Proposal to Provide Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities

January 24, 2025

RFP #: 2025-018

Submitted to:
Lisa Littrell
North Central Texas Council of Governments
Attn: Purchasing Division
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011

Submitted by:
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January 24, 2025

Lisa Littrell
North Central Texas Council of Governments
Attn: Purchasing Division
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011

Dear Ms. Littrell:

Crowe LLP is pleased to submit our response to North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Request for Proposal for Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities. Crowe LLP (Crowe) is a public accounting and consulting firm that uses its deep industry expertise to provide audit, tax, and consulting services to public and private entities. Our vision is built on deep specialization and a focus on our clients, our people, and the hallmarks of our profession: integrity, objectivity, and independence.

Based on the RFP's objectives and specifications, here are the five key themes that demonstrate why Crowe will be an excellent addition to NCTCOG's qualified AI consultancy firms:

1. **Empowering NCTCOG Members with Tailored, Scalable AI Solutions.** Our proposed AI solutions for public sector entities are designed to empower NCTCOG TXShare Members with tailored AI strategies and scalable solutions that enhance operational efficiency, improve service delivery, and deliver sustained value.

2. **Commitment to Ethical, Secure, and Compliant AI Implementations.** We can help NCTCOG Members implement ethical, secure, and compliant AI solutions that prioritize transparency, privacy, and alignment with public sector legal and ethical standards.

3. **Maximizing Impact through Comprehensive Data and AI Roadmaps.** We deliver comprehensive data strategies and AI roadmaps, emphasizing quality, security, and governance, to equip NCTCOG Members with clear milestones and performance indicators for impactful AI innovation.

4. **Empowering Internal Teams through Knowledge Transfer and Training.** We empower NCTCOG Members with training and knowledge transfer programs that build internal capabilities, supporting effective AI adoption and sustained innovation.

5. **Delivering Cost-Efficient Solutions backed with ROI.** We deliver cost-efficient AI solutions with clear ROI assessments, supporting sustained value and improved outcomes for NCTCOG TXShare Members.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our proposal. Crowe understands and agrees to the terms of set forth in the RFP. We are looking forward to demonstrating why Crowe is the best firm to engage for your AI needs.

Sincerely,

John Manilla
Partner

Table of Contents

1. Certificate of Offeror and Statement of Understanding

As requested, we have provided the completed **Cover Page** at the end of this section. We acknowledge Addendum #1, posted 12/19/2024.

Our Understanding of Your Needs

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is seeking AI solutions for public sector entities to drive innovation, enhance operational efficiency, and empower decision-making across its Member Organizations. The work focuses on envisioning and implementing AI solutions that align with Member Organizations' values and goals, fostering a culture of ethical innovation while addressing complex public sector challenges. By blending technical knowledge with a deep understanding of public sector regulatory requirements and industry practices and trends, Crowe will help NCTCOG & TXShare Members integrate AI solutions that are impactful, secure, and sustainable. Our primary AI solution presented in this proposal is **Microsoft Copilot Studio agents**.

We have summarized six areas which Crowe would be honored to have the opportunity to offer to NCTCOG and TXShare Member Organizations. We will dive deeper into discussion on the Copilot Studio agent solution throughout the proposal but wanted to provide this high-level summary of our AI related offerings organized in the way we currently operate at Crowe. We can offer any of these offerings individually or combine them into unique offerings to meet the needs of your Members.

1. **AI Readiness Assessment & Strategy Roadmap**
   o **AI Readiness Assessment** services offer a package of high-level evaluations of an organization's preparedness for AI integration, providing a streamlined approach that touches on key aspects of governance, data, operational processes, and cultural readiness. This assessment helps organizations understand their current state and prioritize actions for successful AI adoption.
   o **AI Strategy and Roadmap** services offer high-level strategic planning for integrating AI across an organization, covering key areas such as governance, data readiness, solution feasibility, and organizational change. This service provides a foundational roadmap tailored to align AI initiatives with organizational objectives, supporting a balanced approach across strategic, operational, and cultural dimensions.

2. **Responsible AI Services**
   o **AI Governance Assessment** services evaluate current governance frameworks to identify both risks and opportunities for program maturity. The output of this service is an assessment report with targeted recommendations to address identified risks and gaps.
   o **AI Governance Program Development** services are designed to help organizations create or enhance structured frameworks for responsible AI use, aligning with regulatory standards, ethical practices, and robust risk management.
   o **AI Program Ongoing Monitoring** services are designed to maintain alignment between an organization's risk profile and its AI use cases, supporting consistent oversight and response capabilities.

3. **AI Data Service**
   o **AI Data Quality Readiness Assessment** services provide a thorough review and assessment of an organization's existing data, pinpointing gaps, quality issues, and areas with potential for AI application.
   o **AI Data Roadmap** services focus on creating a structured plan for AI initiatives, outlining the necessary steps for data preparation and successful AI adoption.

- o **Data Governance Strategy** services establish robust policies and frameworks to manage data securely, ethically, and efficiently
- o **Data Architecture & Integration** services involve designing a data infrastructure that effectively supports AI systems, covering storage, processing, and seamless integration.
- o **Data Cleansing & Transformation** services focus on preparing data for AI applications by addressing issues such as missing values, inconsistencies, and formatting challenges.

4. **AI Application Implementation and Support Services**
- o **AI Business Use Case Discovery** services are designed to identify and evaluate AI opportunities that align with business needs and goals. This service clarifies project scope and objectives, while assessing the potential benefits, challenges, and return on investment of AI applications.
- o **AI Solution Design and Planning** services focus on creating a comprehensive blueprint for the development, testing, and deployment of an AI tool, covering both functional and technical requirements. This service provides a detailed plan for building and implementing an AI solution that meets business needs.
- o **AI Model Development and Deployment** services encompass the end-to-end process of designing, training, fine-tuning, validating, and deploying AI models to address specific business challenges. This service helps support that AI models are aligned with business objectives, optimized for performance, and ready for practical use.
- o **AI Application Development and Deployment** services provide a comprehensive approach to building, testing, and deploying AI-driven applications, with optional integration into existing systems as needed. This service includes designing user-friendly interfaces, incorporating AI models, and secure scalable deployment.
- o **AI Application Support, Maintenance, and Training** services provide comprehensive post-deployment support so that the AI application remains effective, reliable, and user-friendly. This service includes continuous monitoring, maintenance, future upgrades, and training to empower users and adapt the application to evolving needs.

5. **Enterprise AI Organizational Change Management**
- o **Enterprise AI Change Readiness Assessment** services focus on preparing the organization's people and culture for AI adoption at an enterprise level. This organizational change management function assesses readiness, aligns stakeholders, and evaluates capacity for AI-driven transformation across the workforce, emphasizing the human and cultural dimensions of change.
- o **Enterprise AI Change Strategy and Planning** services focus on developing a comprehensive strategy and actionable plans to support AI integration, emphasizing trust, transparency, and the cultural shift needed to embrace AI. This service provides a structured approach to engage and prepare the workforce, as well as external stakeholders, for enterprise-wide AI change.
- o **Enterprise AI Change Execution and Engagement** services focus on implementing the strategies and approaches outlined in AI change management plans, with a strong emphasis on engaging stakeholders, preparing the workforce, and fostering cultural alignment. This phase prioritizes hands-on support for leadership, managers, and employees as they adapt to AI-driven changes.
- o **AI Transition Support and Sustainment** services focus on measuring the impact of AI adoption, advising on workforce transitions, and providing long-term support to embed AI-driven practices into daily operations. This phase emphasizes continued support and knowledge retention, fostering a lasting, adaptive AI culture.

6. **AI Insights and Evolution Support**
- o **AI Insights and Evolution Support** services keep organizations informed of the latest AI advancements, helping to identify potential impacts and opportunities specific to their needs. This service includes both complimentary and premium offerings tailored to public sector clients.

       www.crowe.com

2. References

Quality work based on strong functional competency and deep expertise is the core element of creating value for our clients. Quality service involves prompt and efficient service delivery and effective communication with clients.

Crowe has delivered value to our clients for more than 80 years by listening to their needs and developing a comprehensive understanding of their businesses and would appreciate the opportunity to do the same for you.

Several recent references with profiles or requested services similar to NCTCOG Member Organizations are listed below. Please feel free to contact these individuals.

Phoenix Tower International	
Contact Name	Mauricio Campos, Director of Information Technology Address: 999 Yamato Road, Suite 100, Boca Raton, FL 33431 Email: mcampos@phoenixintnl.com Length of service: Since 2021
Description of Services	Crowe collaborates with Phoenix Tower International (PTI) to implement AI-driven solutions that streamline accounts payable processes across 27 countries and 53 legal *entities*. Key activities include automating ground rent invoicing with a custom PowerApp solution, saving 2,800+ hours annually, and tailoring Microsoft's Invoice Capture Solution, leveraging AI and OCR technology to reduce errors and manual effort.

California Department of Water Resources	
Contact Name	Dena Uding, Financial Management Enhancements Program Director Address: 715 P St., 6th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 Email: dena.uding@water.ca.gov Length of service: May 2018 through current
Description of Services	Crowe developed an overarching Change Management Strategy and Plan to guide change and training activities for the Financial Management Enhancements Program (FMEP).

Seattle Public Schools	
Contact Information	Andrew Medina, Director of Internal Audit & Ethics Officer 2445 3rd Ave. S. Seattle, WA 98134 Email: ajmedina@seattleschools.org | Phone: (206) 252-0138 Length of service: Since 2021
Description of Services	Crowe works with Seattle Public Schools on outsourced internal audit and consulting engagements.

City of Los Angeles City Controller's Office	
Contact Name	Devang Panchal, Director of Auditing Address: 200 N Main St # 300, Los Angeles, CA 90012 Email: devang.panchal@lacity.org | Length of service: August 2023 – June 2024
Description of Services	Crowe supported the Citywide Internal Controls Self-Assessment initiative. Details on this engagement have been provided within our case studies above.

3. Project-Related Experience and Qualifications

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of experience in performing the requested goods/services. Provide a comprehensive overview of your organization's capabilities, experience, and expertise in delivering AI solutions, along with your ability to meet each requirement outlined in Section 5. Highlight any relevant past projects, particularly those involving public sector entities or similar entities.

Crowe LLP brings over 82 years of experience as a global accounting, consulting, and technology firm. Our AI solutions for public sector entities leverage the latest in generative AI technologies as well as machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP), providing transformative solutions tailored to the public sector. Our expertise extends across AI readiness assessments, data governance, ethical AI implementation, and long-term support.

Our team of 50+ dedicated AI consultants collaborate with over 5,000 client-facing professionals, supporting the delivery of scalable, impactful AI solutions. Crowe's extensive experience spans various public sector entities, including state and local governments, school districts, and nonprofit organizations, reflecting our deep understanding of public sector compliance, ethical standards, and regulatory requirements.

Commitment to Public Sector Values and Compliance
Crowe is dedicated to ethical and transparent AI implementations. Our adherence to ethical guidelines provides for fairness, data privacy, and compliance with public sector regulations. This commitment is reflected in our ongoing efforts to align AI initiatives with the unique missions of public entities, fostering trust and accountability.

Key Differentiators

- **Integrated Governance Frameworks:** Crowe's AI governance approach supports alignment with public sector priorities of transparency, ethical conduct, and compliance.
- **Scalable Expertise:** With a flexible workforce, we adapt resources to meet diverse needs, offering robust solutions across local governments and nonprofits.
- **Proven Results:** Our clients report high satisfaction, with approximately 96% willing to recommend our services.

Scope of Work Exceptions Crowe LLP has thoroughly reviewed the RFP scope and confirms our ability to meet the requirements outlined in the RFP. Any deviations would be addressed collaboratively with the Member Organization.

a. Organization's Capabilities and Experience

Provide a detailed description of your organization's capabilities in delivering AI solutions. This should include:

- *Technical Expertise: Outline the specific AI technologies and methodologies your organization specializes in.*

Technical Expertise

For AI initiatives to take hold within an organization, a dual approach of top-down leadership and bottom-up employee engagement is critical. Without top-down executive buy-in, AI initiatives lack the strategic vision and resource commitment needed for success. And without bottom-up involvement from frontline employees, initiatives can fall behind on adoption. A top-down and bottom-up approach provides a strong support system coupled with enthusiastic adoption, which can drive innovative use cases grounded in the day-to-day needs of the organization.

How are we doing this at Crowe?

We've seen great success with this approach, as it's the one we use at Crowe. We've made AI a top priority at the executive level within the firm, with the board and leadership championing the transformative potential of this technology. And we complement our executive sponsorship with comprehensive efforts to educate and enable our people through educational sessions, working groups, and specialized "guilds" focused on AI. In this way, we empower our people to understand how AI can enhance their roles and contribute ideas for practical applications. By giving our people a voice and avenue to explore AI's possibilities, we've seen an outpouring of creative use cases emerge from those closest to the work, which we can then bring to the executive team as a win and a case for additional support.
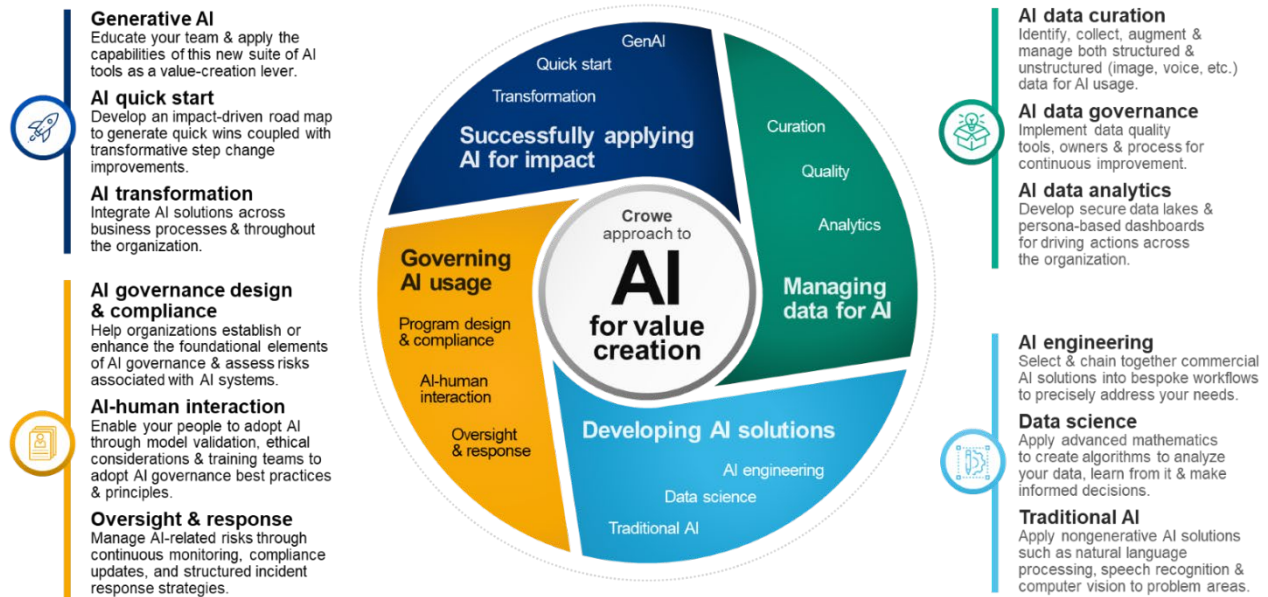
At Crowe we drive measurable business results, such as operational efficiencies, increased speed, higher quality, and new revenue sources, with our focused AI solutions. We bring AI into your organization in a way that works for you, catering our structured methodologies to your specific situations, goals, and needs.

If your organization is new to AI, this approach might involve helping you create initial wins and drive adoption. And if you already have advanced AI solutions, we can offer targeted help in areas such as AI governance, data management, and more provided in the graphic below.

