



Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management

Digital Accreditation and Certification Services Provider
Request for Proposal

RFP COORDINATOR:

Owen Sikatumba Chilala
Chief Executive Officer
Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management
Phone 0979 480513
Email sikatumba_owen@yahoo.com

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1. Introduction

ZIHRM is pleased to invite you to respond to this Request for Proposal (RFP) for Digital Accreditation and Certification Services. The intention of this RFP is to solicit responses and formal proposals from qualified Digital Accreditation and Certification Services Providers (DACSP) and select a single organization to provide IT services to ZIHRM.

1.1 About ZIHRM

The Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management (ZIHRM) is a professional organisation established under Act No. 3 of 2022.

Our vision: - “a Premier professional Institute promoting excellence in Human Resource practice and standards”.

Our mission: - “to continuously develop, regulate and standardize the Human Resource Management profession through international best practice, in order to exceed stakeholder expectations, maximize productivity and contribute to national”.

Our Values: - “Professionalism, Fairness, Integrity, Innovation, Transparency.

The Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management (ZIHRM) has been in existence for more than 20 years, having seen its light of day in 1997. The ZIHRM Act No. 3 of 2022 has strengthened the ZIHRM mandate to include the following functions;

- (a) advance the human resource management profession and promote its interest;
- (b) register and regulate practitioners;
- (c) issue practising certificates to eligible members;
- (d) register students of human resource management;
- (e) set and enforce professional standards of human resource management practice;
- (f) develop, promote and enforce internationally comparable human resource management practice standards in the Republic;
- (g) conduct learning programmes accredited by the Higher Education Authority in human resource management;
- (h) provide continuous professional development by practitioners;
- (i) encourage and promote research into a matter affecting the human resource management profession;
- (j) investigate cases of professional misconduct under this Act;
- (k) publish a journal of the Institute, and collect, collate and publish other information of service and interest to the Institute;
- (l) promote public awareness in matters relating to the human resource management profession;
- (m) promote awareness among practitioners in matters relating to human resource management education, practice and regulation;
- (n) enforce continuing professional development requirements for practitioners; and
- (o) collaborate with higher education institutions, Government departments and other institutions to improve the quality of the human resource management profession.

1.2 Purpose

With this RFP, ZIHRM is requesting information about your company and the Digital Accreditation and Certification Services and solutions you provide as outlined in the Service Requirements section. This information will be gathered from several different organizations and used to evaluate provider options for ZIHRM.

This RFP is issued solely for information and planning purposes. This document does not commit ZIHRM to contract for any service, supply, or subscription whatsoever. ZIHRM will not reimburse any information or administrative costs incurred as a result of participation in response to the RFP. All costs associated with response will solely reside at the responding party's expense.

1.3 Confidentiality Statement

All information included in this RFP is considered confidential and intended only for use by responders. No information included in this document, or in discussions related to ZIHRM Managed Service Provider selection effort, may be disclosed to another party or used for any other purpose without the express written or verbal consent.

2. Environment Overview

ZIHRM currently uses a member management system provided by GlueUp to host all member services. It is key that the solutions you provide integrate with this cloud hosted system.

3. Service Requirements

As part of this RFP, ZIHRM has requirements for the following services. We realize that not every DACSP will be able to provide all the services listed below, but we encourage you to respond regardless.

▪ Service Management and Provisioning Requirements

The below mandatory requirements are applicable for all cloud deployment models. Service Management and Provisioning requirements address the technical requirements for supporting the provisioning and service management of the Cloud Service Offerings proposed to be accredited. Service provisioning focuses on capabilities required to assign services to users, allocate resources, and services and the monitoring and management of these resources.

a. Solution description

1. Automated credentials and certificates which are secure, available and verifiable in pdf and online provider profile and ZIHRM MMS.
2. Digitally and dynamically generated seal guaranteeing authenticity and allows users to embed in their documents, websites and media while user is active and automatically revokes when user is inactive.

b. Service Provisioning

1. Provide the ability to provision virtual machines, storage and bandwidth dynamically (or on-demand), on a self-service mode or as requested.
2. Enable Service Provisioning via online portal/interface (tools).
3. Enable Service Provisioning via Application Programming Interface (API).
4. Secure provisioning, de-provisioning and administering [such as Secure Sockets Layer (SSL)/Transport Layer Security (TLS) or Secure Shell (SSH)]
5. Support the terms of service requirement of terminating the service at any time (on demand).
6. Provide a webpage and associated Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that describes the following:
 - a. Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
 - b. Help Desk and Technical Support
 - c. Resources (Documentation, Articles/Tutorials, etc)

