

City and County of San Francisco • Office of the City Administrator

Emerging Technologies Vendor Guide

For vendors already accepted into the pool • RFQ P-697 / Sourcing Event 0000011726

This document covers what happens next: how departments will find and engage you, how to respond to mini-RFPs, what the short-form contract requires, and how to run a compliant pilot.

At a Glance

What triggers work	A City department issues a mini-RFP to the pool. You choose whether to respond.
Multiple opportunities	Multiple departments can engage you simultaneously under separate contracts.
Updating your profile	For contact information updates, email EmergingTechRFQ@sfgov.org . For changes to your products, capabilities, features, integrations, or other relevant information, submit a new Response Form .
Pool duration	Two-year pilot program through December 2027, with new-vendor additions.
Contract when selected	Short-Form Contract (up to \$230K, up to 12 months per engagement).

1. Receiving and Responding to Mini-RFPs

What a mini-RFP looks like

Each mini-RFP is issued by a specific City department and includes:

- A defined problem statement and desired outcomes.
- Constraints: data available, timeline, budget envelope (within the \$230K / 12-month cap).
- Evaluation criteria the department will use to select a vendor.
- Instructions for submitting a proposal.

Mini-RFPs are real use cases, and you can respond if your solution is a genuine fit. **Please do not** contact City departments directly to solicit Pool opportunities; departments will reach out to all firms in the Pool when opportunities become available. Inclusion in the Pool makes your firm eligible to compete for opportunities, but does not guarantee a contract or minimum amount of work.

Note on process: A department may hold a pre-bid meeting but is not required to. The department issues a Notice of Intent to Award (NOIA) letter as part of the award process, which is how you will learn whether you were selected. You may receive a NOIA even if you did not submit a bid, as departments may share these notices with all vendors in the pool for transparency.

What a strong proposal includes

Proposals should be specific to the department's problem. You may include elements such as:

Element	What to cover
Fit	Why your solution is the right match for this specific problem — not your product in general.
Approach	How it will work within City systems and constraints listed in the mini-RFP.
Data	What data your solution needs and how you will work within the public/synthetic-only requirement for evaluating a prototype.
Success metrics	How you and the department will measure whether the pilot worked. Be specific.
Risks & limitations	What your product cannot do. Where bias, errors, or gaps may occur. Proposed mitigations.
Costs	What is the cost under the short-form contract, and what are your projected costs for production? Be as specific as possible, and please note that proposals submitted without a cost (or for \$0) will receive a lower score or may be rejected as non-responsive.

2. The Short-Form Contract

If the department selects you, you will sign a Short-Form Contract before any work begins. Understand the key terms before you get there.

Core parameters

Maximum value	Up to \$230,000 per engagement (per contract, per department)
Maximum duration	Up to twelve (12) months from start date
Multiple departments	\$230K cap applies per contract. Multiple departments can each run separate pilots with you simultaneously.
Option to extend	City may exercise sole discretion to transition to a Long-Form Contract Amendment.

Required Insurance

Short-Form stage	\$1M per occurrence — Tech E&O and Cyber Liability (Article 5, Attachment 2)
Long-Form stage	\$20M per occurrence
Pool entry	No insurance required to be in the pool.

Please refer to the RFQ Questions and Answers addendum (specifically, questions 71-73) for additional information on insurance and other contracting requirements.

Payment

- To be paid, you must be registered as a City supplier: <https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step--become-city-supplier>
- Payment is tied to accepted deliverables. No payment until the City approves services in each phase.
- Due within 30 calendar days of service delivery or receipt of a valid invoice, whichever is later.
- Invoices must include a unique invoice number, specific date, and accurate information. Incomplete invoices will not be processed.
- The City may withhold payment if you fail to perform per the contract.

What 'agree to contract terms' means in practice

On negotiability (Q&A #94–98)

The Short-Form Contract is deliberately abbreviated, and the City considers it commercially reasonable. You are expected to agree and execute, not to submit redlines. At the Long-Form stage, 'substantially agree' means you accept that insurance, liability, and indemnity. The City can remove vendors from the pool who do not negotiate in good faith.

Intellectual property and data ownership

- All deliverables produced under the contract are owned by the City.
- All data generated by the pilot is City-owned. Support the City's ability to export or delete City data on request.
- **Derivative artifacts are City Data:** model weights, embeddings, prompt logs, and any model behavior shaped by City data. Require separate written City approval to retain.
- You cannot use City data to train or fine-tune AI models without explicit written consent.

Sub-processor disclosure

- Third-party AI services (e.g., OpenAI, Azure AI, Anthropic) must be disclosed in writing at contract execution, and for any subsequent changes, per Section 4.6 of the Short-Form Contract.
- Initial disclosure at pool entry (Response Form) does not replace the contract-time written notification.

Audit and records

- Maintain all records for at least 5 years after final payment, or until final audit is resolved.
- Same requirements apply to your subcontractors (Section 3.4.2 (b)).