Crowe's Framework of AI Solutions

The image below presents Crowe's AI Framework designed to support organizations at various stages of AI adoption. The framework focuses on key pillars: AI education to enable teams, quick-start roadmaps for immediate and impactful gains, and AI transformation for broad integration across processes. It includes robust governance design, risk management, and compliance strategies to support responsible AI implementation. Additionally, the framework emphasizes data curation, analytics, and governance for high-quality insights, along with AI engineering and data science to tailor solutions. Crowe also supports AI-human interaction through training and ethical considerations, while leveraging both traditional and generative AI technologies for practical problem-solving.

Crowe offers a **full framework of AI solutions** to help you apply AI at your unique stage of adoption

Generative AI
Educate your team & apply the capabilities of this new suite of AI tools as a value-creation lever.

AI quick start
Develop an impact-driven road map to generate quick wins coupled with transformative step change improvements.

AI transformation
Integrate AI solutions across business processes & throughout the organization.

AI governance design & compliance
Help organizations establish or enhance the foundational elements of AI governance & assess risks associated with AI systems.

AI-human interaction
Enable your people to adopt AI through model validation, ethical considerations & training teams to adopt AI governance best practices & principles.

Oversight & response
Manage AI-related risks through continuous monitoring, compliance updates, and structured incident response strategies.

AI data curation
Identify, collect, augment & manage both structured & unstructured (image, voice, etc.) data for AI usage.

AI data governance
Implement data quality tools, owners & process for continuous improvement.

AI data analytics
Develop secure data lakes & persona-based dashboards for driving actions across the organization.

AI engineering
Select & chain together commercial AI solutions into bespoke workflows to precisely address your needs.

Data science
Apply advanced mathematics to create algorithms to analyze your data, learn from it & make informed decisions.

Traditional AI
Apply nongenerative AI solutions such as natural language processing, speech recognition & computer vision to problem areas.

- *Project Management: Describe your approach to managing AI projects, including planning, execution, and quality assurance processes.*

Project Management

This engagement would be best supported utilizing Crowe's proven implementation methodology that involves a series of activities organized within five phases. The phases are organized in the following order:

- **Structure** focuses on gathering information, onboarding resources, and defining project plans, tools, and processes. Key activities include transitioning knowledge, aligning stakeholders, mapping business structures, and preparing technical frameworks for successful implementation. Primary deliverable will be a communication plan to report on project status.

- **Analyze** focuses on planning, assessing requirements, identifying solution gaps, and scoping project priorities. It concludes by refining the implementation plan based on the findings from the analysis activities. Primary deliverable will be a business requirements document (BRD) detailing approved requirements, scope, dependencies, and assumptions.

- **Build** consists of multiple sprints, including planning, prototyping, development, data migration, security, infrastructure, and retrospectives, which iteratively progress the main project workstreams. Additionally, the Integrated Testing Cycle (ITC) supports end-to-end testing to meet cross-functional requirements. At the conclusion of each sprint, the delivery team will showcase progress made on your agent.

- **Confirm** outlines key testing and validation activities, including Conference Room Pilots (CRP), User Acceptance Testing (UAT), Performance Testing, and Regression Testing. These activities result in the solution being ready for end-user training, functional approval, system performance verification, and continued functionality after updates before deployment. Primary deliverable will be a master test plan that assures functionality and performance of your agents meets approved requirements detailed in BRD.

- **Deploy** involves training end users, conducting a cutover rehearsal to validate processes in a test environment, and performing the final cutover to the new solution. Post-deployment, support is provided during the transition period to support ongoing success. Primary deliverable will be your deployed AI solution production ready for utilization with end-users.

Crowe would require our teams to reevaluate the estimations for the phases following the Structure and Analyze phases to better understand the hours that would be necessary for our team to develop the implementation in the Build, Confirm, and Deploy phases based on the requirements gathering process that is included in the Structure and Analyze phases.
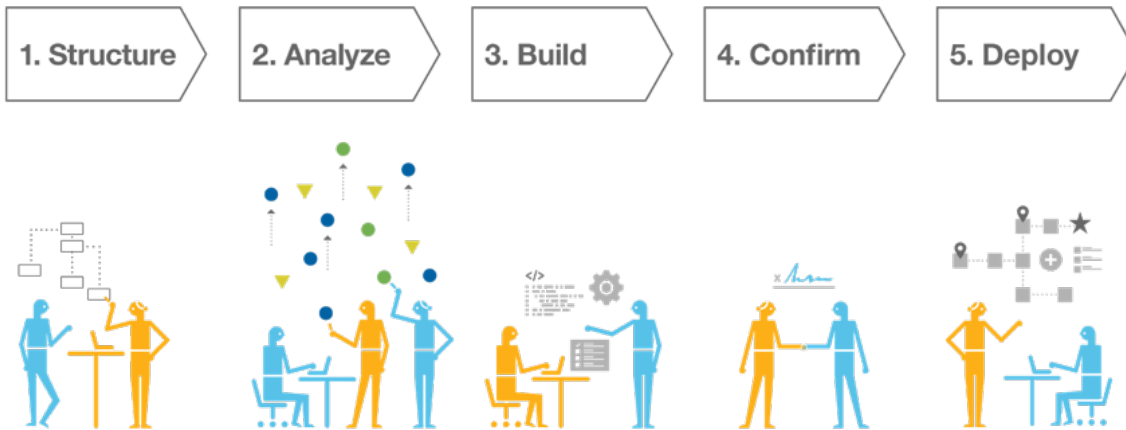
- *Team Qualifications: Highlight the qualifications and experience of key team members who will be involved in the project(s).*

Team Qualifications

The ultimate success of our relationship with NCTCOG involves the commitment of an accomplished team of experienced professionals. Your proposed engagement team is well-qualified to provide NCTCOG with quality, timely, and personalized service. A summary of our team qualifications is summarized below.

Key Team Qualifications and Relevant Skillsets

Key Team Members and Role	Years of Experience	Project Management	Public Sector SME	AI Strategy Development and Solution Design	AI and Data Governance	AI Implementation	AI Readiness and Enablement	Current State/Needs Assessment	Training, Adoption, and Capacity Building
1. John Manilla, CPA, PMP *Engagement Executive*	15	●	●	●			●	●	
2. Luis Lopez Garay, CPA *AI Transformation Partner*	10			●		●	●	●	
3. Mitchell Mathews *AI Transformation Senior Manager*	9			●		●	●	●	●
4. Matthew Palka *AI Transformation Senior Manager*	9			●		●	●	●	
5. Joseph Gill *AL Transformation Manager*	8			●	●		●	●	
6. Zach Bernstein *AI Transformation Senior Consultant*	1			●		●	●		

Exceptional Client Experience

We assign a single contact point to oversee consistency in the services provided and to manage information received from multiple teams in a cohesive manner. Your contact for this will be John Manilla. This streamlines communications and provides you with a single source of accountability when questions arise. Ultimately, we want to effectively work together to achieve results.

Detailed Resumes

We recognize and respect NCTCOGs 30-page limit for this proposal and thus have consolidated the table above to provide a high-level overview of the key personnel we would anticipate supporting your Member Organizations. Additionally, we have provided detailed resumes of the individuals listed above in **Attachment A, which we have offered as supplemental information, separate from our proposal. We understand NCTCOG may ignore this attachment while deliberating on submissions.** The resumes provide details on each individual's education, years of experience, licenses and certifications, professional affiliations, and other relevant experience.

b. Relevant Past Projects

Include examples of past projects that demonstrate your experience and success in delivering AI solutions, especially those involving public sector or similar entities. For each project, provide:

Client Service Delivery

Part Search Agent: Enhancing Sales Efficiency for Cable Distributor

Project Description: The goal of the Part Search Agent is to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of the sales team's part-finding process, enabling them to quickly find components tailored to their customers' needs. Currently, part information is fragmented across multiple resources, including structured datasets from an ERP system and unstructured documents such as specification sheets and manufacturer catalogs. When a customer submits a quote or order, the sales team typically begins their search in an ERP system. If the desired part is not found there, the sales team often resorts to searching the internet for a matching part from known manufacturers. This approach bypasses the wealth of information available in specification sheets and catalogs, as these unstructured resources are difficult to navigate and search effectively. As a result, the process is both inefficient and prone to delays, affecting customer service and productivity.

Technologies Used: To address the inefficiencies in the part-finding process, Crowe leveraged the Cable Distributor's existing Microsoft technology stack to integrate Generative AI for identifying, extracting, and searching part information from unstructured documents. The solution uses the Microsoft Power Platform, with Power Automate and its AI Builder component providing Large Language Model (LLM)-based capabilities. The Cable Distributor provided an export of all the parts listed in their ERP system for a total of 240,000 SKUs and Crowe created a code base to process and call Generative AI to extract part information from 18,000 PDFs, specification sheets and manufacturer catalogs, which results in 75,000 SKUs. Crowe formatted both datasets into structured CSV files and uploaded them to separate Azure Search Indexes using Azure AI Studio. These indexes enable efficient character searching of the structured and unstructured data fields.

Results: To provide users with an intuitive and accessible way to search for parts, Crowe developed a Copilot Agent. The Copilot Agent integrates with the Azure Search Indexes via a Power Automate flow, enabling it to process user queries and return relevant parts based on the indexed data. The Copilot Agent is deployed within Microsoft Teams, making it easily accessible across the organization and streamlining the part-finding process for the sales team. As a result, the part finding process became more efficient with a higher search accuracy rate and sales team members were able to redeploy their time savings to more value-add activities.

PART SEARCH AGENT: ENHANCING SALES EFFICIENCY FOR CABLE DISTRIBUTOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN (1 OF 2):
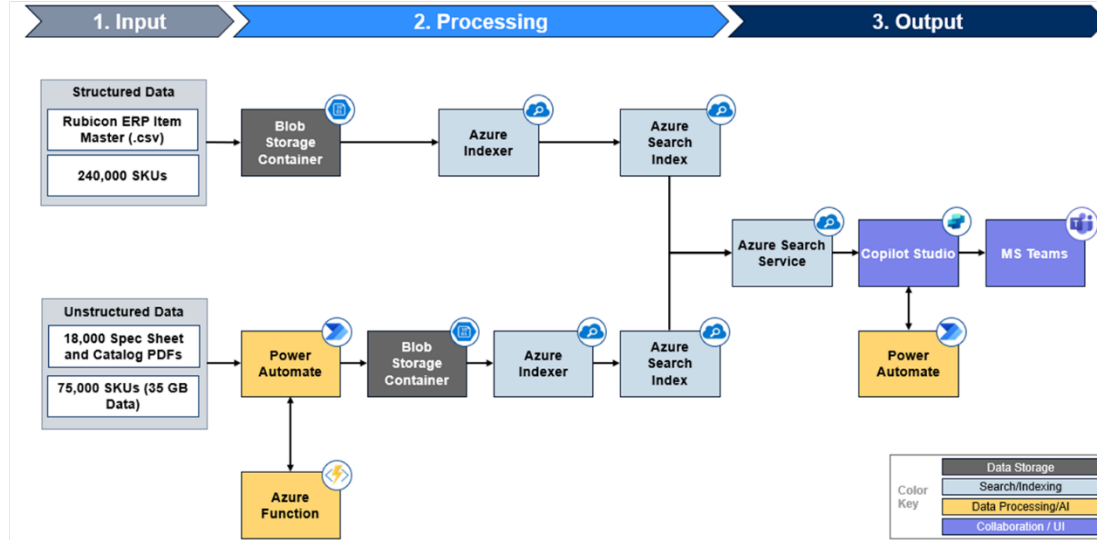
PART SEARCH AGENT: ENHANCING SALES EFFICIENCY FOR CABLE DISTRIBUTOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN (2 OF 2):
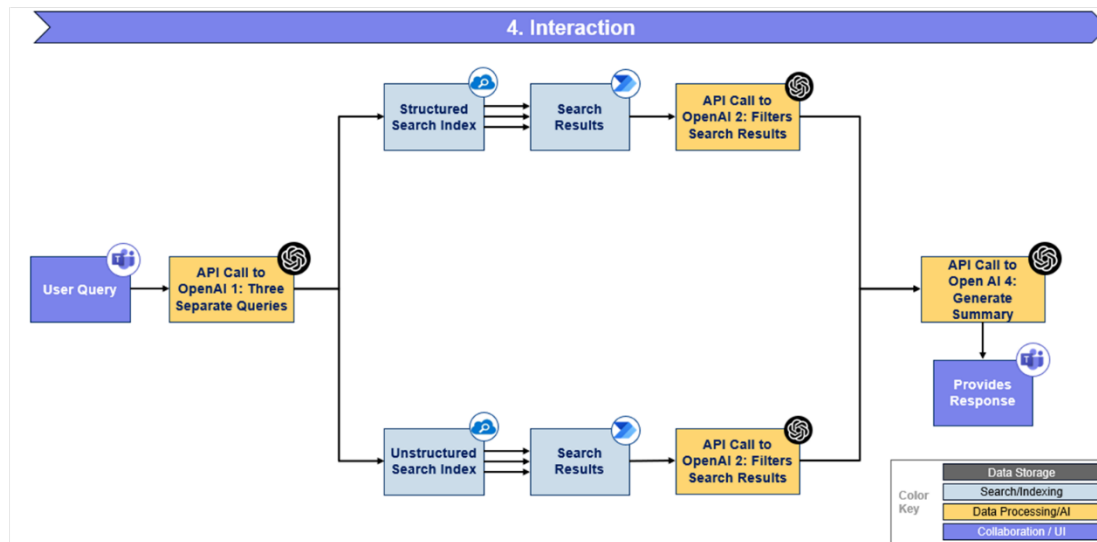
Lease Agent Product for Real Estate Industry

Project Description: Our client, operating in the leasing and real estate industry, faced challenges in managing large volumes of lease agreements. The manual extraction and validation of key lease terms, such as payment schedules, escalation rules, and lease start dates, were time-consuming and prone to errors. Additionally, discrepancies between human-entered data and lease terms led to frequent audit findings and inefficiencies. To address these challenges, we developed Lease Agent, an AI-driven solution designed to automate the extraction, validation, and auditing of lease terms while supporting seamless integration with existing systems like Dynamics F&O.

Technologies Used: To build Lease Agent, we leveraged Microsoft's AI and cloud technology stack to create a scalable and accurate solution. The core technologies include:

- Semantic Kernel for document chunking, embeddings, and AI-driven term extraction.
- Azure SQL Database for storing embeddings, extracted terms, and discrepancies.
- Azure Blob Storage for secure document storage and retrieval.

- Power Automate for orchestrating document ingestion from sources such as Outlook, SharePoint, and manual uploads.
- Power Apps (Canvas App) for user interfaces that facilitate lease validation, audit tracking, and document interrogation.
- Copilot Studio for ad-hoc chatbot queries and advanced document interrogation.
- Azure Application Insights for monitoring and logging system performance and user activity.
- Azure Key Vault for secure credential management.

Results: With Lease Agent, our client has streamlined their lease management processes, reducing manual effort and improving accuracy in lease term extraction and validation. The integration with Dynamics F&O helps discrepancies to be quickly addressed and records are consistently updated.

LEASE AGENT PRODUCT FOR REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:
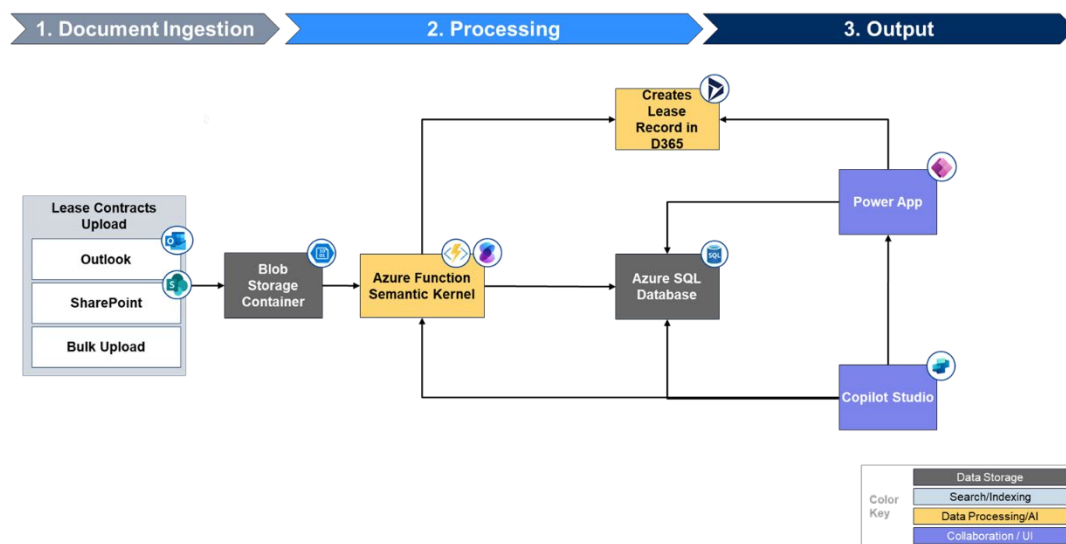
Lease Management App for Real Estate Company

Project Description: Our client in the Real Estate industry leases individual suites to independent tenants. As a result, their lease management process has traditionally been highly manual, particularly around data extraction. For each lease that they have a tenant sign, they need to enter the most important terms into their database, which takes a lot of time, especially when performing at scale and is susceptible to human error.