7. Make the Management Reports described in this RFP accessible via online interface. These reports shall be available for one year after being created.
8. The Provider is expected to carry out the capacity planning in advance to identify & provision, where necessary, the additional capacity to meet the user growth and / or the peak load requirements to support the scalability and performance requirements of the solution. There should not be any constraints on the services.
9. Service Provisioning should be based on an E2EE mechanism for user internet sessions implemented without the need for specialized client software.

c. Service Level Agreement Management

1. Provide a robust, fault tolerant infrastructure with enterprise grade SLAs with an assured uptime of 99.5%, SLA measured at the VM Level & SLA measured at the Storage Levels
2. Document and adhere to the SLAs to include:
 - a. Service Availability (Measured as Total Uptime Hours / Total Hours within the Month) displayed as a percentage of availability up to one-tenth of a percent (e.g. 99.5%)
 - b. Within a month of a major outage occurrence resulting in greater than 1-hour of unscheduled downtime. Describe the outage including description of root-cause and fix.
 - c. Service provisioning and de-provisioning times (scale up and down) in near real- time.
3. Helpdesk and Technical support services to include system maintenance windows.
4. Provider shall implement the monitoring System including any additional tools required for measuring and monitoring each of the Service Levels as per the SLA between ZIHRM and the provider.

d. Operational Management

1. Manage the network, storage, server and virtualization layers, to include performance of internal technology refresh cycles applicable to meet the SLAs.
2. Provide a secure, dual factor method of remote access which allows ZIHRM designated personnel (privileged users) the ability to perform duties on the hosted infrastructure
3. Upgrade and periodically replace hardware without financial impact to ZIHRM, all the data within it shall be immediately deleted/destroyed and certify the VM and data destruction to ZIHRM as per stipulations and shall ensure that the data cannot be forensically recovered.
4. Perform patch management appropriate to the scope of their control;
 - a. Alerts on the upcoming patches via email and management portal, and ability to defer or reject patches before they are applied in the next patch cycle
 - b. Patch approved VMs on the next available patch management change window;
 - c. Application of automated OS security patches, unless deferred or rejected.
 - d. Send regular approval reminders to ZIHRM designated email address five (5) days prior to patch cut-off dates
5. OS level vulnerability management – all OS images created within the cloud platform are regularly patched with the latest security updates.
6. Provide the artifacts, security policies and procedures demonstrating its compliance with the Security Assessment and Authorization requirements.
7. Monitor availability of the servers, Provider - supplied operating system & system software, and Provider network.
8. The Provider is fully responsible for tech refreshes, patch management and other operations of infrastructure that is in the scope of the solution.
9. Investigate outages, perform appropriate corrective action to restore the hardware, operating system, and related tools.
10. Provider should manage Provider provisioned infrastructure including VMs as per the ITIL standards.

11. Comply with technology refresh requirements as required to ensure security requirements and service level agreements (SLA) are met.
12. Software within the Providers scope will never be more than two versions behind unless deferred or rejected.

e. Data Management

1. Manage data isolation in a multi-tenant environment.
2. The P should provide tools and mechanism to ZIHRM or its appointed agency for defining their backup requirements & policy.
3. The Provider should provide tools and mechanism to ZIHRM or its appointed agency for configuring, scheduling, performing and managing back-ups and restore activities (when required) of all the data including but not limited to files, folders, images, system state, databases and enterprise applications in an encrypted manner as per the defined policy.
4. Transfer data back in-house either on demand or in case of contract or order termination for any reason
5. Manage data remanence throughout the data life cycle.
6. Provide and implement security mechanisms for handling data at rest and in transit.
7. Provider shall not delete any data at the end of the agreement (for a maximum of 365 days beyond the expiry of the Agreement) without the express approval of ZIHRM.
8. When ZIHRM or Provider (with prior approval of ZIHRM) scales down the infrastructure services, Provider is responsible for deleting or otherwise securing ZIHRM's Content/data prior to VM deletion and in case deleted, shall ensure that the data cannot be forensically recovered.
9. Provider shall ensure protection of data in line with applicable laws in Zambia.

f. User/Admin Portal Requirements

The below mandatory requirements are applicable for all cloud deployment models.

