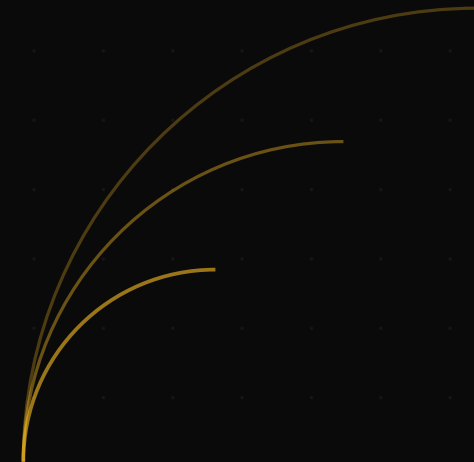


PROCUREMENT AND PROJECT LEADS

How to write a software RFP that gets comparable bids

Write an RFP that produces comparable, scoreable proposals: define scope in one page, lock a weighted scoring model, ask closed questions, and set the timeline.



WHAT'S INSIDE

5 steps in this guide

- 01 Define scope on one page
- 02 Lock the scoring model before you send it
- 03 Ask closed questions where you can
- 04 Force the exclusions into the open
- 05 Set a realistic timeline and review checkpoint

An RFP only works when it produces proposals you can actually compare.

01**Define scope on one page**

Before a single vendor sees the RFP, write what's in, what's out, the must-have workflows, the integrations, the regions, and the timeline - on one page. Scope clarity is what lets vendors quote total cost accurately and stops feature creep during demos.

02**Lock the scoring model before you send it**

Decide your weighted evaluation criteria - and their weights - before proposals arrive, so a slick presentation can't move the goalposts mid-process. Tie each criterion to your scope, not to the vendor's pitch.

03**Ask closed questions where you can**

Closed-ended questions are objectively scoreable. For open-ended prompts, define example answers that map to low, medium, and high scores in advance, so two evaluators grade the same answer the same way.

04**Force the exclusions into the open**

Require each vendor to state, in writing, what is excluded from their price and what it would cost. An RFP that doesn't ask for exclusions invites the change orders that blow the budget later.

05

Set a realistic timeline and re-view checkpoint

Publish a clear timeline and review the RFP partway through the active cycle, especially for complex programmes like ERP - requirements drift, and a mid-cycle check keeps scope creep from contaminating the comparison.

PUT THIS TO WORK

Walk into every evaluation with the vendor's own playbook.

- A vendor-proof scope, issued before any proposal
- Gap analysis scoring every proposal against your scope
- A risk-weighted interrogation kit for the vendor meeting
- Scope-drift detection across proposal versions

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