Contract checklist

☐	Insurance certificates ready: \$1M Tech E&O and Cyber Liability
☐	City Project Manager identified — all deliverable sign-offs and Change Orders go through them
☐	Deliverables and Acceptance Plan reviewed and understood
☐	Sub-processor disclosure letter prepared for contract execution
☐	Record-keeping process in place for 5-year retention
☐	Invoice template ready: unique number, date, accurate line items
☐	Short-form contract signed before any work begins

The city may enter into short-form contracts with multiple vendors for the same RFP.

3. Running a Pilot

The sandbox

The sandbox must be logically isolated from all City production systems and data, mirror production security and access controls, and use only public or synthetic data.

If your standard SaaS tenant isolation architecture meets those criteria, it is acceptable as long as no City production systems or data are connected.

Synthetic data

- Must not contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
- Must be generated or approved by the City.
- Must be representative enough to meaningfully evaluate system performance.
- If vendors generate, document the generation methods. The City may request this documentation.

Iterative deliverables

Discover and Prototype: Vendor refines requirements while building a working prototype to validate the approach early. Deliverables include a testable prototype and initial performance indicators.

Iterative Development: Vendor develops the solution in increments (sprints), delivering working functionality with ongoing updates to requirements and design. Each increment is reviewed against acceptance criteria and performance benchmarks.

Validation and testing: Vendor and City conduct comprehensive testing across accuracy, fairness, security, and robustness. The department leads this evaluation and will typically go deeper than a single “fairness” check — be ready to support it. Expect: equity testing across groups (language, ability, demographics, and digital literacy, comparing access, uptake, error rates, and outcomes); red-team / stress testing to confirm safeguards cannot be bypassed to induce harmful outputs; technical performance measured against a benchmark dataset the department keeps separate from any training data; and predefined stop/go thresholds that, if not met, can end the pilot. Align with the department on these thresholds and the benchmark approach early.

Support departments to execute a testing approach. This is a joint responsibility. Departments will reach out to the Emerging Technologies team who can offer in-house or academic expertise where needed. See the [SF AI Playbook](#) for details.

All methods and outputs must be shared with the department and be fully auditable. Methods may include automated evaluation and/or subject matter expert review.

4. Handoff

After the pilot concludes, departments will assess.

- Did the solution work as intended and will it meet their needs

- Were risks (bias, privacy, accessibility, security) adequately managed?
- Is the vendor able to meet full technical and contract requirements for a long-term contract/production deployment?

The City coordinates learnings across departments. How you perform in one pilot is visible to the City, not just the contracting department.

Possible outcomes

→	Scale to Long-Form Contract Department exercises option to transition to a Long-Form Contract Amendment. Additional requirements kick in: Cybersecurity Risk Assessment, \$20M insurance, full data integration standards, Chapter 22J disclosures, WCAG 2.1 AA. Timeline depends on internal City approvals (CRA, LBE review) and how quickly both parties finalize contract terms.
X	Stop Experiment ends. Deliver all City data deletion certificates. You retain your proprietary technology. The City owns all deliverables produced under the contract. Pool membership continues and you remain eligible for future mini-RFPs.

Preparing for the Long-Form stage (start early)

Begin preparing these while the pilot is running so you can continue to a full contract

☐	Cybersecurity certification: SOC 2 Type II, ISO 27001, FedRAMP, CIS Controls, or equivalent. City evaluates against NIST CSF 2.0. Early-stage firms can use the City's Cyber Risk Assessment Questionnaire.
☐	Insurance: \$20M Tech E&O and Cyber Liability. Please engage your insurance broker early if this will be an issue.
☐	Indemnity: The Long-Form Contract includes the City's standard indemnity provisions. Confirm your ability to accept them and review with counsel early.
☐	Data flow diagram: How data moves between your product and each City system of record.
☐	AI Use Case Card and 22J disclosures: Work with the department to prepare responses to all questions under Section 22J.3(b).
☐	UDP integration: If your product writes data to Snowflake — use Fivetran, dbt, or approved connectors. No real-time/streaming. Schema documentation and provenance metadata required.

☐	WCAG 2.1 AA: If any public-facing interfaces are involved, confirm compliance and prepare documentation.
☐	RBAC and audit logging: 12-month audit log retention required for all read/write operations to City systems.

Other FAQs

1) Are contracts issued from the pool eligible for piggybacking by other public entities?

As stated in Section X.A of the Request for Qualifications document, “Any other City department, public entity or non-profit made up of multiple public entities, may use the results of this RFQ to select Contractors from the Prequalified Pool under the same terms and conditions of this RFQ.”

This guide is a reference document. In the event of any conflict with the official RFQ solicitation (P-697), contract terms (Attachments 2, 3a, 3b), Technical Requirements (Attachment 4), or Q&A Addendum, those official documents govern. Proposers are responsible for reviewing all official documents.