Digital Platforms and Data Strategy
Request for Proposal (RFP)
May 2024

World Aquatics (AQUA) have launched a tender process to renew its Digital Platform ecosystem, data strategy and integration.

World Aquatics will shortly announce a new strategic roadmap for the next Olympic cycle (2024 – 2028). Among others, Digital and Innovation are considered centric pillars to enable World Aquatics to renew and enhance its online presence, events management and ultimately better support its athletes.

TENDER PROCESS

World Aquatics selected the participants in the tender from among the best-known market operators.

The selection process consists of the following stages:

PHASE 1 – Sending the bid request

This document was sent simultaneously to all Providers selected by World Aquatics.

Providers will send their proposals responding to the requests explained in the project brief. Any proposals for alternative or supplementary projects, accompanied by the related strategic evaluations will be welcome and shall be quoted separately, following a modular and scalable approach.

Providers are required to send their proposal by the 15th of June 2024 to the following mail address: executiveoffice@worldaquatics.com

PHASE 2 – Establishing a Short list

After the qualitative and economic assessment of the proposals received, World Aquatics, at its sole discretion, will establish a short list of companies chosen which will continue within the selection process.

Phase 2 will involve only the companies forming part of the possible short list. During this phase, World Aquatics will meet the providers to further discuss each proposal.

World Aquatics will notify the short-listed providers by no later than the 21st of June 2024.

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PHASE 3 - Choosing the Provider and formulating the agreement

After having met all short-listed providers, World Aquatics will reassess again the submitted projects and offers to eventually take a final decision and define the winner of the RFP.

Documents received by the providers

Together with the bid request, the provider shall consider the following given documents:

1. Bid Request (this document)
2. Project Brief
3. Project Requirements

Documents to send back to World Aquatics

The documents to send to World Aquatics shall contain:

- References and case studies of similar existing platforms created for major sport clients and events.
- The overall proposed solution to create a brand-new digital platform ecosystem for World Aquatics following the requirements listed in the project brief and deliverables.
- The high-level descriptive document containing the platforms' organization and architecture
- The calendar of the project development with its division in sprints across the following months and years
- The high-level description of the adopted technological and hosting solution and its architecture
- The description of the Project management tool will be used to work on the project.
- A cost estimation filling the suggested commercial grid (Document n.4) for building, maintaining, enhancing and hosting each platform.
- Separate estimation of time and costs for additional services is required.
- The confidential Agreement signed to send straight after the reception of this document (Document n.5).

Note: A provider may decide to send their proposal for either all or only certain items from the listed requirements. All requirements listed will be assessed independently.

Contact
Thanks for sending all possible queries to this address: executiveoffice@worldaquatics.com

PROJECT BRIEF

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1. MISSION

World Aquatics aim to build a next generation data model, architecture and platforms to elevate data management, insights, digital and fan engagement.

This will bring World aquatics to retain not only a leading role as the first data collector for aquatic sport results, event management and delivery by securing smooth processes for accreditations and event operations.

World Aquatics are looking also to ingest, collect, aggregate relevant data from all its stakeholders and audiences, safely, to know and serve them better.

World Aquatics seek for providers able to help integrating innovation and technology within its digital ecosystem, to optimise all existing platforms and build new digital touchpoints based on different needs and requirements.

World Aquatics is looking to secure a provider that not only offers the technilogical solution –to be fully owned by World Aquatics- for the above mentioned services but also to continuously provide development support in a mid-long term.

2. CONTEXT

CURRENT DIGITAL PLATFORMS ECOSYSTEM

World Aquatics have conducted an internal assessment of the more relevant digital platforms, to find out strength and weaknesses and evaluating performance and reliability.

The current digital ecosystem is composed by a range of platforms, all integrated to a certain extent. Within World Aquatics different departments are responsible for different platforms as listed below:

I.   GMS (General Management System) – led by GMS Department
II.   Results Database – GMS Department
III. Official Website (worldaquatics.com) – Digital Services Department
IV. Mediapool (Online photo and video archive) - Digital Services Department
V.   Learning/Development platform – Development Department
VI. AQUA Events insider application – Sports Department

VII.   Finance Applications – Finance & Accounting Department
VIII.   Human resources portal – HR Department
  IX.   E Shop (shortly available) – Digital Services and Marketing Department
   X.   Swimming Fantasy Game – Digital Services Department

A short introduction of the existing platforms impacted by this tender is available below:

I.   GMS (General Management System)

The World Aquatics GMS has been built in 2014 to manage all FINA and World Aquatics events. Since then, the GMS is the core platform for everything related with event creation, management and delivery. It's used across multiple stakeholders to participate to World Aquatics events (i.e. from accreditations to travel logistics and payments).

Local Organisers, National Federations, athletes (elite and masters), coaches ITOs (Technical and officials), Media and Broadcasters; all these groups access the AQUA GMS for different matters related to competitions and certifications.

During these 10 years, the scope of work of the GMS stretched in many new functionalities that were added at a later time, with a consequent impact on the system architecture and reliability.

The platform was initially built to ease the work of specific stakeholders, AQUA staff and Local Organisers above all. With these premises, the GMS can't be considered as a client application, user interface and experience (UX/UI) are quite basic and complex.

