RFP and RFI Question Bank

60 questions for AI deployment vendors. Updated 11-08-2026.

The team

1. Name the engineers who will be embedded, with their backgrounds and the share of their time on our account.
2. How many days a week will they work on site or inside our systems?
3. Will any of the build be subcontracted? To whom?
4. Who is the accountable engagement lead, and what is their authority?
5. How do you handle engineer rotation, and how much notice do we get?
6. How many engagements is each engineer working at once?
7. What training will our own engineers receive during the engagement?
8. Describe three engagements you stopped early, and why.

Diagnostic and approach

9. What does the diagnostic cost, how long does it take and what exactly do we receive?
10. How do you choose the first workflow, and what makes a workflow a bad candidate?
11. How do you measure the baseline before you build?
12. What does week one look like, and what will we see by week four?
13. Which of our people do you need, and for how many hours a week?
14. What is your typical time from kickoff to a workflow in production?
15. How do you decide build, buy or wait for each candidate workflow?

The workflow and quality

16. How will you build the evaluation set, how many examples and who labels them?
17. What evaluation score clears the system for production, and who sets it?
18. How are exceptions handled, and which actions require human approval?
19. How does autonomy expand over time, and who approves each step?
20. How do you monitor accuracy, drift and cost in production?
21. Can we run the evaluation suite ourselves, without you?
22. What happens when the system takes a wrong action?
23. Which of our systems of record will the system read and write, and through which interfaces?

Models

24. Which model will go to production, and what evidence supports that choice on our task?
25. Will you run a head-to-head evaluation of at least two models on our data?
26. Can the system move to another model provider? What would that take?
27. What happens if the model provider changes pricing, deprecates a model or has an outage?
28. Do you or your owners have a commercial interest in which model we use?

Security and compliance

29. Will our data be used to train any model? Put the answer in the contract.
30. Where will our data be processed and stored, and by which sub-processors?
31. What are your retention and deletion terms for inputs, outputs and logs?

32. Which certifications and audits cover the systems you will use?
33. How are credentials scoped and rotated for your engineers?
34. Can every action and approval be exported to our logging tools?
35. Which regulatory obligations in our sector have you handled before?
36. What is your incident response process and notification time?

IP and data ownership

37. Who owns the code, prompts, evaluation sets and any fine-tuned weights?
38. Who owns outputs, and what IP indemnity do you provide?
39. What reusable components will you retain, and on what license do we use them?
40. May you use learnings from our engagement in your products? On what terms?
41. Define customer data, output data, training data and derived data as you use them.

Pricing

42. Is pricing fixed, outcome-based, time and materials or bundled with a platform?
43. What is the projected production cost per task at our volume, itemized?
44. What does production support cost after the engagement?
45. Which costs are passed through (model tokens, cloud) and at what markup?
46. What triggers a change order, and how is it priced?
47. Are there minimum commitments, platform fees or consumption targets?
48. What payment milestones and holdbacks do you accept?

Exit and handover

49. What is the exit plan, and when will we receive it in writing?
50. Who operates the system after month six, and what does that cost?
51. What documentation, runbooks and training are included at handover?
52. In what formats will we receive our data, prompts, embeddings and artifacts?
53. How much transition assistance is included, and at what rate after that?
54. Can we bring in another vendor to maintain what you built?
55. What notice period applies on either side?
56. Name a customer that took over a system you built. May we call them?
57. What happens to our data within 30 days of termination?
58. How do you prove deletion?
59. What survives termination in the contract?
60. Who owns the relationship with the model provider after exit?