1. Utilization Monitoring
 - a. Provide automatic monitoring of resource utilization and other events such as failure of service, degraded service, etc. via service dashboard or other electronic means.
 - b. Real time performance thresholds
 - c. Real time performance health checks
 - d. Real time performance monitoring & Alerts
 - e. Historical Performance Monitoring
 - f. Capacity Utilization statistics
 - g. Cloud Resource Usage including increase / decrease in resources used during autoscale.
 - h. Monitor the number of and persons who accessed issued credentials or certificates
2. Trouble Management
 - a. Provide Trouble Ticketing via online portal/interface (tools).
 - b. Provide Trouble Ticketing via API.
3. User Profile Management
 - a. Support maintenance of user profiles and present the user with his/her profile at the time of login.
4. Access to certificates and credentials
 - a. Provider to allow access to certificates via the portal.
 - b. Provider to allow access to certificates via pdf copy sent to user.
 - c. Provider to allow access to certificates via ZIHRM's member management system.
 - d. Provider to allow the display of certificates and credentials in different media including emails, documents, websites, social media etc.

g. Integration Requirements

The below mandatory requirements are applicable for all cloud deployment models.

- a. Provide support to all Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) including REST API that Provider develops/provides.
- b. Provide support and capability that enables integration with the GlueUp Member Management System currently being used by ZIHRM and or any other systems that ZIHRM would use in the future.
- c. Capability to use CSV files for uploading data.

4. Response Process

4.1 Notification of Intent to Respond and Clarifying Questions

Please indicate your intention to respond to this RFP by email to the Primary RFP Contact listed below by the *Intent to Respond and Clarification Questions Due* date outlined below. In addition, please provide the contact details of the individual responsible for coordinating your RFP response. At the same time, we ask that you submit any clarification questions regarding the RFP.

4.2 Primary RFP Contact

Please direct all inquiries regarding to this RFP to:

Numbi Mulenga
IT Officer
Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management
Phone 0977 961915
Email zihrm.it@gmail.com

4.3 Response Delivery Instructions

ZIHRM requires responses to this request for proposal to be delivered in writing. You may attach documentation to support your answers, if necessary.

Please submit all responses via electronic delivery no later than **7th January, 2023** to:

Owen Sikatumba Chilala
Chief Executive Officer
Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management
Phone 0979 480513
Email sikatumba_owen@yahoo.com

Any response received after the delivery date specified, will not be considered without prior written or electronic approval.

Please complete the attached forms (Attachment A and Attachment B), a proposal document, pricing breakdown, and a version of any master services agreement or other contract that would be utilized if chosen.

5. Selection Criteria & Process

5.1 Selection Criteria

ZIHRM will evaluate the responses based on multiple criteria and will select the best overall solution to fit its needs. ZIHRM is not obligated to select the lowest price bidder. All responses will be evaluated in the following areas:

- Completeness and readiness of solution
- Expertise and experience
- Demonstrated customer service quality and support
- Previous relevant experience
- Vendor strength and stability
- Account management
- Reporting capabilities
- Financial considerations

5.2 Selection Process

All responses will be evaluated as received and included in the following process:

- Review and scoring of the responses, as well as clarification of information as deemed necessary by the evaluation team.
- Identification of 2–3 final candidates to conduct in-depth review of capabilities, including on-demonstration and presentations.
- Conducting of site visits and/or reference calls as deemed appropriate by the evaluation team.

5.3 Finalist Presentations

Our intention is to hold presentations/demonstrations with one or more firms as indicated in the *Key Dates* table. The presentations will be held at a physical or virtual address to be provided ZIHRM and we will try to provide the finalist firms with as much advance notice as possible.

Key Dates

Below is a general timeline outlining the process steps with estimated dates for each step of the process. By participating in the RFP process, DACSP agree that they can adhere to the following general timeline and the meeting times they reserve through this process.

Task	Completion Date
RFP Distributed to DACSP	7 th February, 2023
Intent to Respond & Questions Due from DACSP	17 st February, 2023
Responses Due from DACSP	17 st February, 2023
Response Analysis / Finalists Selection	24 th February, 2023
Finalist Presentations	27 th February, 2023
DACSP Selection / Award Contract	21 st March, 2023
DACSP “Go Live”	3 rd April, 2023

Thank You

ZIHRM looks forward to reviewing your response and would like to thank you in advance for your participation. The Managed Service Provider selection project is very important to our continued success and represents a major focus of effort for ZIHRM. We appreciate and value your input, expertise, and feedback.

Attachment A

RFP Response Form: Corporate Information

Please provide the following information about your company.

1.0 Company Profile		
1.1	Company Name	
1.2	Company Address	
1.3	Contact Information (Party responsible for responding to this RFP)	
1.4	Company Webpage	
1.5	Main Products / Services	
1.6	Main Market / Customers	
1.7	Number of years in the Market	
1.8	When did you first start providing similar solutions?	
1.9	Company location(s)	
1.10	Number of Employees	
1.11	Number of Employees in Account Management	
1.12	Number of Employees in Technical Support	
1.13	Notable Acquisitions	
1.14	Key Business Partnerships	

2.0 Financial Information		
2.1	Previous year gross revenue	
2.2	Previous year net income	
2.3	Return on investment	

Attachment B

RFP Response Form: Questions

Please provide responses to the questions below to the best of your ability.