Technologies Used: To address this challenge, Crowe leveraged Microsoft's technology stack to integrate Generative AI into the workflow, one that is primed for the use of GenAI given the abundance of unstructured data. This initiative utilized the Microsoft Power Platform, specifically Power Automate, along with its AI Builder component, which incorporates large language model (LLM)-based capabilities.

The process begins when a user uploads a contract into their Crowe developed Power App. The AI Builder component within a Power Automate flow extracts all text from the lease, retaining its structure and location details.

The extracted text is then processed through a custom-engineered prompt designed to identify and extract relevant details and terms. The executed prompt outputs all essential terms in JSON format, which is then stored in the Dataverse Table supporting the Power App.

Results: By transitioning from a fully manual process to a highly automated one, our client in the Real Estate industry has saved hundreds of hours on data extraction and data entry whenever they acquire a new asset or building.

LEASE MANAGEMENT APP FOR REAL ESTATE COMPANY ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:
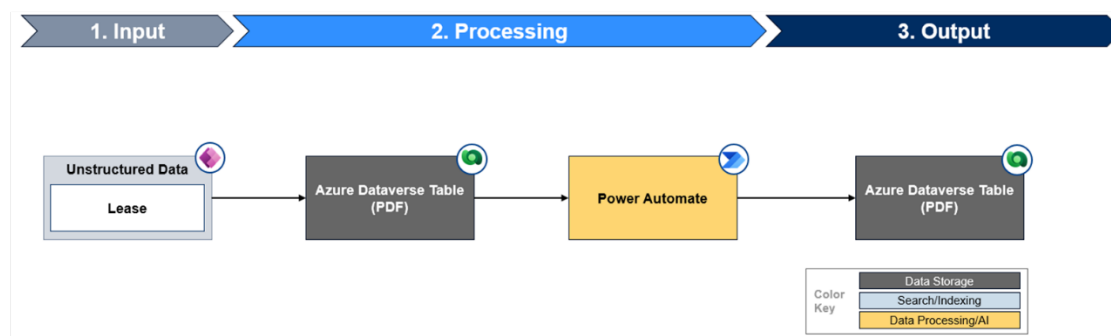
## CIM Summary and Chat for Private Equity Group

Project Description: Our client in the Private Equity industry relies heavily on analysts to review Confidential Information Memorandum (CIM) documents, which can be as lengthy as 150 pages. Historically, this process has been highly manual, requiring analysts to extract key details and metrics for reporting purposes, leading to significant time investment and reduced efficiency.

Technologies Used: To address this challenge, our team leveraged Microsoft's technology stack to build an automated workflow that incorporates low-code tools such as Power Automate, AI Builder, and Salesforce integration. This solution is specifically designed to process and summarize unstructured data from CIM documents while maintaining accuracy and human oversight.

The workflow is triggered when a user emails a CIM document to a dedicated inbox. The AI solution extracts the document text, inputs the extraction into a custom prompt, and analyzes the prediction output by extracting key entities. The workflow contains an integration with Salesforce allowing the solution to check if the financial company exists. If not, there's conditional logic to create the company record prior to creating the deal record and financial record in Salesforce for linking ID purposes. Once complete, the workflow concludes by emailing the submitter a summary email containing the extracted key entities for verification purposes.

Results: By transitioning from a time-intensive manual process to an AI-driven automated workflow, our client in the Private Equity industry has significantly improved efficiency. Analysts can now focus on higher-value activities, showcasing the transformative potential of AI in streamlining complex document processing.

CIM EXTRACTION TO SALESFORCE DEAL PRODUCT FOR PRIVATE EQUITY GROUP ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:
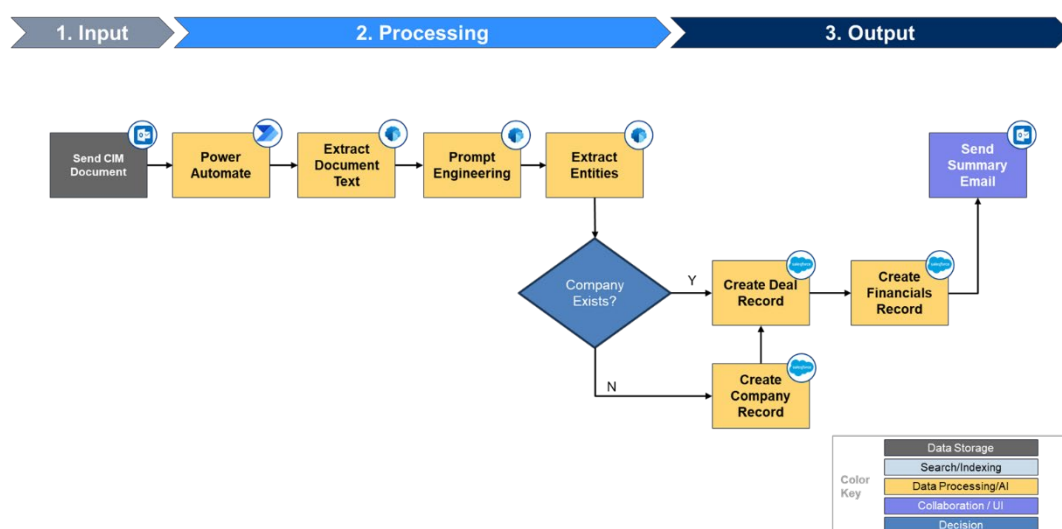
Internal Service Delivery:

Fixed Asset Manager Power App: Streamlining Depreciable Life Calculations
Project Description: The Fixed Asset Manager application streamlines the workflow for assigning depreciable lives to fixed asset additions, addressing inefficiencies of the current process. Traditionally, assigning depreciable lives for fixed assets requires significant expertise and manual effort, with tax subject matter experts (SMEs) spending hours reviewing raw Provided by Client (PBC) files to classify assets and prepare data for Sage ERP integration. On average, Crowe's Federal Tax Services team processes 2,500 PBC files per year, each containing approximately 300 rows of data, requiring up to 5 hours per file—70% of which is spent on classification and depreciable life assignment, and 30% on making sure the file is formatted correctly for Sage import.

Our solution resolves these challenges by automating key aspects of the Fixed Asset Classification process. The Fixed Asset Manager identifies key columns such as Asset ID, Description, Acquisition Value, and Acquisition Date using Azure AI Builder. After an initial Human-in-the-Loop validation confirms accuracy, the application leverages IRS Publication 946 guidelines to classify assets and assign depreciable lives, providing outputs that include MACRS Life, ADS Life, and the rationale behind each classification. Additionally, a portion of user-validated responses are linked to the Entity ID and sent back to Dataverse storage, improving responses returned in future Runs.

Technologies Used: The end-to-end process is powered by a combination of tools and platforms. Azure AI Builder is used for intelligent column identification, while OpenAI API enables accurate classification and life assignment based on customized prompts. Power Automate workflows orchestrate data validation and classification, supporting a smooth flow from raw data inputs to final outputs. Data is securely stored in Dataverse, and the final output is made accessible via SharePoint as an in-browser Excel file formatted for Sage ERP. Adherence to Sage's formatting standards is specific to this use-case and critical for supporting seamless integration, reducing errors during the import process.

Results: By automating classification and mandating user-validation, the tool reduces processing time per file by over 60% and achieves an initial classification accuracy of more than 80%, significantly improving efficiency and consistency upon initial depreciable life assignment.

Ease of use is a key feature of the Fixed Asset Manager, delivered through a model-driven PowerApp interface. Users can navigate the workflow seamlessly, from uploading raw PBC files to validating classifications and generating Sage-ready outputs. While automation handles much of the heavy lifting, the application's Human-in-the-Loop design supports compliance and response validation, allowing tax experts to review and correct classifications as needed. This critical component balances automation with the need for expert oversight, making the Fixed Asset Manager a powerful tool for improving operational efficiency while maintaining regulatory compliance.

FIXED ASSET MANAGER POWER APP: STREAMLINING DEPRECIABLE LIFE CALCULATIONS ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:
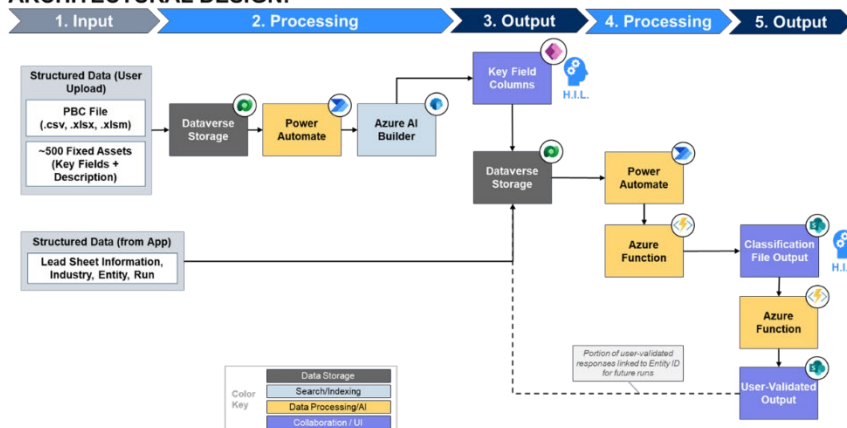
c. Background and Years in Business

Provide a brief statement of your organization's background, including:

- *History: A summary of your organization's history and evolution.*
- *Years in Business: The number of years your organization has been operating.*
- *Core Values: Your organization's mission, vision, and core values.*

Founded in 1942, Crowe operates as a leading consultancy firm with a global presence. Our longevity reflects our ability to innovate and adapt, making us a trusted partner in the rapidly evolving field of AI solutions.

Our purpose is: Shaping Your Better Tomorrow. Together. Today.® It's the standard we live by and reflects what we hold important as both a firm and as individuals.

We are driven by passion, deep understanding, and integrity. We work together as a team to serve the needs of our people and our communities. We embrace and celebrate collaboration, growth, and learning.

We lead with insights, and we're committed to always do better and be better. We embrace the legacy of where we've been, and our duty to tomorrow.

d. Significant Requirements Not Met

Clearly state any significant requirements from the Scope of Work that your organization is unable to meet. Provide a rationale for why these requirements cannot be met and suggest any potential alternatives or solutions.

All requirements were met.

If applicable, identify any subcontractors or third-party services that are utilized in the performance of fulfilling this RFP. Provide a general explanation and chart which specifies project leadership and reporting responsibilities, and how the team will interface with NCTCOG and Participating Entities' project management and team personnel.

Crowe will not be utilizing any subcontractors or third-party services in conjunction with our Copilot Studio agent solution offering detailed within this proposal.

4. Technical Proposal

a. Project Deliverables

Clearly specify how your proposed solution addresses each deliverable outlined in Section 5.1, including detailed descriptions of functionalities and approaches for each challenge objective.

Our understanding of your project objectives: The NCTCOG is seeking AI solutions to boost operational efficiency, enhance service delivery, and foster innovation across public sector entities. The project's central challenge is to improve public services, optimize data usage, and increase citizen engagement through effective AI solutions.

Our proposed agent solution will meet the following challenge objectives:

a. *Administration: How can AI assist in strategic planning, policy analysis, performance tracking, and enhance decision-making processes for effective city governance?*

An agent (sometimes referred to as chatbot) powered by Microsoft's Copilot Studio will be trained on your policy documentation and will be able to provide you with the information end users request via chat and provide citations on where the generated content originated from. Follow-up conversation will be enabled through chat for end users to continue conversing with the agent.

b. *Development Services: How can AI streamline permit applications, automate inspection scheduling, and improve communication with developers and residents?*

Based on pre-configured conversation topics, your agent will be intelligent enough to understand a variety of permit application utterances and independently choose the correct conversation topic to discuss with the end user. If the end user would like to schedule an inspection, your agent can ask the end user for required information and preferred date to automatically trigger an action that will run a Power Automate Flow to schedule a building inspection. Furthermore, an automated schedule confirmation can be sent to the developer and resident with the scheduled appointment time, date, and location.

c. *Event Center: What AI-driven solutions can enhance customer engagement, streamline ticketing processes, and optimize event management?*

Based on pre-configured conversation topics, your agent will be intelligent enough to understand a variety of event management utterances and independently choose the correct conversation topic to discuss with the end user. If the end user would like to book an event, your agent can ask the end user for required booking information and trigger an action that will run a Power Automate Flow to book an event. Furthermore, an automated booking confirmation can be sent to end users with the booked event time, date, and location.

d. *Economic Development: What AI-driven solutions can attract investment, facilitate business development, and streamline processes for economic growth?*

Similar to Crowe's CIM Summary Agent previously listed, as new deal documents are shared with the economic development department, your agent can monitor a specific inbox for new deals and process a summary of the document reducing the time-intensive review of staff. Furthermore, your agent can send a custom engineered prompt with extracted entities from the deal document to an OpenAI Large-Language-Model (LLM) that will interpret the prompt and provide a prediction response back with recommendations to pursue the economic deal or not.

e. *Finance and Budget: What AI solutions can support financial forecasting, optimize budget allocation, detect anomalies, and improve overall financial management and reporting?*

Integrating Microsoft 365 Copilot for Finance with a Copilot Studio Agent can significantly enhance financial forecasting, budget allocation, anomaly detection, and overall financial management.

Copilot for Finance helps analyze historical data to identify trends and generate accurate forecasts for revenue, expenses, and other financial metrics. It optimizes budget allocation by analyzing spending patterns, recommending adjustments, and automating detailed budget reports. For anomaly detection, Copilot reviews transactions, provides real-time alerts for unusual activities, and offers insights into potential issues. It also improves financial management by automating data reconciliation, generating presentation-ready reports, and summarizing financial insights.

