enhance its reputation for quality with its customers. Users must be able to contact the support desk by email and telephone as a minimum and the help desk must be available during normal business hours.



11 RESPONSE FORMAT

Question	Response
Partner name	
Parent company	
Partner address	
Name of person responsible for the information contained in this RFI	
Telephone number:	
Fax number	
Email address	
Web page	
Initial year of operations	
Partner location:	
Corporate office	
Local offices (RSA)	
Other office	
Number of employees:	
Total	
Development	
Implementation	
Sales & administration support	
Employee turnover rate	
Employee satisfaction (if surveyed and known)	
Key employees (names and terms of contract)	
Total revenue:	
Current year	
Previous year	
Total profit/loss	
Current year	
Previous year	
Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity:	
Give details of your business continuity arrangements.	
South Africa Business Strategy:	
Give details of your strategy for doing business in South Africa especially in relation to your growth plans for the region over the next 2 – 5 years.	
Experience and Capabilities:	



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<p>Please outline your experience within the arena international standards (OCR, ECM) and with regulatory bodies. Please explain your capabilities and experience of OCR.</p> <p>Regulatory environments</p> <p>Please explain how you have worked with other regulators.</p> <p>Which solutions have you implemented with other regulators?</p> <p>Volume of documents</p> <p>What is a typical number of documents your solution manages a year?</p> <p>What are the peak volumes of documents you have managed?</p>	
<p>Standards support:</p> <p>Please list the standards which your solution can support.</p> <p>What is your policy for supporting new, in-progress or existing standards?</p>	
<p>Companies and References:</p> <p>Have you supplied to customers in a similar industry, with a similar growth profile that would act as a reference site for you? If so then please state them</p>	
<p>Depth of Experience:</p> <p>Total number of installations of the version of the software being proposed, which have been carried out by your organization?</p>	
<p>Partnerships and Alliances:</p> <p>Describe any third-party alliances/relationships</p>	
<p>Legal Actions:</p> <p>Please provide details of any outstanding legal action against your company or any directors or partners.</p>	
<p>Mergers and Acquisitions:</p> <p>Are there any anticipated mergers or acquisitions pending?</p>	
<p>Project Preparation, Delivery and Post Project Support:</p> <p>How would you help us to prepare for this project, what services can you provide to ensure a proper foundation prior to embarking on the project?</p> <p>Please provide information on your implementation methodology.</p> <p>Please provide a project roadmap indicating key stages and key milestones.</p> <p>Please provide an example project plan with timelines.</p> <p>How would you help to manage and support us through the life of this project?</p> <p>How can you demonstrate innovation in the area of OCR usage?</p> <p>What follow on services can you provide to ensure that we can continue to extract the best value from your solution after the initial project completion?</p>	Attach as required.
<p>Documentation:</p> <p>What documentation is provided for the software / system?</p>	
<p>Software:</p> <p>Was your software written by your organization or acquired from a third party?</p> <p>Is your software written according to appropriate industry standards?</p>	
<p>Performance:</p> <p>Describe your scalability model (horizontal, vertical, load-balancing), availability (fault tolerance, clustering), and performance (messages, transactions, work flows) for all application components.</p>	



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Training: Do you offer formal user training? What type of courses do you run and what is their duration? What level of training would you recommend? Describe any training materials offered?	
Product Support: Please provide details of how the product is supported across multiple sites globally. What levels of support is available, definition of each level and what are the hours of operation and response times? Where are the support services located? Does support include product updates, as well as bug fixes at no extra charge? What is the helpdesk escalation procedure?	
Project Costs: Please summarize the total costs of your product. What are the licensing costs for individual parts of the solution? Are new releases chargeable separately? What are your consultancy rates to help with implementation? What do you charge for customization? What do you charge for training? What is the maintenance and support costs? Please give a breakdown. Do you offer discounts for volume purchases? Do you levy any charges for software or services during the evaluation period?	