Q&A for SaaS Small Business Loan Origination Platform

I) System integration and Users

1) Could you provide a list of systems with which the platform must integrate (e.g., core banking, CRM, DocuSign, Loan Servicing)?
   - Ideally, the loan origination platform would integrate with DocuSign or other e-signature system. The platform will also need to integrate with external systems to check personal and business credit, and be able to perform OFAC identity checks. The core system that Self-Help uses for loan servicing does not integrate with other systems.

2) Are you expecting us to set up API integrations? If so, to which solutions?
   - The Self-Help internal team would set up API integrations but would need documentation and perhaps some support from the vendor if we have questions.

3) Will the APIs be bidirectional, or will some systems (e.g., core banking) only allow outbound data feeds?
   - It depends; some of our systems don't have APIs at all. Some don't allow inbound feeds. Our internal programming team would handle the majority of the work around integration, and the vendor would provide support where needed. Preferably, our small business lending solution would be bidirectional (allow outbound and inbound data feeds).

4) Will internal IT resources support the implementation, or should we assume a fully managed setup?
   - Yes, we will have IT staff to assist in implementation.

5) Will your team provide dedicated SMEs for each phase (e.g., application intake, underwriting, integration), or is the expectation that the Proposer drives requirements?
   - Yes, we have dedicated SMEs to provide requirements for the system.

6) Will data migration be required to the system?
   - No

7) How would requirements differ between Self-Help Federal Credit Union and Self-Help Credit Union?
   - Requirements would be the same for both Credit Unions.

8) Should both credit unions operate within one system environment, or separate ones?
   - The same environment for both credit unions is fine.

9) How do you categorize internal vs external users?
   - Internal users are Self-Help employees. External users are small business loan applicants and borrowers.

10) Will Proposer be expected to handle single sign-on (SSO) setup for both internal and external users?
    - Ideally, we would have SSO for internal users. SSO for external users with a Self-Help account is a nice-to-have but not required.

II) Document Handling / Online Portal

1) Will the external application need to support multilingual interfaces? If so, which languages are required?
   - Yes, Spanish
2) Will there be separate borrower experiences depending on loan type?
   - No
3) Should document uploads trigger internal workflows (e.g., "document review in progress")?
   - Yes
4) Will applicants require access to previously submitted applications or an inbox for ongoing communication?
   - Yes
5) For in-branch applications: is the expectation that borrowers receive a link via email to complete the application once they visit the branch, or that branch staff complete the applications on-site for the borrower?
   - It would be nice to allow both options.
6) Regarding "custom fields to capture specific data points unique to Self-Help" - are these self-reported by applicants, or do any rely on outside or third-party sources?
   - These are self-reported by applicants.
7) How many custom fields?
   - We'd prefer to have as many custom fields as possible, recognizing that every system will have some limitations. We gather a lot of data for impact analysis as well as specific funder requirements, so the more custom fields available, the better.
8) Are custom fields used just for reporting and analysis, or are they expected to be tied to automations?
   - Ideally custom fields would be used for both reporting/analysis and automations, but minimally we must be able to export the custom fields for reporting and analysis.
9) How many documents are typically uploaded during underwriting?
   - 4-6 documents for underwriting plus 2-3 for closing might be typical.
10) What loan documentation solution does the credit union use?
    - We get our loan documents from TruStage.
11) How many different loan closing documents and number of pages are there?
    - We have 6 closing documents that need to be mapped, total 34 pages.
12) Can you elaborate on what you mean by "allow applicants' information to be mapped to custom loan documents for loan closing"?
    - We'd like to understand the form automation capabilities of your solution. Specifically:
      (1) Can we upload our own loan forms into the system?
      (2) If so, is it possible for data to be automatically mapped into those forms?
      (3) How is this mapping process handled?
          (a) Is it something your team sets up for us?
          (b) Or does your platform provide tools that allow us to configure the mappings ourselves?
13) For "allow document extraction," is OCR required? If so, for which document types? Is there a preferred OCR solution?
    - OCR is not required

14) For "document extraction and export to embed into the core system while retaining mapping to specific loan IDs", is an API connection required, or is manual file upload sufficient?
- Manual file upload with a way to index each file is fine.