Using Copilot Studio, you can connect to various financial data sources, such as ERP systems and CRM platforms, and extend agent capabilities with custom data retrieval actions and automated workflows. This integration allows you to work seamlessly within familiar tools like Excel, Outlook, and Teams, streamlining financial operations and enhancing efficiency, accuracy, and insightfulness. By leveraging these tools, you can transform your financial processes, making them more effective and data driven.

f.   *Human Resources (HR): How can AI solutions automate HR processes, enhance employee engagement, and transform recruitment and onboarding experiences?*

An agent will be trained on your onboarding documentation and will be able to assist new hires with self-service requests via chat and provide citations on where the generated content originated from. Follow-up conversation will be enabled through chat for end users to continue conversing with the agent. A ServiceNow connection can be set up with your agent for new hires to automatically request hardware/software tickets.

g.   *Information Technology and Cybersecurity (IT): How can AI solutions alleviate the workload of IT personnel? Can they automate Help Desk support, streamline processes, create documentation for IT service domain knowledge, assist with cybersecurity threat detection, or take a proactive role in auditing and cyber defense?*

A ServiceNow connection can be set up with your agent for employees to automatically request self-service tickets, reducing the burden on your IT helpdesk personnel. Any standard operating procedures (SOPs) that your helpdesk agent currently use can be quickly shared with your agent and trained in a matter of seconds. IT documentation with specific domain knowledge can be created by your agent assuming domain knowledge has already been shared with your agent beforehand. Your agent can assist with cybersecurity by assessing suspicious activity reports submitted by end users and contacting the correct IT Security Personnel for an additional layer of cyber defense.

h.   *Library Services: What AI technologies can provide a personalized user experience, improve catalog searches, and offer automated assistance?*

Similar to Crowe's Part Search Agent previously listed, an agent can provide users with an intuitive and accessible way to search for cataloged books by integrating with Azure Search Indexes via a Power Automate flow, enabling your agent to process user queries and return relevant book results based on the indexed catalog.

i.   *Municipal Courts: How can AI support efficient case management, automate routine inquiries, and improve citizens' access to legal information?*

Based on pre-configured conversation topics, your agent will be intelligent enough to understand a variety of case management utterances and independently choose the correct conversation topic to discuss with the end user. If the end user would like to pay for a parking ticket, your agent can ask the end user for required ticket information and trigger an action that will run a Power Automate Flow to pay for the parking ticket. Furthermore, an automated invoice confirmation can be sent to end users with the paid ticket datetime stamp. Any municipal court documentation shared with the agent as a knowledge source will be enabled for end user sharing along with citations.

j.   Parks and Recreation: What AI solutions can enhance program management, registration processes, and personalized recommendations for recreational activities?

An agent that is trained on the Parks and Recreation website along with the registration system will have knowledge about upcoming events and can query the registration system with the end users full name to explore previously registered events. If no previous recreational event history can be found, then the agent will converse with the end user further based on a pre-configured topic to determine their recreational likes and interests before providing a personalized recommendation.

k.   Parks Maintenance: How can AI improve maintenance scheduling, optimize resource allocation, and facilitate better communication with residents?

An agent that is trained on your maintenance database will be able to evaluate maintenance history dates and schedule appointments for future maintenance checks. An agent that is deployed on the parks maintenance website will allow citizens to submit maintenance requests to Parks facilities and if several citizen requests are submitted to the same facility within a short period of time, your agent can provide a resource scheduling recommendation to increase resources at the location where maintenance requests are spiking.

l.   Public Works: What solutions can help in optimizing project schedules, managing resources, and keeping residents informed about public infrastructure projects?

Your agent can plug into Microsoft Planner and schedule projects, manage assigned resources, and keep residents informed on the status of public infrastructure projects.

m. Utility Billing: How can AI automate billing inquiries, streamline payment processes, and provide real-time updates on utility usage?

Your agent can send an HTTP API call to your payment processing system to query citizens utility bill information and collect required payment information for payment processing, if desired.

n.   Visitors Bureau: How can AI enhance visitor engagement, provide personalized recommendations, and improve tourism management?

An agent that is trained on the Visitors Bureau website along with the tourism management system will have knowledge about upcoming events and can query the tourism management system with the end users full name to explore previously registered events. If no previous tourism event history can be found, then the agent will converse with the end user further based on a pre-configured topic to determine their tourism likes and interests before providing a personalized recommendation.

o.   Other Government Entity Departments: What AI-driven innovations can improve service delivery, streamline routine operations, and bolster data-driven decision-making?

Your agent can be trained on animal control policy, what to do in the event a vehicle hits an animal on the road, and automate pet registration tags along with vaccine documentation saving citizens time registering in person at city hall. Animal control inquiries can be shared with the Parks Maintenance or Forest Preserve departments to assess over-population of a particular animal species.

b. Technical Approach

Detail the technical approach for implementing the proposed solution, including:

- *Methodologies for design and development.*
- *Integration strategies with existing government systems.*
- *User-friendliness and accessibility considerations.*

The tables below provide an overview of the five primary phases of our implementation methodology. Each table highlights the primary activities & their descriptions for each phase of the project.

Structure Phase Activity	Structure Activity Description
Transition	Transition knowledge from the sales team to the implementation team.
Client Pre-Work	Begin gathering information used in further understanding and scoping the project.
Customer Onboarding	Establish project tools and environments
Project Planning	Define the project plan, communication plan, status update plan, etc.
Business Structure Mapping	Identify the functions and business processes that the new technology needs to support. This serves as the framework for the Requirements Traceability Matrix (RTM).
Resource Planning	Recruiting and onboarding the right people is critical for the new technology to support the business and that your organization can confidently run it.
Kickoff Event and Scenario Mapping	Kickoff the project with all stakeholders. Begin to map all scenarios.
Technical Planning	Plan and document frameworks for data migration, security, compliance, privacy, and infrastructure.

Analyze Phase Activity	Analyze Activity Description
Analyze Planning	Plan and schedule Analyze Phase activities.
Foundational Designs & Requirements Gathering	Analyze each scenario to uncover the requirements the new technology will need to support the scenario.
Gap-Fit Analysis & Solutioning	Analyze requirements in each scenario to determine what's covered by the native software and what will need to be built.
Project Planning & Scoping	Define scope and priorities across all areas of the implementation. Align on a final scope for the project.
Implementation Planning	Refine the implementation and build plan based on the results of Analyze phase.

Build Phase Activity	Build Activity Description
Sprint Planning	Iteratively progress the main project workstreams forward
Sprint Prototyping	Iterative design process used to create and test a realistic model of a product or solution within a short timeframe, typically as part of a design sprint.
Sprint Development	Collaboratively plan, execute, and deliver specific increments of a project within a fixed timebox, typically one to four weeks.
Sprint Data Migration	Transfer data in iterative phases, aligned with agile sprints, for accuracy, validation, and seamless integration with new systems.
Sprint Security, Privacy, and Compliance	Integrate security, privacy, and compliance practices and assessments into each sprint of the development process to proactively identify and address vulnerabilities in real-time.
Sprint Infrastructure	Iterative planning, building, and optimizing of the foundational systems and environments needed to support development and deployment during agile sprints.
Sprint Retrospective	Collaborative meeting held at the end of a sprint where the team reflects on what went well, what could be improved, and identifies actionable steps for future sprints.
Integrated Testing Cycle (ITC)	Conduct end to end testing to confirm cross-functional requirements are met.

Confirm Phase Activity	Confirm Activity Description
Conference Room Pilots (CRP)	Through a series of conference room pilots (CRPs), we confirm people can run the business. Functional SMEs simulate go-live by conducting mock cutovers and processing transactions.
User Acceptance Testing (UAT)	Confirm the solution is ready for end-user training. The Functional SMEs have one final opportunity to confirm and sign off that the new solution is ready for end-user training and deployment.
Performance Testing	Confirm the new solution is capable of all activity and ready for deployment. This is a final opportunity to confirm and sign off that the new solution is ready for regression testing and deployment.
Regression Testing	Regression tests should be run and verified as part of user acceptance testing and subsequently re-run each time an update is taken to confirm system functionality. Regression testing is performed either manually or through RSAT depending on the nature of each specific test case.

Deploy Phase Activity	Deploy Activity Description
End User Training	Your functional SMEs train end users to operate the business on the new solution.
Cutover Rehearsal	In the cutover rehearsal, your functional SMEs and select end users conduct a simulation of cutover in a test environment. This includes migrating data, performing day-one transactions, and validating results.
Cutover	Cut over to the new solution.
Transition to Support	After the new solution goes live, the Crowe implementation team stays engaged to provide support during the transition period. Following the transition, the client engages Crowe Support Services for ongoing support.

Technical Approach to Scope of Work

Your agent will be user-friendly and accessible to all stakeholders through integration with existing government systems (e.g., case management systems, HR management systems, library databases, public works management systems, parks and recreation management systems, development services systems, and utility billing systems), including security frameworks such as Mobile Device Management (MDM), Identity and Access Management (IAM), Security Information and Event Management (SIEM), and other critical IT infrastructure, supporting scalability and adaptability.

The agent will leverage Natural Language Processing (NLP) to understand end user interactions. The agent will be trained on website content, including HTML, PDFs, Word documents, Dataverse Tables, SharePoint Sites, Public Websites, and provide accurate responses, escalating queries to staff if necessary. Built-in analytics will track usage, session success, and customer satisfaction ratings. Multilingual support, including Spanish, is supported.

Compliance and security are essential. The agent will follow Section 508 accessibility standards and data privacy laws like PII, HIPAA, & GDPR, without collecting sensitive personal data. It will provide an intuitive interface with user feedback options.

The solution will leverage advanced NLP frameworks to handle diverse inquiries, integrate with government entity infrastructure, and scale for high traffic utilization. Regular updates will support current content, and a dashboard will provide real-time insights. Training and technical support will aid adoption and future enhancements, with a focus on security, accessibility, compliance, and data privacy.

This approach will provide an agent that meets the project's objectives and delivers a scalable, user-friendly, and compliant solution that aligns with NCTCOG's vision for improved public services, optimized usage of governmental entity data, and increased citizen engagement.

c. Performance Metrics

Describe how you will measure success and performance, including key performance indicators (KPIs) for each deliverable. Include approaches to ensure accuracy, reliability, and continuous improvement of the AI solutions.

Real-Time Analytics

The graphic below depicts an example of what your agent dashboard would look like. Within Copilot Studio Analytics tab, you will be able to digest your agent analytics which captures sessions, engagement rate, resolution rate, escalation rate, abandon rate, and customer satisfaction score.

https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-copilot-studio/analytics-overview
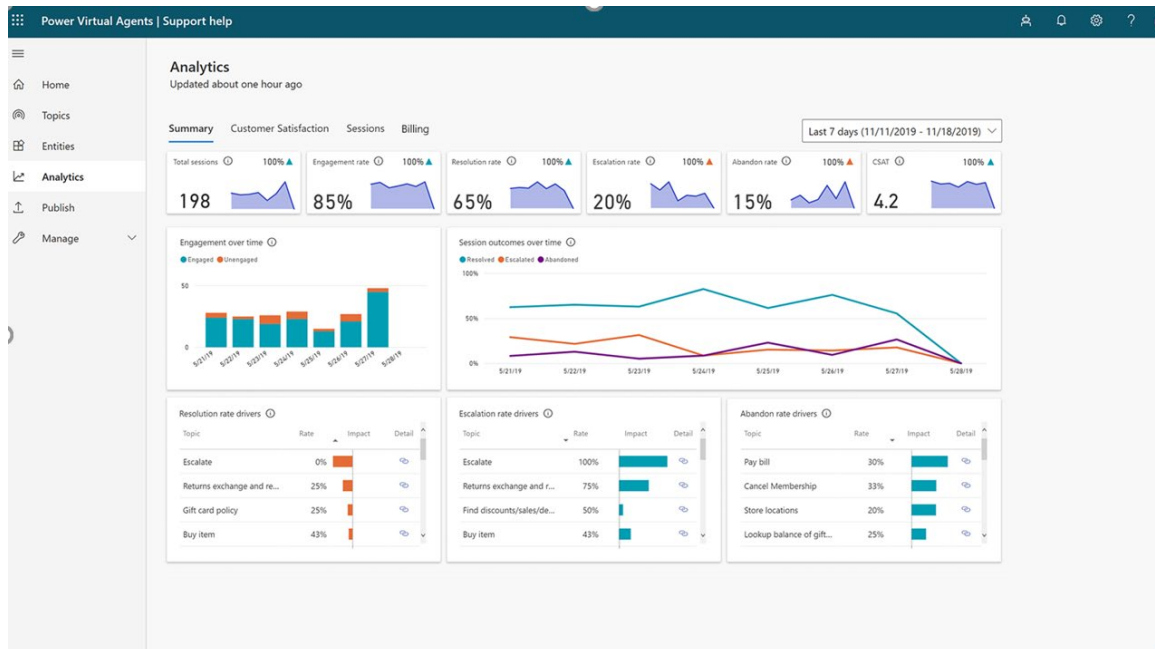
KPI: Accuracy

Response Accuracy Rate evaluates the percentage of responses that are correct, relevant, and actionable based on user input. This metric indicates if the agent is consistently providing precise and contextually appropriate answers, fostering trust and reliability. The accuracy rate is calculated as the ratio of accurate responses to the total number of responses, with a target of ≥95%. This KPI is monitored through user feedback, internal audits, and analysis of response logs, so the agent meets quality standards and minimizes the need for clarifications or corrections.

KPI: Reliability

Assistance Accuracy and Consistency Rate, measures the agent's ability to deliver accurate, contextually appropriate, and consistent responses. Key components include response accuracy (percentage of correct and actionable replies), service consistency (maintaining tone and adherence to guidelines), uptime (availability without disruptions), and error rate (frequency of inaccuracies or guideline violations). Target metrics might aim for ≥95% accuracy, ≥90% consistency, ≥99% uptime, and ≤2% error rate, assessed through user feedback, quality audits, and system monitoring. This KPI indicates if the agent is functioning as a dependable tool, enhancing user trust and efficiency in interactions.

KPI: Continuous Improvement

Learning and Enhancement Rate, measures the agent's ability to adapt, improve, and incorporate feedback over time. This metric evaluates the frequency and effectiveness of updates to the agent's knowledge base, workflows, or performance, so it may become more accurate, efficient, and aligned with user needs.

It can be tracked through metrics such as the percentage of resolved issues post-feedback, time taken to implement improvements, and a reduction in recurring errors. Regular monitoring and iterative updates help the agent evolve to deliver better user experiences and stays relevant to changing requirements.

Algorithm Transparency

Within the Generative AI settings of your agent, you will have complete control over bias mitigation by setting the content moderation scale to high precision. This instructs the underlying GPT model to generate responses that are precise to the users' prompt and significantly reduces the probability of hallucinations (aka off topic content generated by the models underlying training data).

Interoperability

Your agent will be able to be trained on a variety of knowledge sources as illustrated in the screenshot below. Most of the access is governed to your specific instance of M365 tenant. For specific files that you would like to train your agent with, you can upload those files directly to the agent's knowledge tab and it will be stored in the connected Dataverse Table within your Power Platform environment. For third party systems, your agent can send GET and POST requests via an HTTP API call within custom topic nodes.

Add knowledge   ✕

Add knowledge so your agent can provide more relevant information and insights. Once set up, other people with edit permissions for this agent can reuse these knowledge sources for additional topics. Learn more about knowledge sources

☆ Featured   🖉 Advanced   🔍 Search

Enterprise data connections (preview)
Powered by Copilot connectors. Some options may require admin approval or end user licensing. Learn more

☁ Azure AI Search	🗄 Azure SQL	Salesforce	now ServiceNow Catalog
now ServiceNow Knowledge	now ServiceNow Tickets	Zendesk	

Cancel

Quality Control

Crowe applies a robust framework to maintain the integrity and accuracy of data used in AI solutions, employing advanced tools and methodologies to validate datasets and enhance reliability. Our process includes comprehensive data validation protocols to detect and address inaccuracies through automated checks and manual reviews, identifying anomalies for prompt resolution. Crowe collaborates with stakeholders to design data enrichment procedures, filling gaps, standardizing formats, and integrating external sources to improve dataset quality. This proactive approach aligns data quality strategies with organizational goals, enabling AI solutions to support effective decision-making and deliver meaningful outcomes.

d. Risk Management

Outline any potential risks associated with the proposed solution and describe your strategies for mitigating these risks.

Outside of broad Generative-AI knowledge, your agent will be limited to the knowledge that its trained on. Over time, legacy knowledge repositories can become stale and disconnected so it's imperative to have a training plan established for your agent to learn new policies and procedures as they become available and where they are located within the organization. Your agent will need to be added to the proper security groups in order to access highly sensitive knowledge repositories.

Crowe helps AI implementations comply with legal standards (e.g., FOIA, grant/state/federal regulations) through a structured governance framework rooted in risk management and public sector compliance experience. Our AI Governance Assessment identifies gaps in compliance, data privacy, and security, forming the basis for a roadmap aligned with legal and ethical guidelines. We establish technical safeguards like encryption and role-based access controls, alongside administrative controls such as monitoring, audits, and incident response plans. Tailored policies define roles and responsibilities to guide transparency and accountability, while continuous training equips internal teams to maintain compliance and adapt to evolving legal requirements. This approach mitigates risks and fosters confidence in ethical and lawful AI deployment.

e. Compliance and Standards

Confirm adherence to relevant regulations and standards, including data privacy laws (e.g., GDPR, HIPAA), and detail how your solution will maintain compliance.