The platform contains records for more than 80'000 individuals.

The AQUA GMS is connected to a system of APIs, to push and pull data with other platforms (i.e. Results Database). The platform is currently stored on a physical server, with some limitations for scalability.

The AQUA GMS was developed and currently maintained in collaboration with Swiss Timing, however World Aquatics is the ultimate owner of the platform.

For a better understanding of the GMS system and its technology, please refer to: juanma.sarria@worldaquatics.com

II.   Results Database (RDB)

The World Aquatics Result Database (RDB) has been also built in 2015 to digitise and store all results from aquatic sports events. The RDB is a comprehensive platform that ingests and processes results from various formats across diverse sports. The system also applies specified ranking algorithms to generate World and Series rankings which are continually updated as new data flows in. Additionally, leveraging the accumulated data, the system calculates prize money distributions made on predefined criteria, enabling seamless integration of financial rewards into the sporting ecosystem.

Competition results from 1239 World Aquatics events, including Olympic Games, World Championships and World Cups and from 9266 qualifying events are stored in RDB. The platform contains records for more than 200'301 athletes and 39'84'412 results and functions as a centralize repository with all historical sports results. Multiple digital endpoints keep being updated in real time through dedicated API endpoints ensuring immediate availability to end-users.

Same as the GMS, the RDB is currently hosted on a physical server, and it was initially built as a digital archive for historical results (not tailored for sending data to client applications in live time)
The AQUA RDB was developed and currently maintained in collaboration with Swiss Timing, however World Aquatics is the ultimate owner of the platform.

For a better understanding of the GMS system and its technology, please refer to: juanma.sarria@worldaquatics.com

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III. AQUA website (worldaquatics.com)

The AQUA website was launched in February 2021 with the main goal of displaying results (live and post live) statistics and sport data from World Aquatics events and Olympic Games.

85% of the web traffic produced on the platform comes from results and statistics sections. During World Aquatics Championships (3 weeks period), more than 500k unique users access the website.

The information is available to everyone and everywhere, no sign-on is requested to access this data. However, no data collection is ongoing for marketing and commercial purposes: World Aquatics don't collect any 1st party data apart from the essential cookies.

The platform was built and still maintained in collaboration with Pulselive, web agency specialised in the representation of sport data and fan engagement. While World Aquatics is the product owner, the technology and infrastructure to build the website is owned by Pulselive and can't be shifted to a third provider.

For a better understanding of the GMS system and its technology, please refer to: luca.fasani@worldaquatics.com

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WORLD AQUATICS STAKEHOLDERS

To better understand the World Aquatics digital ecosystem, it is also important to list all stakeholders, that at some point during their user journey, access and engage with one or more digital platforms.

We can divide all stakeholders across two main groups. It is worth it to mention that an individual can be part of more groups simultaneously or cover different roles in a longer period.

For instance, an elite athlete could become coach, master athlete or even ITO at the end of his/her agonistic career.

1. **INDIVIDUALS**

- Elite's athletes
- Masters' athletes
- Coaches & Team Officials
- ITOs: Technical Officials, Judges, Referees
- AQUA Family: Executives, Bureau, Technical Committees, Staff, Contractors
- Media and broadcasters: TV workforce, journalists, photographers,
- Local Organiser workforce & volunteers
- Ambassadors & Influencers (sport & non sport related)
- Special Guests
- Venue spectators
- Online / TV Viewers
- People Practising aquatics sports (6 different sports)
  - Avid fans
  - Casual fans

2. **ORGANISATIONS**

- National Federations and Continental Organisations
- Local organisers (Past and future hosts)
- Partners and sponsors
- Media right holders
- International Olympic Committee (IOC)

3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY DELIVERABLES

As stated in the Mission, World Aquatics aim to build a next generation data model, architecture and platforms to elevate data management, insights, digital and fan engagement.

The scope of this multi-year project has impact on existing digital platforms and on the creation of new datapoints and platforms. Activities will be distributed across few macro phases, depending on priorities.

KEY OBJECTIVES

I. Renew structure and architecture of the current platforms to meet new technological and security requirements.
II. Maintain full ownership of existing and new platforms by ensuring better scalability and more dependency from suppliers
III. Consolidate and structure athlete sport data and insights
IV. Enhance and enlarge the historical data archive (results) with additional stats and data points to be displayed
V. Create a universal membership for all aquatics' athletes
VI. Service and support national federations (NF) through our general management system
VII. Collect first party data and provide insights to use in marketing efforts and ROI evaluations
VIII. Continuous development and support (per project and day to day support)

KEY DELIVERABLES

I. *General Management System (GMS) - enhancement of existing platform
II. *Results Database - enhancement of existing platform
III. AQUA Service Platform – brand new platform
IV. Data platform (CRM) – brand new platform

*In the Project Requirements, both platforms are categorised under WAMS: World Aquatics Management system

KEY PHASES

I. Phase (Sep 2024 – Mar 2025)
II. Phase (Apr 2025 – Sep 2025)
III. Phase (Oct 2025 – Mar 2026)
IV. Phase (Apr 2026 – Sep 2026)
V. Phase (Oct 2026 – Mar 2027)

For better understanding all specific deliverables and their timing, please refer to: Project Requirements.xls

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