1.0 General		
1.1	Q. What are the general types of organizations your clients represent?	
	A.	
1.2	Q. Why do you believe that you are a good fit with our organization?	
	A.	
1.3	Q. Describe your onboarding/implementation process and approach if you were selected?	
	A.	

1.4	Q. Do you conduct QBRs and what is the nature of those meetings? A.
1.5	Q. What is unique about your services in credentials and e-certificates generation? A.
1.6	Q. What do you feel your overall strengths and differentiators are? A.
1.7	Q. Do you serve clients with 24 X 7 requirements? A.
1.8	Q. What services do you offer besides the core services of a Managed Service Provider? A.
1.9	Q. What type of training do you offer either during onboarding or ongoing? A.
1.10	Q. What do you feel are your biggest hurdles to a successful relationship? A.
1.11	Q. What training resources are available for team members? A.
1.12	Q. What type of general expertise can you provide in key technology areas? A.
1.13	Q. What differentiates your organization from your competitors in the marketplace? A.

2.0 Processes	
2.1	Q. Do you use in-house or contracted resources for services? A.
2.2	Q. Describe your process for migrating ZIHRM to your organization? A.
2.3	Q. What ZIHRM resources would you require (i.e., information, data, staff resources, communication) during initial migration and on an ongoing basis? A.
2.4	Q. Outline the methods by which clients can access you (i.e. online, by phone, etc.). A.
2.5	Q. Describe the escalation and account management process. A.
2.6	Q. Where is/are your support center(s) located? A.
2.7	Q. How involved is your team with creating project plans/testing during technical projects?

	A.
2.8	Q. Do you follow ITIL or other processes aligned with industry standard practices? A.
2.9	Q. Do you participate in drills or tests i.e. DR, IRP, etc.? A.
2.10	Q. How do you notify users of maintenance windows or system outages? A.
2.11	Q. What types of diagrams would you typically create/maintain? A.
2.12	Q. Do you offer knowledge bases for common issues and how are they utilized? A.
2.13	Q. What is your willingness or ability to support the security systems, phone systems, audio/visual systems? A.
2.14	Q. How often do you conduct DR testing? A.

3.0 Technology	
3.1	Q. What types of monitoring agents would you use for end user devices? A.
3.2	Q. What is the back-end help desk system you use? A.
3.3	Q. Do you offer managed firewalls or other managed technology? A.
3.4	Q. Do you offer MDM or other mobile management technology? A.
3.5	Q. Do you offer a SIEM or other security-based technology? A.
3.6	Q. Do you have tools to provide system uptime metrics? A.
3.7	Q. What tools do you use for network monitoring? A.
3.8	Q. What tools do you use for system monitoring or general health level of end user devices? A.
3.9	Q. Do you offer or partner for laptop encryption? A.

3.10	Q. If hosting/co-location is an option please describe details of option i.e. services, vendor partners, etc.
	A.

4.0 Support

4.1	Q. Describe fully your technical support options including the assistance request process, escalation process, support hours, response times, staffing levels, staff expertise, and physical location of the help desk.
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	A.
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4.2	Q. Please provide details on your standard reporting capabilities.
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	A.
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4.3	Q. Describe any documentation and support (e.g., user manuals, online help, interact demos, web-based seminars, and online knowledge base) that will be available, both from technical perspective and the end user perspective.
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	A.
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4.4	Q. What options are available for user training and technical training that may be required staff?
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	A.
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4.5	Q. Describe any user groups, websites, newsletters, conferences, or any other means you support for sharing information and soliciting service feedback.
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	A.
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4.6	Q. How do you monitor customer satisfaction and quality assurance on an ongoing basis and how might we benefit from this process?
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	A.
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4.7	Q. The COMPANY user base varies considerably in its level of technical sophistication. Please describe your experience in successfully supporting users that may be remote and possess limited technical skills.
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	A.
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5.0 Pricing & Contracts

5.1	Please attach cost estimates and worksheets to support these estimates if applicable. Itemize non-recurring and recurring costs. Recurring costs should be quoted as per user per month costs. Other pricing models may be provided as an option.
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5.2	Please attach a Master Services Agreement or other legal documents beyond a proposal which accompany a proposal.
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6.0 References

6.1	Please provide at least three references for customers with similar operations to the proposed solution. Include contact names, phone numbers, email addresses and industry.
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Please provide any other information you feel should be considered in our evaluation.