To achieve the data governance requirements, a Copilot Studio agent can implement the following strategies with practical examples:

1. **Data Integrity and Accuracy**:

    - **Mechanisms**: Implement validation checks at data entry points to support data accuracy. For example, use automated scripts to verify data formats and ranges.
    - **Error Correction**: Develop protocols to identify and correct errors. For instance, if a data entry error is detected, the system can flag it for review and correction by a data steward.

2. **Data Privacy and Compliance**:

    - **Adherence to Laws**: Support compliance with GDPR and CCPA by incorporating data privacy policies. For example, include a consent form that users must agree to before data collection.
    - **Anonymization and Pseudonymization**: Use techniques like data masking to anonymize personal data. For instance, replace sensitive information with pseudonyms in datasets used for analysis.
    - **User Consent**: Document user consent for data processing. For example, maintain a log of consent forms and timestamps when users agree to data collection.

3. **Data Access Controls**:

    - **Role-Based Access Controls (RBAC)**: Define roles and permissions to restrict data access. For example, only HR personnel can access employee records, while IT staff have access to system logs. This role-based access can be configured and assigned at the Microsoft Tenant level.
    - **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)**: Implement MFA for accessing sensitive data. For instance, require a combination of passwords and biometric verification for database access.

4. **Data Retention and Disposal**:

    - **Retention Policies**: Specify how long data will be stored. For example, financial records might be retained for seven years, while marketing data is kept for two years. Automated workflows can be configured within your agent to automatically check specific datetime stamps and wipe records, if necessary.
    - **Secure Disposal**: Use secure methods for data disposal, such as data wiping or shredding physical documents. For instance, employ software that overwrites deleted files to prevent data recovery.

5. **Data Auditing and Monitoring**:

    - **Regular Audits**: Conduct periodic audits to review data usage and access. For example, perform periodic audits to support compliance with data governance policies.
    - **Logging Mechanisms**: Implement logging to track data access and modifications. For instance, maintain logs that record who accessed data, what changes were made, and when these actions occurred.

To achieve the specified cybersecurity requirements, a Copilot Studio agent can implement the following strategies with practical examples:

1. **Threat Detection and Response**:

    - **AI-Driven Systems**: Deploy AI-driven threat detection systems that monitor network traffic and user behavior to identify anomalies. For example, use machine learning algorithms to detect unusual login patterns that may indicate a security breach.
    - **Identity Verification**: Integrate robust identity verification mechanisms such as biometric authentication and two-factor authentication (2FA). For instance, require fingerprint or facial recognition along with a password for accessing sensitive information.

- **Incident Response Protocols**: Define and regularly update incident response protocols. For example, conduct periodic drills to simulate identity-related breach scenarios and the team is prepared to respond effectively.

2. **Encryption**:

- **End-to-End Encryption**: Data is encrypted both in transit and at rest using industry-standard algorithms. For example, use AES-256 encryption for data storage and TLS for secure data transmission over the internet.
- **Key Management**: Implement robust key management practices. For instance, use hardware security modules (HSMs) to generate and store encryption keys securely.

3. **Vulnerability Management**:

- **Regular Assessments**: Conduct regular vulnerability assessments and penetration testing to identify and address security weaknesses. For example, schedule monthly scans of the network and applications to detect vulnerabilities.
- **Timely Patching**: Timely patching and updating of software. For instance, Copilot Studio is a SaaS (Software as a Service) Platform which means updates are published automatically and will not require any patching management from public sector entities.

4. **Security Governance Framework**:

- **Policies and Procedures**: Establish a comprehensive security governance framework that outlines security policies, procedures, and responsibilities. For example, create a security policy document that defines acceptable use, data protection, and incident response procedures.
- **Compliance**: Continuous compliance with security standards and best practices. For instance, conduct periodic audits to verify adherence to frameworks like ISO 27001 or NIST.

5. **Risk Management**:

- **Risk Assessment**: Identify and assess potential risks associated with AI solutions. For example, perform a risk assessment to evaluate the impact of data breaches on AI solution integrity.
- **Mitigation Strategies**: Develop and implement risk mitigation strategies. For instance, establish a disaster recovery plan (DRP) that includes regular backups and failover procedures to support business continuity.
- **Root-Cause Analysis**: Conduct root-cause analysis (RCA) of incidents to prevent recurrence. For example, after a security incident, analyze the root cause and implement corrective actions to address underlying vulnerabilities.

6. **Training and Awareness**:

- **Regular Training**: Provide regular cybersecurity training and awareness programs for staff. For example, conduct periodic training sessions on phishing awareness and secure password practices.
- **Knowledge Sharing**: Support staff to be knowledgeable about security best practices and protocols. For instance, distribute security newsletters and updates to keep public sector employees informed about the latest threats and mitigation techniques.

Crowe identifies potential AI use cases by collaborating with key stakeholders to uncover opportunities that address operational challenges and align with organizational priorities. We evaluate each use case's feasibility through a thorough assessment of technical, organizational, and financial requirements, considering factors like data quality, infrastructure readiness, and regulatory compliance. To assess value, Crowe estimates the impact of use cases on efficiency, cost reduction, and service enhancement through ROI modeling, balancing immediate benefits with long-term strategic value. By prioritizing use cases based on feasibility and value, we create a roadmap for deployment that minimizes risk and delivers measurable, ethically grounded improvements tailored to public sector needs.

Crowe systematically documents compliance requirements by assessing both external mandates, such as state and federal statutes, GDPR, HIPAA, and CCPA, and internal controls needed for AI use.

This process includes mapping compliance needs to operational risks and implementing administrative, technical, and policy measures to support oversight and compliance. We develop a compliance assessment that aligns requirements with corresponding controls and mitigation strategies, presenting actionable recommendations to address gaps and support audit readiness. By embedding compliance into the AI governance framework, Crowe aligns legal and ethical standards with organizational goals, to support both current and future regulatory adaptability.

Crowe conducts a detailed pros, cons, and risk-benefit analysis for each AI use case by evaluating technical feasibility, financial implications, and alignment with organizational goals. Benefits such as enhanced efficiency, improved decision-making, and scalability are weighed against potential risks like data integration challenges, stakeholder resistance, and regulatory compliance. We assess factors affecting success, including data readiness, change management needs, and technology compatibility, addressing drawbacks such as implementation costs and governance requirements with actionable mitigation strategies. By incorporating compliance considerations and ethical AI principles, Crowe confirms that prioritized use cases offer high ROI and feasible deployment while fostering informed decision-making and organizational trust.

5. Pricing

Our goal in setting fees is simple – to provide long-term, cost-effective pricing for our clients. We are confident that we can work together to achieve an optimized plan for your Public Sector Entities Agent. We are happy to offer a 10% discount from our standard pricing to NCTCOG's Member Organizations for AI Solutions.

Additionally, we highly value long-term relationships and so are pleased to offer an additional tiered discount model to recognize cumulative services across multiple projects. An additional 5% discount is applied once the total value of services with a Member Organization under this agreement exceeds $500,000, bringing the total discount on services from that point forward to 15%. This additional discount increases by another 5% when services exceed $1 million, bringing the total discount on services from that point forward to 20%. This structure allows NCTCOG Members to benefit from increasingly competitive pricing as our partnership grows, reflecting our commitment to providing greater value and expanded services over time.

One additional note on pricing – we have aligned this pricing model with what Crowe submitted to Sourcewell in response to their similar RFP for AI consulting services. As of early January 2025, Sourcewell has informed all bidders they will need up to 90 additional days to deliberate submissions so we do not yet know if we will be a selected vendor, but we wanted to disclose this to NCTCOG given your existing partnership with Sourcewell.

Pricing Summary

After the analyze phase of Crowe's implementation methodology, we'll be able to assess the project's effort estimate with greater certainty and provide you with an accurate total delivery cost. Given the number of unknowns and options that may be factored in depending on the Member's needs, only approximations can be provided up front. We have done this in the table below via a "T-shirt size" approach… these are estimates based on past experiences and are not guaranteed to fit the size of the Member organization. For example, it is entirely possible that an entity that may fit the small description ends up with a total cost in the medium range due to complex requirements.

Effort Estimate (T-Shirt Size)	Typical Entity Aligning to this Size	Estimated Cost Range
Small	Typically small municipalities, local school districts, or individual nonprofit entities	$250,000 - $350,000
Medium	Includes mid-sized cities, regional school districts, and nonprofit organizations operating across multiple locations or regions.	$500,000 - $700,000
Large	Represents larger cities, counties, public agencies, and extensive regional nonprofit networks or public school systems.	$750,000 - $1,000,000
Extra Large	Encompasses major metropolitan governments, state or provincial agencies, large public university systems, and extensive public healthcare systems.	$1,000,000+

The following rates were used to calculate the total delivery cost of your public sector entity's agent above.

Job Title	Short Description	Long Description	10% Discounted Hourly Rate
AI Consultant	Supports AI readiness, data analysis, and model development.	Works with clients to assess AI readiness, perform data analysis, and implement AI solutions. Supports the development and execution of AI models and strategies under the guidance of senior staff.	$202.50
AI Senior Consultant	Leads AI projects, delivers strategic insights.	Leads AI projects and engagements, providing deep expertise in AI strategy, machine learning, and data science. Aligns AI solutions with client business objectives and delivers insights to drive decisions.	$270.00
AI Manager	Manages AI teams and project execution.	Manages AI teams and oversees the implementation of AI solutions across client projects. Responsible for planning, coordination, and execution of AI strategies, while managing stakeholder relationships.	$315.00
AI Senior Manager	Oversees complex AI initiatives and client relationships.	Leads larger and more complex AI initiatives. Oversees multiple AI projects, supporting alignment with overall business strategies and responsible for client relationship management.	$432.00
AI Director	Oversees complex AI initiatives and client relationships and assists with leading the AI practice.	Leads largest and most more complex AI initiatives. Also has responsibilities for driving the AI practice within the firm.	$472.50
AI Partner	Leads AI practice, focuses on business development and major projects.	A senior-level executive responsible for driving the AI practice within the firm. Focuses on business development, client management, and overseeing the most critical AI projects and engagements.	$495.00

We are committed to working with you to make sure the scope of our proposal is appropriate. While we experience cost increases throughout our relationships with our clients, we make every effort to structure an engagement fee arrangement which will meet your needs while providing us with sufficient resources to perform the expected work.

Project Dependencies

1. AI development work is expected to use a Microsoft and OpenAI-centric toolset that are consistent with most client's technology stack. Our expectation is that the toolset used for the service accounts to leverage will include:
   a. Microsoft Azure AI Studio/Foundry Subscriptions, Dedicated Azure Resource Group, Power Platform (Copilot Studio, Automate) subscriptions.
   b. Microsoft Azure permissions to create and enable components.
   c. Microsoft 365 Copilot for Finance
2. The hourly rates above include a 10% discount from our standard hourly rates.
3. We will not surprise you with additional fees that have not been agreed to by all parties in advance. If a question results in significant research or additional work or if we are requested to perform a consulting project, such effort is billed separately. We will provide you with an estimate of fees for such services and obtain management approval before proceeding.
4. For each project, Client will appoint a Project Manager to coordinate and oversee Crowe's work, including identifying stakeholder availability for meetings, arranging meeting logistics, and overseeing

client-related completion of assigned activities per the project schedule.

5. Crowe reports directly to the client (Member Organization) and not to any other third-party vendor.

6. The Client Project Manager will facilitate internal deliverable reviews and provide consolidated feedback to Crowe within 5 business days, unless otherwise noted in the Proposal.

7. Client will make data, documentation, and subject matter experts available to our team as needed to complete project activities. Client executives and staff will be available to assist in this effort, including by participating in meetings, surveys, information requests, and other appropriate points of engagement to successfully achieve the objectives of the project.

8. We can perform work in a mix of virtual and onsite environments. We can adjust this approach per Client's preference at any time and estimate travel expenses in advance if requested.

9. Each phase of the project will require formal deliverable signoff to indicate Client acceptance. The subsequent phase of work will begin after prior phase signoff is complete and signed off.

10. Client agrees to make all management decisions, including determining which, if any, recommendations to implement.

11. We will prepare monthly invoices for progress toward deliverables, and we ask clients to pay invoices via check, ACH, or wire transfer. P-card and Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover) are also accepted for amounts of $10,000 USD or less and if invoices are paid within 45 days.

12. No significant changes in regulatory or client expectations or actions are expected. Should significant change occur, Crowe will assess the impact on our services and fees. All fee adjustments will require approval by all parties in advance.

13. Client will not send any sensitive information to Crowe via unencrypted solutions. Client will notify Crowe of any information sent that is deemed to be confidential and it will be clearly marked as such.

14. Crowe's deliverables are intended for Client (Member) personnel only.

15. Crowe consultants will have access to all necessary systems, resources, and personnel for the duration of the engagement.

16. Crowe may also utilize third-party providers used in the ordinary course of Crowe's business operations, including without limitation, providers such as Microsoft, Rackspace, Crowe Horwath IT Services LLP (a subsidiary owned and controlled by Crowe), information security providers, and other ordinary-course third-party providers.

17. Our policy is to bill for reasonable actual out-of-pocket expenses incurred. Out-of-pocket expenses are not included in the estimate and will be billed separately with a cap of 15 percent of total fees.

Fees for Additional Services

- Professional fees for special projects outside of the agreed-upon scope will be determined based on project factors, such as type of project, subject matter experience required, scope, and resource requirements. Prior to commencing additional services, we will obtain your approval and agreement on the scoping and pricing.

- If Crowe is requested by Client, any third-party, or any other person or entity, by subpoena, investigation, other legal process, or other request to produce documents or testimony pertaining to Client or the Services, and Crowe is not named as a party in the proceeding, Client will pay Crowe for its professional time, plus out of pocket expenses, costs, and fees, as well as reasonable attorney fees, incurred in responding to such request.

6. Proposed Value Add

Respondents are encouraged to include a Value-Add section in their submission to showcase innovative approaches or supplementary functionalities that could enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our public sector operations beyond the primary scope of this RFP. This section should highlight any additional capabilities or services not explicitly detailed in the Scope of Work but that the respondent believes would be of benefit.

Crowe's AI Consultancy Services: A Value Add for NCTCOG

Crowe LLP is a leading public accounting and consulting firm with deep industry expertise, offering tailored AI consultancy services designed to empower NCTCOG TXShare Members. Our services are structured to enhance operational efficiency, improve service delivery, and deliver sustained value through scalable AI solutions. Here are the key themes that demonstrate why Crowe is an excellent addition to NCTCOG's qualified AI consultancy firms:

1. **Tailored, Scalable AI Solutions**: Crowe's AI consultancy services are designed to empower NCTCOG Members with customized AI strategies that enhance operational efficiency and service delivery. Our solutions are scalable, so they can grow with the needs of NCTCOG Members.

2. **Ethical, Secure, and Compliant AI Implementations**: We prioritize transparency, privacy, and alignment with public sector legal and ethical standards. Our commitment to ethical AI gives NCTCOG Members comfort that they can implement AI solutions that are secure and compliant.

3. **Comprehensive Data and AI Roadmaps**: Crowe delivers detailed data strategies and AI roadmaps, emphasizing quality, security, and governance. These roadmaps provide clear milestones and performance indicators, equipping NCTCOG Members with the tools needed for impactful AI innovation.

4. **Knowledge Transfer and Training**: We offer training and knowledge transfer programs that build internal capabilities within NCTCOG Member organizations. This supports effective AI adoption and sustained innovation, empowering internal teams to leverage AI tools independently.

5. **Cost-Efficient Solutions with ROI**: Crowe delivers cost-efficient AI solutions with clear ROI assessments. This helps NCTCOG Members to receive sustained value and improved outcomes from their AI investments.