III) **Loan Structure and Volume**
1) Is this RFP designed to support this loan program as currently described? https://www.self-help.org/business/loans/other-business-loans/small-business-loans
- No, the loan program above is our existing commercial lending program, operated centrally. We are creating a new small business product to be available through our branches that have historically only offered consumer lending.
2) How many loan applications are received annually?
- This is a new product. Eventually, we will offer it through our footprint of 74 branches (and growing).
3) How many loan types do you offer?
- We only have one small business loan type that will be available through this platform, with only one version of the application.
4) What is the typical use of funds?
- Working capital
5) Are loans asset-backed or unsecured?
- Unsecured
6) Are the loans fixed rate or variable rate? If variable rate - what index are they tied to?
- Fixed
7) Are you originating and servicing SBA loans?
- Not through this solution
8) What capital sources are used to fund loans (single or multiple)?
- Single
9) Does the system need to support loan servicing (e.g., payment management, disbursement management, etc.)?
- No

IV) **Operations & Workflow Gaps**
1) What system (if any) is currently used for small business origination at Self-Help retail branches? How are applications currently submitted and processed—online and/or in-branch?
- This is a new product, process, and system for our branches. We do not yet accept applications for small business loans at our branches, which currently only offer consumer lending.
2) Are there main particular operating friction points you're aiming to address?
- The main purpose of this system will be to originate unsecured small business loans through our credit union branches. We have been historically unable to find a solution that meets our needs where the borrower is a business entity, rather than an individual.
- The second most important friction point we are trying to resolve is to have the ability to use our own underwriting model, with the customizability to add fields to the platform that may not already exist in standard underwriting, e.g., a field to add back expenses.

3) How standardized is underwriting, and how much flexibility is needed in the platform to reflect your policies?
   - Our underwriting model is standard, but includes calculations that require flexibility within the system related to analysis of financial statements. Specifically, we want to know if we will be able to add fields to the financial analysis portion of the solution to allow underwriters to enter information from varied tax statements (Schedule C, Form 1065, Form 1120) and add back expenses (rent, one-time expenses).
4) Does Self-Help require side-by-side borrower financial comparison tools (e.g., previous years or scenarios)?
   - Yes, we will need to see previous years' financials displayed next to each other.
5) Should the system support automated calculation of DSCR, DTI, or other financial ratios based on provided documents or inputs?
   - Yes
6) Should underwriters be able to collaborate or comment within a loan record asynchronously?
   - This would be a nice-to-have feature.
7) Should notification logic vary by user type (e.g., borrower receives SMS, underwriter receives task digest email)?
   - This would be a nice-to-have feature.
8) Do you envision system-generated tasks/reminders for borrowers (e.g., "upload missing document") or only internal users?
   - Yes, it would be good to have reminders go to borrowers as well as internal users.
9) How does Self-Help fund loans?
   - We will fund loans using our core system, not this solution.
10) What are your expectations regarding "configur[ing] to accommodate evolving organizational needs and as we develop new products"? Do you expect the vendor to perform these configurations on your behalf?
    - We're looking to understand how flexible your platform is as our needs evolve. Specifically:
      (1) Are you open to working with us to add new products or features as our business requirements change?
      (2) More broadly, do you actively invest in enhancing your system to support new capabilities and meet the evolving needs of your clients?

V) Reporting
1) Are there reporting or dashboard requirements tied to funders, compliance, or internal review?
   - Yes, but most of this tracking and reporting happens through our data warehouse, so our primary need is to be able to easily export data from the system.
2) Are there compliance or impact-tracking needs (e.g., CFPB 1071, demographic reporting)?
   - Yes, we will need to track compliance with CFPB 1071 when it comes into effect. We also regularly gather demographic information as well as impact information that is not in most systems by default (see questions 6-8 in the document handling/online portal section about custom fields).

3) Is there a predefined set of regulatory or internal compliance reports the platform must replicate (e.g., 1071 data exports, CRA reports)?
   - Yes, we will need to be able to create CFPB 1071 compliance reports. CRA reports would be useful, but a lot of our regulatory and compliance reporting is done through our data warehouse, so being able to export data easily is our primary concern.
4) Will report access be role-based (e.g., branch manager vs. regional leadership)?
   - Yes

5) Do you require support for exporting visual dashboards (e.g., to PDF)?
   - Yes, to PDF and excel.

VI) Security
1) Does Self-Help require full audit trail access (e.g., exportable logs), or only event visibility within the UI?
   - Audit logging is required and should include tracking user access, other user actions, security-related events and transactional details.

VII) Stakeholders & Project Oversight
1) Will there be a dedicated project manager or internal lead?
   - Yes
2) Who should I send an NDA to?
   - Lendingprocurement@self-help.org

VIII) Timeline & Deployment
1) Would you prefer phased rollout (by product or region) or full deployment?
   - We will offer a phased rollout by region.
2) How many branches or regions will be using the solution at launch?
   - 1-2 regions at launch
3) Are there external deadlines (grants, compliance, etc.) we should align to?
   - No
4) Does Self-Help expect a dedicated account manager, implementation consultant, and support engineer throughout the contract period?
   - Yes. Implementation consultant, an account manager, and support during and after the implementation.

IX) Training, Support, and Maintenance
1) Will different training tracks be required for various user personas (e.g., branch staff, underwriters, admin users)?
   - Yes – branch staff, underwriters, and admin users will likely all have different training needs.