Key Services Offered:

- **AI Readiness Assessment & Strategy Roadmap**: Evaluations of an organization's preparedness for AI integration, providing a streamlined approach to governance, data, operational processes, and cultural readiness.

- **Responsible AI Services**: AI Governance Assessment, Program Development, and Ongoing Monitoring to support responsible AI use aligned with regulatory standards and ethical practices.

- **AI Data Services**: Data Quality Readiness Assessment, Data Roadmap, Data Governance Strategy, Data Architecture & Integration, and Data Cleansing & Transformation.

- **AI Application Implementation and Support Services**: Business Use Case Discovery, Solution Design and Planning, Model Development and Deployment, Application Development and Deployment, and Post-deployment Support.

- **Enterprise AI Organizational Change Management**: Change Readiness Assessment, Change Strategy and Planning, Change Execution and Engagement, and Transition Support and Sustainment.

- **AI Insights and Evolution Support**: Keeping organizations informed of the latest AI advancements and identifying potential impacts and opportunities.

Crowe's comprehensive approach helps NCTCOG Members to effectively integrate AI solutions that are impactful, secure, and sustainable. Our commitment to ethical AI, combined with our extensive experience and tailored services, makes Crowe an ideal partner for NCTCOG's AI consultancy needs.

7. HUB Bonus

5 additional points will be awarded upon submission of proof of certification as a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB), Minority, Women-Owned or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.

Crowe does not qualify for the HUB Bonus.

8. Required Attachments

We have provided the Required Attachments on the following pages:

- Cover Sheet *(provided in section 1)*
- Attachment I: Instructions for Proposals Compliance and Submittal
- Attachment II: Certification of Offeror
- Attachment III: Certification Regarding Debarment
- Attachment IV: Restrictions on Lobbying
- Attachment V: Drug-Free Workplace Certification
- Attachment VI: Certification Regarding Disclosure of Conflict of Interest
- Attachment VII: Certification of Fair Business Practices
- Attachment VIII: Certification of Good Standing Texas Corporate Franchise Tax Certification
- Attachment IX: Historically Underutilized Businesses
- Attachment X: Federal and State of Texas Required Procurement Provisions
- Exhibit 1: Service Designation Areas
- Exhibit 2: Sample Market Basket Form
- Exhibit 3: Service Area Designation Forms

Due to varying file types, these pages will not be reflected on our Table of Contents.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
For
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities
RFP # 2025-018

Sealed proposals will be accepted until 2:00 PM CT, **January 17, 2025,** and then publicly opened and read aloud thereafter.

_____
Legal Name of Proposing Firm

_____   _____
Contact Person for This Proposal   Title

_____   _____
Contact Person Telephone Number   Contact Person E-Mail Address

_____
Street Address of Principal Place of Business   City/State   Zip

_____
Mailing Address of Principal Place of Business   City/State   Zip

_____   _____
Point of Contact for Contract Negotiations   Title

_____   _____
Point of Contact Telephone Number   Point of Contact Person E-Mail Address

Acknowledgment of Addenda (initial): #1 _*JM*_ #2 _____ #3 _____ #4 _____ #5 _____

NOTE: Any confidential/proprietary information must be clearly labeled as "confidential/proprietary". All proposals are subject to the Texas Public Information Act.

COVER SHEET

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT CHECKLIST

Please utilize this checklist to ensure that all required attachments are included with your proposal. IF AN ATTACHMENT DOES NOT APPLY, PLEASE MARK AS "**NOT APPLICABLE**" AND SUBMIT WITH THE PROPOSAL. FAILURE TO SUBMIT **ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS** MAY NEGATIVELY IMPACT YOUR EVALUATION SCORE.

☐ Page 1 - Cover Sheet

☐ Page 21 - Attachment I: Instructions for Proposals Compliance and Submittal

☐ Page 22 - Attachment II: Certification of Offeror

☐ Page 23 - Attachment III: Certification Regarding Debarment

☐ Page 24 - Attachment IV: Restrictions on Lobbying

☐ Page 26 - Attachment V: Drug-Free Workplace Certification

☐ Page 27 - Attachment VI: Certification Regarding Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

☐ Page 30 - Attachment VII: Certification of Fair Business Practices

☐ Page 31 - Attachment VIII: Certification of Good Standing Texas Corporate Franchise Tax Certification

☐ Page 32 - Attachment IX: Historically Underutilized Businesses

☐ Page 33 - Attachment X: Federal and State of Texas Required Procurement Provisions

☐ Page 36 - Exhibit 1: Description of Desired Product Categories for Proposed Pricing

☐ Page 37 - Exhibit 2: Sample Market Basket Form

☐ Page 38 – Exhibit 3: Service Area Designation Forms

Respondent recognizes that all proposals must be submitted electronically through Public Purchase by the RFP due date and time. All other forms of submission will be deemed non-responsive and will not be opened or considered.

ATTACHMENT I: INSTRUCTIONS
FOR PROPOSALS COMPLIANCE AND SUBMITTAL

Compliance with the Solicitation

Submissions must be in strict compliance with this solicitation. Failure to comply with all provisions of the solicitation may result in disqualification.

Compliance with the NCTCOG Standard Terms and Conditions
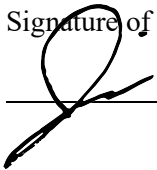
By signing its submission, Offeror acknowledges that it has read, understands and agrees to comply with the NCTCOG standard terms and conditions.

Acknowledgment of Insurance Requirements

By signing its submission, Offeror acknowledges that it has read and understands the insurance requirements for the submission. Offeror also understands that the evidence of required insurance must be submitted within ten (10) working days following notification of its offer being accepted; otherwise, NCTCOG may rescind its acceptance of the Offeror's proposals. The insurance requirements are outlined in Section 2.2 - General Terms and Conditions.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

_____

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date:_____

ATTACHMENT II: CERTIFICATIONS OF OFFEROR

I hereby certify that the information contained in this proposal and any attachments is true and correct and may be viewed as an accurate representation of proposed services to be provided by this organization. I certify that no employee, board member, or agent of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has assisted in the preparation of this proposal. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements and provisions of the solicitation and that the organization will comply with the regulations and other applicable local, state, and federal regulations and directives in the implementation of this contract.

I also certify that I have read and understood all sections of this solicitation and will comply with all the terms and conditions as stated; and furthermore that I, _____(typed   or   printed   name)   certify   that   I   am   the _____ (title) of the corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship, or other eligible entity named as offeror and respondent herein and that I am legally authorized to sign this offer and to submit it to the North Central Texas Council of Governments, on behalf of said offeror by authority of its governing body.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

_____

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date:_____

ATTACHMENT III: CERTIFICATION
REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations Implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 45 CFR Part 93, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85, 668, 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that both it and its principals:

1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency;

2. Have not within a three-year period preceding this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction, violation of federal or State antitrust statues or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records, making false Proposals, or receiving stolen property;

3. Are not presently indicated for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity with commission of any of the offense enumerated in Paragraph (2) of this certification; and,

4. Have not within a three-year period preceding this contract had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default.

Where the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is unable to certify to any of the qualifications in this certification, such prospective recipient shall attach an explanation to this certification form.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

_____

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date:_____

ATTACHMENT IV: RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING

Section 319 of Public Law 101-121 prohibits recipients of federal contracts, grants, and loans exceeding $100,000 at any tier under a federal contract from using appropriated funds for lobbying the Executive or Legislative Branches of the federal government in connection with a specific contract, grant, or loan. Section 319 also requires each person who requests or receives a federal contract or grant in excess of $100,000 to disclose lobbying.

No appropriated funds may be expended by the recipient of a federal contract, loan, or cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any federal executive department or agency as well as any independent regulatory commission or government corporation, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with any of the following covered federal actions: the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan the entering into of any cooperative agreement and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

As a recipient of a federal grant exceeding $100,000, NCTCOG requires its subcontractors of that grant to file a certification, set forth in Appendix B.1, that neither the agency nor its employees have made, or will make, any payment prohibited by the preceding paragraph.

Subcontractors are also required to file with NCTCOG a disclosure form, set forth in Appendix B.2, if the subcontractor or its employees have made or have agreed to make any payment using nonappropriated funds (to include profits from any federal action), which would be prohibited if paid for with appropriated funds.

LOBBYING CERTIFICATION
FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge or belief, that:

1. No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an officer or employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative Contract, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification or any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative contract; and

2. If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, and or cooperative contract, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form – LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying", in accordance with the instructions.

3. The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers and that all sub-recipients shall certify accordingly.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

_____

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date:_____

ATTACHMENT V: DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE CERTIFICATION

The _____ (company name) will provide a Drug Free Work Place in compliance with the Drug Free Work Place Act of 1988. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited on the premises of the _____ (company name) or any of its facilities. Any employee who violates this prohibition will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. All employees, as a condition of employment, will comply with this policy.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations Implementing Sections 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85, 668 and 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned subcontractor certifies it will provide a drug-free workplace by:

Publishing a policy Proposal notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the consequences of any such action by an employee;

Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the subcontractor's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, the availability of counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed on employees for drug violations in the workplace;

Providing each employee with a copy of the subcontractor's policy Proposal;

Notifying the employees in the subcontractor's policy Proposal that as a condition of employment under this subcontract, employees shall abide by the terms of the policy Proposal and notifying the subcontractor in writing within five days after any conviction for a violation by the employee of a criminal drug abuse statue in the workplace;

Notifying the Board within ten (10) days of the subcontractor's receipt of a notice of a conviction of any employee; and,

Taking appropriate personnel action against an employee convicted of violating a criminal drug statue or requires such employee to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

_____

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date:_____

ATTACHMENT VI: DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
CERTIFICATION REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The undersigned certifies that, to the best of his or her knowledge or belief, that:

"No employee of the contractor, no member of the contractor's governing board or body, and no person who exercises any functions or responsibilities in the review or approval of the undertaking or carrying out of this contract shall participate in any decision relating to this contract which affects his/her personal pecuniary interest.

Executives and employees of contractor shall be particularly aware of the varying degrees of influence that can be exerted by personal friends and associates and, in administering the contract, shall exercise due diligence to avoid situations which give rise to an assertion that favorable treatment is being granted to friends and associates. When it is in the public interest for the contractor to conduct business with a friend or associate of an executive or employee of the contractor, an elected official in the area or a member of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, a permanent record of the transaction shall be retained.

Any executive or employee of the contractor, an elected official in the area or a member of the NCTCOG, shall not solicit or accept money or any other consideration from a third person, for the performance of an act reimbursed in whole or part by contractor or Department. Supplies, tools, materials, equipment or services purchased with contract funds shall be used solely for purposes allowed under this contract. No member of the NCTCOG shall cast a vote on the provision of services by that member (or any organization which that member represents) or vote on any matter which would provide a direct or indirect financial benefit to the member or any business or organization which the member directly represents".

No officer, employee or paid consultant of the contractor is a member of the NCTCOG.

No officer, manager or paid consultant of the contractor is married to a member of the NCTCOG.

No member of NCTCOG directly owns, controls or has interest in the contractor.

The contractor has disclosed any interest, fact, or circumstance that does or may present a potential conflict of interest.

No member of the NCTCOG receives compensation from the contractor for lobbying activities as defined in Chapter 305 of the Texas Government Code.

Should the contractor fail to abide by the foregoing covenants and affirmations regarding conflict of interest, the contractor shall not be entitled to the recovery of any costs or expenses incurred in relation to the contract and shall immediately refund to the North Central Texas Council of Governments any fees or expenses that may have been paid under this contract and shall further be liable for any other costs incurred or damages sustained by the NCTCOG as it relates to this contract.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

_____

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date:_____

CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

FORM CIQ

For vendor doing business with local governmental entity

	OFFICE USE ONLY
This questionnaire reflects changes made to the law by H.B. 23, 84th Leg., Regular Session.	Date Received
This questionnaire is being filed in accordance with Chapter 176, Local Government Code, by a vendor who has a business relationship as defined by Section 176.001(1-a) with a local governmental entity and the vendor meets requirements under Section 176.006(a).	
By law this questionnaire must be filed with the records administrator of the local governmental entity not later than the 7th business day after the date the vendor becomes aware of facts that require the statement to be filed. *See* Section 176.006(a-1), Local Government Code.	
A vendor commits an offense if the vendor knowingly violates Section 176.006, Local Government Code. An offense under this section is a misdemeanor.	

1   Name of vendor who has a business relationship with local governmental entity.

2   ☐   Check this box if you are filing an update to a previously filed questionnaire. (The law requires that you file an updated completed questionnaire with the appropriate filing authority not later than the 7th business day after the date on which you became aware that the originally filed questionnaire was incomplete or inaccurate.)

3   Name of local government officer about whom the information is being disclosed.

_____
Name of Officer

4   Describe each employment or other business relationship with the local government officer, or a family member of the officer, as described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A). Also describe any family relationship with the local government officer. Complete subparts A and B for each employment or business relationship described. Attach additional pages to this Form CIQ as necessary.

     A. Is the local government officer or a family member of the officer receiving or likely to receive taxable income, other than investment income, from the vendor?
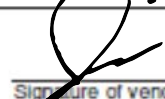
         ☐ Yes   ☐ No

     B. Is the vendor receiving or likely to receive taxable income, other than investment income, from or at the direction of the local government officer or a family member of the officer AND the taxable income is not received from the local governmental entity?

         ☐ Yes   ☐ No

5   Describe each employment or business relationship that the vendor named in Section 1 maintains with a corporation or other business entity with respect to which the local government officer serves as an officer or director, or holds an ownership interest of one percent or more.

6   ☐   Check this box if the vendor has given the local government officer or a family member of the officer one or more gifts as described in Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), excluding gifts described in Section 176.003(a-1).

7

_____   _____
Signature of vendor doing business with the governmental entity   Date

Form provided by Texas Ethics Commission   www.ethics.state.tx.us   Revised 1/1/2021

CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE
For vendor doing business with local governmental entity

A complete copy of Chapter 176 of the Local Government Code may be found at http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.176.htm. For easy reference, below are some of the sections cited on this form.

Local Government Code § 176.001(1-a): "Business relationship" means a connection between two or more parties based on commercial activity of one of the parties. The term does not include a connection based on:
    (A) a transaction that is subject to rate or fee regulation by a federal, state, or local governmental entity or an agency of a federal, state, or local governmental entity;
    (B) a transaction conducted at a price and subject to terms available to the public; or
    (C) a purchase or lease of goods or services from a person that is chartered by a state or federal agency and that is subject to regular examination by, and reporting to, that agency.

Local Government Code § 176.003(a)(2)(A) and (B):
    (a) A local government officer shall file a conflicts disclosure statement with respect to a vendor if:
        ***
        (2) the vendor:
            (A) has an employment or other business relationship with the local government officer or a family member of the officer that results in the officer or family member receiving taxable income, other than investment income, that exceeds $2,500 during the 12-month period preceding the date that the officer becomes aware that
                (i) a contract between the local governmental entity and vendor has been executed; or
                (ii) the local governmental entity is considering entering into a contract with the vendor;
            (B) has given to the local government officer or a family member of the officer one or more gifts that have an aggregate value of more than $100 in the 12-month period preceding the date the officer becomes aware that:
                (i) a contract between the local governmental entity and vendor has been executed; or
                (ii) the local governmental entity is considering entering into a contract with the vendor.

Local Government Code § 176.006(a) and (a-1)
    (a) A vendor shall file a completed conflict of interest questionnaire if the vendor has a business relationship with a local governmental entity and:
        (1) has an employment or other business relationship with a local government officer of that local governmental entity, or a family member of the officer, described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A);
        (2) has given a local government officer of that local governmental entity, or a family member of the officer, one or more gifts with the aggregate value specified by Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), excluding any gift described by Section 176.003(a-1); or
        (3) has a family relationship with a local government officer of that local governmental entity.
    (a-1) The completed conflict of interest questionnaire must be filed with the appropriate records administrator not later than the seventh business day after the later of:
        (1) the date that the vendor:
            (A) begins discussions or negotiations to enter into a contract with the local governmental entity; or
            (B) submits to the local governmental entity an application, response to a request for proposals or bids, correspondence, or another writing related to a potential contract with the local governmental entity; or
        (2) the date the vendor becomes aware:
            (A) of an employment or other business relationship with a local government officer, or a family member of the officer, described by Subsection (a);
            (B) that the vendor has given one or more gifts described by Subsection (a); or
            (C) of a family relationship with a local government officer.

ATTACHMENT VII: CERTIFICATION OF FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

That the submitter has not been found guilty of unfair business practices in a judicial or state agency administrative proceeding during the preceding year. The submitter further affirms that no officer of the submitter has served as an officer of any company found guilty of unfair business practices in a judicial or state agency administrative during the preceding year.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Signature of Authorized Representative:

Date:

ATTACHMENT VIII: CERTIFICATION OF GOOD STANDING
TEXAS CORPORATE FRANCHISE TAX CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to Article 2.45, Texas Business Corporation Act, state agencies may not contract with for profit corporations that are delinquent in making state franchise tax payments. The following certification that the corporation entering into this offer is current in its franchise taxes must be signed by the individual authorized on Form 2031, Corporate Board of Directors Resolution, to sign the contract for the corporation.

The undersigned authorized representative of the corporation making the offer herein certified that the following indicated Proposal is true and correct and that the undersigned understands that making a false Proposal is a material breach of contract and is grounds for contract cancellation.

Indicate the certification that applies to your corporation:

_____   The Corporation is a for-profit corporation and certifies that it is not delinquent in its franchise tax payments to the State of Texas.

_____   The Corporation is a non-profit corporation or is otherwise not subject to payment of franchise taxes to the State of Texas.

Type of Business (if not corporation):   ☐   Sole Proprietor

☐   Partnership

☐   Other

Pursuant to Article 2.45, Texas Business Corporation Act, the North Central Texas Council of Governments reserves the right to request information regarding state franchise tax payments.

_____
(Printed/Typed Name and Title of Authorized Representative)

_____
Signature

Date:_____

ATTACHMENT IX: HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES, MINORITY OR WOMEN-OWNED OR DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs), minority or women-owned or disadvantaged businesses enterprises (M/W/DBE) are encouraged to participate in the solicitation process.

NCTCOG recognizes the certifications of most agencies. HUB vendors <u>must</u> submit a copy of their certification for consideration during the evaluation of their proposal. Please attach the copy to this form. This applies only to the Offeror and not a subcontractor.

Texas vendors who are not currently certified are encouraged to contact either the Texas United Certification Program, State of Texas HUB Program, or the North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency, among others. Contact:

> State of Texas HUB Program
> Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
> Lyndon B. Johnson State Office Building
> 111 East 17th Street
> Austin, Texas 78774
> (512) 463-6958
> http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/

> North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency
> 624 Six Flags Drive, Suite 100
> Arlington, TX 76011
> (817) 640-0606
> http://www.nctrca.org/certification.html

> Texas United Certification Program
> USDOT website at
> https://www.transportation.gov/DBE

<u>You must include a copy of your certification document as part of this solicitation to receive points in the evaluation.</u>

Vendor to Sign Below to Attest to Validity of Certification:

_____
Vendor Name

_____
Authorized Signature

_____   _____
Typed Name   Date

☐ **Not applicable.**

The following provisions are mandated by Federal and/or State of Texas law. Failure to certify to the following will result in disqualification of consideration for contract. Entities or agencies that are not able to comply with the following will be ineligible for consideration of contract award.

PROHIBITED TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION

This Contract is subject to the Public Law 115-232, Section 889, and 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, including §200.216 and §200.471, for prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance or equipment. Public Law 115-232, Section 889, identifies that restricted telecommunications and video surveillance equipment or services (e.g., phones, internet, video surveillance, cloud servers) include the following:

A) Telecommunications equipment that is produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliates of such entities).
B) Video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporations, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliates of such entities).
C) Telecommunications or video surveillance services used by such entities or using such equipment.
D) Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, Director of the National Intelligence, or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by the government of a covered foreign country. The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that no funds under this Contract will be obligated or expended to procure or obtain telecommunication or video surveillance services or equipment or systems that use covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as a critical technology as part of any system prohibited by 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable provisions in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.

☐ **The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable regulations in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.**

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

DATE: _____

-OR-

☐ **The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it cannot comply with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable regulations in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.**

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

DATE: _____

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST FIREARMS ENTITIES OR FIREARMS TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

This contract is subject to the Texas Local Government Code chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10, prohibiting contracts with companies who discriminate against firearm and ammunition industries.

TLGC chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10, identifies that "discrimination against a firearm entity or firearm trade association" includes the following:

A) means, with respect to the entity or association, to:
   I. refuse to engage in the trade of any goods or services with the entity or association based solely on its status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association; and
   II. refrain from continuing an existing business relationship with the entity or association based solely on its status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association; or
   III. terminate an existing business relationship with the entity or association based solely on its status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association.

B) An exception to this provision excludes the following:
   I. contracts with a sole-source provider; or
   II. the government entity does not receive bids from companies who can provide written verification.

The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that they have no practice, policy, guidance, or directive that discriminates against a firearm entity or firearm trade association; and that they will not discriminate during the term of the contract against a firearm entity or firearm trade association as prohibited by Chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10 of the Texas Local Government Code.

☐ **The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of Chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10.**

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

DATE: _____

-OR-

☐ **The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it cannot comply with the requirements of Chapter 2274, Subtitle F, Title 10.**

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

DATE: _____

BOYCOTTING OF CERTAIN ENERGY COMPANIES

This contract is subject to the Texas Local Government Code chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8, prohibiting contracts with companies who boycott certain energy companies.

TLGC chapter Code chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8, identifies that "boycott energy company" means, without an ordinary business purpose, refusing to deal with, terminating business activities with, or otherwise taking any action that is intended to penalize, inflict economic harm on, or limit commercial relations with a company because the company:

    I.   engages in the exploration, production, utilization, transportation, sale, or manufacturing of fossil fuel-based energy and does not commit or pledge to meet environmental standards beyond applicable federal and state law; and

    II.   does business with a company described by paragraph (I).

The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that they do not boycott energy companies, and that they will not boycott energy companies during the term of the contract as prohibited by Chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8 of the Texas Local Government Code.

☐ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of Chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

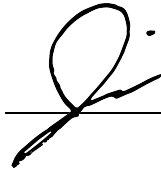NAME OF COMPANY: _____

DATE: _____

-OR-

☐ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it cannot comply with the requirements of Chapter 809, Subtitle A, Title 8.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT 1: CATEGORIES OFFERED AND PRICING PROPOSAL

Place a checkmark next to each category you are offering in your proposal:

_____ Service Category #1: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities

_____ Service Category #2: Other Ancillary Goods or Services (List Below)

The Respondent shall furnish a comprehensive cost pricing model for this RFP, pursuant to the guidance provided in Section 5.13. Please delineate pricing based on **Service Category 1**, **Service Category 2**, or a combined pricing model for both categories. Label your pricing proposal as "Exhibit 1 – Pricing," and use as many pages as necessary to provide detailed information.

Important Note: This RFP is not tied to any specific project at this time. The purpose is to secure pricing for potential future use of AI solutions by public sector entities. Respondents are encouraged to provide pricing models that are as descriptive and flexible as possible to accommodate the varied needs of potential users.

In addition to the requested pricing, Respondents are encouraged to include a retainage rate based on the hourly rate of each staff member for any future projects that may arise but are not currently anticipated by this RFP.

Refer to Exhibit 1 –Pricing Proposal Worksheet Attachment.

EXHIBIT 2: SAMPLE MARKET BASKET FORM

This Exhibit is not applicable for this solicitation.

EXHIBIT 3: SERVICE DESIGNATION AREAS

Texas Service Area Designation or Identification			
Proposing Firm Name:			
Notes:	**Indicate in the appropriate box whether you are proposing to service the entire state of Texas**		
	Will service the entire state of Texas	Will not service the entire state of Texas	
	If you are not proposing to service the entire state of Texas, designate on the form below the regions that you are proposing to provide goods and/or services to. By designating a region or regions, you are certifying that you are willing and able to provide the proposed goods and services.		

Item	Region	Metropolitan Statistical Areas	Designated Service Area
1.	North Central Texas	16 counties in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan area	
2.	High Plains	Amarillo Lubbock	
3.	Northwest	Abilene Wichita Falls	
4.	Upper East	Longview Texarkana, TX-AR Metro Area Tyler	
5.	Southeast	Beaumont-Port Arthur	
6.	Gulf Coast	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land	
7.	Central Texas	College Station-Bryan Killeen-Temple Waco	
8.	Capital Texas	Austin-Round Rock	
9.	Alamo	San Antonio-New Braunfels Victoria	
10.	South Texas	Brownsville-Harlingen Corpus Christi Laredo McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	
11.	West Texas	Midland Odessa San Angelo	
12.	Upper Rio Grande	El Paso	

(Exhibit 3 continued on next page)

(Exhibit 3 continued)

	Nationwide Service Area Designation or Identification Form		
Proposing Firm Name:			
Notes:	**Indicate in the appropriate box whether you are proposing to provide service to all Fifty (50) States.**		
	Will service all fifty (50) states	Will not service fifty (50) states	
	If you are not proposing to service to all fifty (50) states, then designate on the form below the states that you will provide service to. By designating a state or states, you are certifying that you are willing and able to provide the proposed goods and services in those states. **If you are only proposing to service a specific region, metropolitan statistical area (MSA), or City in a State, then indicate as such in the appropriate column box.**		
Item	**State**	**Region/MSA/City** **(write "ALL" if proposing to service entire state)**	**Designated as a Service Area**
1.	Alabama		
2.	Alaska		
3.	Arizona		
4.	Arkansas		
5.	California		
6.	Colorado		
7.	Connecticut		
8.	Delaware		
9.	Florida		
10.	Georgia		
11.	Hawaii		
12.	Idaho		
13.	Illinois		
14.	Indiana		
15.	Iowa		
16.	Kansas		
17.	Kentucky		
18.	Louisiana		
19.	Maine		
20.	Maryland		

21.	Massachusetts		
22.	Michigan		
23.	Minnesota		
24.	Mississippi		
25.	Missouri		
26	Montana		
27.	Nebraska		
28.	Nevada		
29.	New Hampshire		
30.	New Jersey		
31.	New Mexico		
32.	New York		
33.	North Carolina		
34.	North Dakota		
35.	Ohio		
36.	Oregon		
37.	Oklahoma		
38.	Pennsylvania		
39.	Rhode Island		
40.	South Carolina		
41.	South Dakota		
42.	Tennessee		
43.	Texas		
44.	Utah		
45.	Vermont		
46.	Virginia		
47.	Washington		
48.	West Virginia		
49.	Wisconsin		
50.	Wyoming		

End of Exhibit 3

Attachment A: Resumes

Team member resumes have been provided under separate cover as supplemental information.

![Crowe logo]

John R. Manilla
CPA, PMP – Partner

John.Manilla@crowe.com
www.crowe.com

Profile

Mr. Manilla is a Finance and Compliance Partner within Crowe's Public Sector Practice within the Consulting Business Unit. He has over 15 years of consulting experience in both the highly regulated environments of the public sector and financial services. John has served clients ranging from local, state, and federal governmental agencies, institutions of higher education, as well as financial institution clients ranging from small community banks to national multi-billion-dollar banks. Many of John's projects consist of managing state governments' compliance efforts with federal programs. These projects often center around business process design and automation, incorporating technology solutions to drive efficiency, consistency, and quality.

Federal Program Compliance Experience

Mr. Manilla has supported statewide (Illinois) compliance with 2 CFR Part 200 – the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principals, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – averaging 4,000 distinct funding recipients annually. Additionally, he has supported statewide (Ohio) compliance with the USDA's Child Nutrition Cluster programs involving approximately 1300 distinct funding recipients each of which undergo two separate review processes on a 5-year revolving basis.

AI Leadership in Public Sector Consulting

Mr. Manilla is an AI advocate and is driving the adoption and innovation of AI within the internal audit practice at Crowe. John has delivered multiple high impact speaking engagements on AI, showcasing its transformative potential. Committed to embedding AI in everyday workflows, he leads efforts of team-wide adoption while exploring cutting-edge use cases that elevate operational efficiency. Additionally, he spearheads initiatives to respond to RFPs for AI consulting services within the public sector, positioning the practice as a leader in AI-driven solutions.

Client Focus

Industries:
- Public Sector

AI Speaking Engagements:
- 2024 NASACT Annual Conference
- 2024 NGMA Fall Forum
- 2024 NASACT Government Internal Audit Summit

Services:
- AI Enablement
- Business Process Design & Automation
- Business Process Reengineering
- Cloud Solution Implementations
- Data Collection & Analysis
- Data Visualization
- GASB 87 & 96 Implementations
- Geospatial Enablement
- LeaseQuery Implementations
- Project Management

Public Sector Clients
- Battery Park City Authority
- Bridgewater State University
- City of Long Beach NY
- City of Los Angeles
- District of Columbia Retirement Board
- Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- Nassau County NY
- Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
- Salem State University
- San Joaquin County Office of Education
- Town of East Hampton
- University of Florida Health
- University of Mary Washington
- University of Massachusetts
- University System of New Hampshire

Education & Certifications

- Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- NetSuite SuiteFoundation Certification
- Grand Valley State University, Michigan
  - Bachelor of Business Administration, Major in Accounting
  - Master of Science, Accounting

Client Listing – Recent Consulting Engagements

City of Los Angeles | Internal Controls Self-Assessment Implementation

Role: Executive Oversight, Project Manager & Advisor | Dates: June 2023 – June 2024

The City of Los Angeles hired Crowe in 2023 to implement a technology solution to support their efforts around administering an internal controls self-assessment across all City departments. Crowe has developed a dynamic questionnaire application built on the Microsoft Power Platform known as the Crowe Dynamic Review Manager (CDRM) which was configured to administer this self-assessment. Mr. Manilla oversees both the design and development efforts of the CDRM application as well as this engagement having the role of project executive.

Illinois Governor's Office of Management and Budget | Audit Report Reviews

Role: Project Advisor, Process Design Oversight, Software Solution Advisor | Dates: October 2016 – Present

The Illinois Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) hired Crowe in 2016 to assist in its newly assigned responsibility to review the financial statement and single audit reports of every State of Illinois grantee, as part of its monitoring requirements. Crowe worked closely with GOMB during the planning stages of the project to establish a workflow which would provide transparency to the statewide process. For the past 7+ years, Crowe has continued to work with GOMB on modifications and improvements to the review process for changes in accounting pronouncements, auditing standards, and OMB guidance. To date, Crowe has reviewed approximately 17,000+ grantee audit reports for GOMB. Crowe is completing the audit report reviews through a proprietary review system and providing GOMB the results through a secure data exchange. Mr. Manilla designed the original process management tool used to facilitate all grantee audit report reviews up through mid-2024 when we anticipate a cut-over to a new system built on the Microsoft Power Platform. He has continued to advise on system updates as well as overseeing the design, development, and transition to the new system which is expected to go live in Q1 2024.

Battery Park City Authority

Role: Project Manager & Functional Lead | Dates: January 2020 – Present

Crowe is currently engaged by Battery Park City Authority, BPCA, to implement the Crowe Lease Accounting Optimizer for GASB 87. John acts as a project manager and functional lead, leading the implementation of the solution. John, a certified public accountant, specializes in GASB 87 and Lease Accounting and has helped BPCA organize their lease portfolio in order to comply with GASB 87.

Ivy Tech Community College

Role: Project Manager & Functional Lead | Dates: January 2020 – Present

Crowe is currently engaged by Ivy Tech Community College System, Ivy Tech, to implement the Crowe Lease Accounting Optimizer for GASB 87 and provide lease abstraction accounting consulting services. John acts as a project manager and functional lead, leading the implementation of the solution. John, a certified public accountant, specializes in GASB 87 and Lease Accounting and has helped Ivy Tech organize their lease portfolio in order to comply with GASB 87.

Ohio Department of Education | Procurement Compliance Reviews

Role: Project Advisor, Process Design Oversight, Software Solution Advisor | Dates: 2018 – Present

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) hired Crowe in 2018 to conduct Procurement Compliance Reviews, in accordance with the procurement/contracting requirements set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for School Nutrition Programs. Crowe has completed over 1500+ reviews and provided technical assistance regarding the interpretation and implementation of the requirements by the School Food Authorities. Ms. Manilla designed the original project management application utilized to organize the few hundred SFA reviews completed annually. He has assisted with updates and improvements to this system over the years and in 2024 is advising on migrating the entire project into a new solution build on the Microsoft Power Platform.

Ohio Department of Education | Resource Management Reviews

Role: Project Advisor, Process Design Oversight, Software Solution Advisor | Dates: 2017 – Present

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) hired Crowe in 2017 to conduct Resource Management (RM) reviews, in accordance with the requirements set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the School Nutrition Programs (SNP). The reviews focus on program net cash resources, paid lunch equity (lunch pricing), revenue from nonprogram foods, and indirect costs. The Crowe team contacts the School Food Authorities (SFA), collects the required documentation to complete the assessment tools, and provides review reports to ODE in the established timeframes. The Crowe team is also required to provide technical assistance and proper compliance guidance to the SFAs to help them improve their processes and accounting over resource management of the School Nutrition Program. Ms. Manilla designed the original project management application utilized to organize the few hundred SFA reviews completed annually. He has assisted with updates and improvements to this system over the years and in 2024 is advising on migrating the entire project into a new solution build on the Microsoft Power Platform.

University of Massachusetts

Role: Project Manager & Functional Lead | Dates: June 2021 – March 2024

Crowe is currently engaged by the University of Massachusetts, UMass, to implement the Crowe Lease Accounting Optimizer for GASB 87. John acts as a project manager and functional lead, leading the implementation of the solution. John, a certified public accountant, specializes in GASB 87 and Lease Accounting and has helped UMass organize their lease portfolio in order to comply with GASB 87.

University of Florida Health Affiliates (5) | GASB 87 Implementation

Role: Executive Oversight, Software Solution Implementation Lead | Dates: June 2021 – March 2024

The University of Florida Health (5 of the affiliate entities) hired Crowe to implement a technology solution to support their adoption of the new lease accounting standard, GASB 87. Crowe developed a solution to support GASB 87 built on NetSuite which was implemented to support the lease accounting needs of these 5 entities. Mr. Manilla oversaw both the design and development efforts of this lease accounting solution (known as the Crowe Lease Accounting Optimizer) as well as this engagement having the role of project executive.

![Crowe logo]

Luis Lopez, CPA
Partner

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luis.lopezgaray@crowe.com
www.crowe.com

Profile

Luis is a D365 ERP Partner Crowe and a leader of the AI Transformation consulting practice.He is an nnovative leader in AI transformation and financial consulting with extensive experience in leveraging cutting-edge technologies to drive efficiency and growth in the accounting industry. Specializes in developing AI-powered solutions for complex business challenges, particularly in the tower industry.

Professional and Industry Experience

Luis has over 10 years of experience in audit, SEC reporting, acquisition accounting, and ERP implementation and AI consulting. He is passionate about the merge of technical accounting and technology and has created industry-leading solutions for lease accounting compliance, financial reporting, and business transformation. He is the co-author publications on the new lease accounting standards, and has been recognized as a Rising Star of the Profession and an Innovation Award winner by Consulting Magazine and Crowe, respectively

Education & Certifications

- Bachelor of Art, Accounting
  - Goshen College | Goshen, IN
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA)

Projects and Innovations

- **Crowe Tower Accelerator:** Led the development of this AI-powered ERP system, specifically designed for tower companies to streamline operations and manage leases efficiently.
- **AI-Powered Lease Automation:** Developed a system to extract and translate lease data with higher accuracy and speed, improving downstream operations, accounting, and billing for tower companies
- **Invoice Automation System:** Created an AI-driven solution for automating both incoming and outgoing invoices, significantly reducing manual work and increasing efficiency for accounting departments

Client Focus

Services:

- Artificial Intelligence in Accounting
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems
- Financial Consulting and External Audits
- AI-Driven Process Automation
- Tower Industry Operations
- Lease Accounting and Automation
- Data Extraction and Analysis

Industries:

- Manufacturing and Distribution

Community Involvement:

- Church in City, Chicago, volunteer
- World relief, Good neighbor volunteer

Professional Affiliations:

- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)

Publications and Speaking Engagements

- **"The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Towers"**: Contributed insights to an industry article discussing the transformative potential of AI in the tower industry
- **"Technology Issues to Consider in Lease Accounting"**: Co-authored an article exploring the role of AI and other technologies in addressing challenges related to the new lease accounting standards
- Regular speaker on AI adoption in Private Equity and its impact on financial operations.
- Presented at industry conferences on the future of AI in accounting and consulting.

Crowe

Mitchell Mathews
Senior Manager

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Suite 2600
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1224
Direct +1 (312) 606-7118
Mitchell.Mathews@crowe.com
www.crowe.com

Profile

Mitchell Mathews is part of Crowe's AI Transformation team with a focus on autonomous agents and automation delivery. Mr. Mathews obtained his MBA degree from Quinlan School of Business in Chicago, IL.

Professional and Industry Experience

Mr. Mathews plays an essential role in implementing Crowe's AI Transformation Go to Market strategy and spearheads discovery for both internal and external AI use cases. He specializes in both Low-Code and Pro-Code solutions within the Microsoft Power Platform and Azure ecosystem.

Education & Certifications

- MBA, Finance
  - Loyola University Chicago | Chicago, IL
- Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)
- Lean Six Sigma Black Belt (LSSBB)

Client Focus

Services:

- AI Agents
- AI Advisory
- AI Transformation
- Automation
- Process Optimization

Industries:

- Diversified
- Public Sector
- Technology, Media, and Telecommunications

Professional Affiliations

- United States Artificial Intelligence Institute
- Six Sigma Global Institute

Experience

Crowe LLP

AI Transformation Practice
Role: AI Senior Functional Lead | Date: October 2024 – Current
Configure and publish an autonomous agent PoC that can summarize document reviews to key data points reducing manual effort and increasing precision based on trained SOP knowledge and prompt engineering.

Automation Center of Excellence
Role: Business Process and Optimization Specialist | Date: December 2017 – October 2022
Trained an Azure AI neural network model using machine learning best practices on Individual, Joint, S-Corp, and Fiduciary tax return forms that plugged into a Power Automate solution for automating tax e-filings. Co-founder of Crowe's internal Automation CoE built on a federated operating model that leveraged enterprise process automation tools (i.e. Power Platform, BluePrism).

Audit Service Delivery Platform
Role: Business Analyst | Date: March 2017 – December 2017
Interviewed key stakeholders, drafted functional & non-functional requirements, developed & executed test plans, reviewed results from testing, updated RCM/change logs, and developed OCM/training plans for Crowe auditors.

Matthew Palka
Technical Lead

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Chicago, Illinois 60601
Direct 630.974.9014
Fax 312.899.5300
matthew.palka@crowe.com
www.crowe.com

Profile

Matt is a seasoned AI Technical Lead with a proven track record in designing and implementing enterprise-grade AI/ML solutions. He combines deep technical expertise with strategic vision to lead development teams in delivering scalable, innovative AI systems. With experience spanning supply chain, manufacturing, oil & gas, and financial services, Matt excels at driving operational efficiency and fostering cross-functional collaboration. His focus on responsible AI practices, robust DevOps, and AIOps frameworks ensures the development of high-impact, sustainable solutions that empower organizations to stay ahead in a rapidly evolving digital world.

Professional and Industry Experience

Matt has over 8 years of consulting experience in data analytics, data science, and Generative AI engineering. He has led initiatives involving anomaly detection, document intelligence, and AI-powered analytics. With a strong background in consulting and project management, he has successfully guided discovery sessions, developed proof of concepts (PoCs) and minimum viable products (MVPs), and implemented AI frameworks. His expertise also includes leveraging platforms like Databricks, Azure AI services, and Power BI to drive data-driven transformation.

Education & Certifications

- M.S in Data Science and AI
  - Northwestern University | Evanston, IL
- B.S.B.A Accounting Finance
  - Saint Louis University | St. Louis, MO
- Microsoft Certifications
  - Azure AI Engineer | Azure AI Fundamentals

Client Focus

Market Sectors:
- Consulting
- Retail
- Financial Services
- Automotive
- Insurance
- Oil & Gas

Services:
- AI Transformation
- Generative AI
- MLOps/LLMOps/AIOps
- Machine Learning
- Python Development
- Web Development
- API Management
- Agentic Frameworks
- Database Management
- Data Visualization

Project Experience

- **Global Generative AI Service Center at Big 4 Consulting Firm** – Led the generative AI proof of concepts to production for global efforts to optimize firm efficiency by automating financial reporting and client data analysis. Using AI-driven frameworks such as AutoGen and Semantic Kernel to reduced reporting time and increase efficiency. Applied a RAG architecture to streamline Trial Balance processing and understanding. These initiatives pushed the boundaries of the transformative power of Generative AI driving business growth and technological advancement.

- **Insurance Claims Generative AI** – Developed a proof-of-concept Generative AI for Insurance Claims analysis to efficiently process and extract information from PDF and Word files. The system intelligently chunks and decodes data, making it ready for analysis with Azure Cognitive Services. Documents are indexed, vectorized, and seamlessly embedded with OpenAI models for further processing, showcasing a comprehensive solution for automate the handling of claims documentation.

- **Social Media Marketing Generative AI** – Delivered Azure Machine Learning solution to create a virtual Teen(AI)ger with multiple personas, with which users could interact with to study the influence of social media on a virtual AI teenager, The responses of the different personas were analyzed to allow research into the dangers of excessive exposure to social media for developing teens.

- **Retail Natural Disaster Predictive Stocking** – Developed a data pipeline in python for a supply chain team to transform and orchestrate the movement millions of rows of SKU data to resolve backlog of product shipments across North America. Database design was focused on making the tables flexible and consumable across multiple end-users and departments.

Joseph Gill
Manager

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Direct +1 (847) 767-5040
Joseph.Gill@crowe.com
www.crowe.com

Profile

Joseph Gill is a seasoned professional specializing in AI, IT strategy, and data-driven business transformation. Mr. Gill is a member of Crowe's AI Transformation team, as well as Crowe's Chief of Staff for the firm's Office of AI Leader. With over 8 years of experience in technology and consulting, he leverages his expertise in designing and implementing innovative technology strategies to drive organizational growth and value.

Professional and Industry Experience

- **AI & IT Strategy**: Developed tailored IT and AI strategies for mid-market firms, addressing complex challenges in technology integration and scaling operations. Delivered 3-year roadmaps for transformative digital initiatives.
- **Data & Applications Strategy**: Spearheaded data-centric projects, enabling clients to harness analytics for enhanced forecasting and decision-making. Led system integration efforts to improve data interoperability.
- **Mergers & Acquisitions**: Guided technology evaluations during M&A transactions, ensuring alignment with long-term business objectives and operational resilience.

Education & Certifications

- Master of Science, Information Systems (MSIS)
  - o Indiana University | Bloomington, IN
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
  - o Indiana University | Bloomington, IN
- Bachelor of Science, Information Technology
  - o Indiana University | Bloomington, IN

Client Focus

Services:
- AI Transformation
- Process Optimization
- AI/IT Strategy
- Data Analytics

Industries:
- Manufacturing & Distribution
- Private Equity
- Healthcare
- Public Sector

Community Involvement:
- Animal Assisted Therapy – volunteer dog handler
- U9 Instructor – Gracie Barra Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academy

Experience

Crowe LLP

AI Transformation Practice
Role: AI Senior Functional Lead | Date: January 2025 – Current
Joined Crowe's AI Transformation team, supporting our clients in the planning, development and management of AI solutions to fit their particular needs and interests.

Office of the Crowe AI Leader
*Role: Chief of Staff | Date: June 2024 – Current*
Member of Crowe's Firmwide AI (FWAI) leadership team, composed of 13 leaders. Co-authored an 18-month investment roadmap for Crowe's AI strategy across all business units. Oversaw the creation of Crowe's AI Studio, focused on AI business transformations. Provided investment updates to executive management via Crowe's AI Steering Committee.

Technology Advisory
Role: Consultant | Date: July 2022 – August 2024

Led a team of data scientists in developing an AI-based data extraction & document indexing proof of concept, using various programming & statistical packages, for a $250M organization, automating over 80% of indexing overhead & reducing file indexing time from ~3 weeks to within 1 day.

Led board-driven, post-merger IT strategy roadmaps for 50+ companies across diverse industries & sizes ($100M-$1B). Collaborated with C-suite & business leaders to define end-state targets, develop multi-year execution plans, & evaluate ROI, ensuring competitive advantages aligned with clients' investment theses.

![Crowe logo]
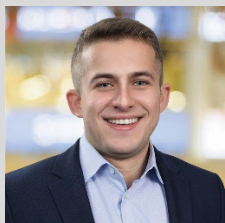
Zach Bernstein
Senior Consultant

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Direct 312.606.7122
Zach.Bernstein@crowe.com
www.crowe.com

Profile

Zach Bernstein is a Senior Consultant in Crowe's AI Transformation Consulting practice. Mr. Bernstein has Bachelor of Science in Business and Information Systems from Indiana University, Kelley School of Business

Professional and Industry Experience

Mr. Bernstein is an instrumental part of the firm's external Go To Market AI efforts and internal transformation. Zach previously held a role in the firm's Information Technology Advisory practice where he primarily focused on ERP system selections and implementation oversight. He has a deep passion and interest in Artificial Intelligence and is motivated by providing new-found value to Crowe and its clients

Education & Certifications

- Bachelor of Science, Information Systems
  - Indiana University, Kelley School of Business | Bloomington, Indiana

Client Focus

Services:

- AI Transformation
- AI Advisory
- IT Advisory
- ERP Advisory

Industries:

- Private Equity
- Construction & Real Estate
- Manufacturing & Distribution
- Professional Services
- Aerospace and Defense
- Technology, Media & Telecommunications
- Public Sector

Speaking Engagements

- 2024 - National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) Annual Convention – AI Panel Speaker
- 2024 - Crowe ExPErtise Series: The Economy, Cybersecurity, and AI – Speaker
- 2024 – Private Equity CIO Summit – AI Speaker

Experience

AI Transformation

Crowe LLP
Role: Senior Consultant | Date: September 2024 – Current
Co-founded Crowe's AI Transformation team, which develops Generative AI applications for clients, from concept to execution.

Technology Advisory
Role: Consultant | Date: July 2022 – August 2024
Co-led Crowe's firmwide AI roadmap to enhance external Go-to-Market AI strategies and drive internal transformation, positioning the firm as a leader in AI innovation.

Engaged in six ERP system selections for mid-market, PE-backed, and non-PE-backed enterprises, facilitating requirement gathering sessions, managing vendor communications, and developing client-facing deliverables.

Co-led ERP implementation project management oversight for one of the largest field service companies in the U.S., acting as the primary liaison between the client and ERP implementer, managing sprints, customizations, third-party integrations, and running weekly status calls.

Co-led an ERP system optimization for a global supply chain leader in the A&D industry, executing requirement gathering sessions, sprint planning, and managing developers across multiple entities to enhance system performance. Engaged in 17 IT Due Diligences for Private Equity clients.

NetSuite Cloud Solutions
Role: Consulting Intern | Date: Summer 2021
Created and implemented a more accurate forecasting tool for billable client hours by leveraging Power BI and Excel that has been adopted by project managers across the firm, helping increase profitability significantly. Worked with clients to understand requirements and cleansed large sets of data before migration into Oracle's NetSuite Cloud Solutions ERP system. Sped up multiple phases of the implementation process by organizing and sorting hundreds of client business functions and requirements in Azure DevOps, the software used to cover and document the entire implementation lifecycle. Learned and documented the process of test cases for client requirements and led meetings instructing current managers how to effectively utilize them.