

**SECTION M
EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD**

M.1 FAR 52.252-1 SOLICITATION PROVISIONS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE (FEB 1998)

This solicitation incorporates one or more solicitation provisions by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Upon request, the Contracting Officer will make their full text available. The Offeror is cautioned that the listed provisions may include blocks that must be completed by the Offeror and submitted with its offer. In lieu of submitting the full text of those provisions, the Offeror may identify the provision by paragraph identifier and provide the appropriate information with its offer. Also, the full text of a solicitation provision may be accessed electronically at this address: <http://acqnet.gov/far/index.html>

CLAUSE #	CLAUSE TITLE	DATE
52.217-5	EVALUATION OF OPTIONS	JUL 1990

M.2 BASIS FOR AWARD

(a) Best Value – Award will be made to responsible Offerors whose proposals are determined to provide the “best value” to the Government. FAR Part 15 competitive negotiation selection procedures utilizing the “best value” trade-off approach will be utilized.

(b) Relative Importance – The two Technical Evaluation Factors, (1) Past Performance (Section M.5.1) and the (2) Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan (Section M.5.2), are approximately equal in importance to each other, and when combined, are significantly more important than Cost or Price (Section M.6).

To the extent that the Technical Evaluation Factors consist of various subfactors, the subfactors in Past Performance are approximately equal in importance to each other, and the subfactors in the Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan are in descending order of importance when determining the overall rating for the specific Technical Evaluation Factors.

(c) Discussions – The Government intends to evaluate proposals and award contracts without discussions with Offerors, except for clarifications, as described in FAR 15.306(a). Therefore, initial Proposals should contain the Offerors' best terms from a technical and cost/price standpoint. The Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if determined necessary.

(d) Sources of Evaluation Data – When conducting the evaluation, the Government may use data provided in Offerors' proposals, as well as data obtained from other sources. Each

Offeror is responsible for ensuring that the information it provides to the Government is timely, accurate and complete.

M.3 EVALUATION PROCEDURE FOR CONTRACT AWARD

The procedure for evaluating Proposals shall be as follows:

- (a) **Acceptability Review** – The Government will conduct an acceptability review of each proposal received as described below in Section M.4. The Offeror’s proposal will only proceed to the evaluation phase if it is deemed to “pass” the acceptability review.
- (b) **Technical Evaluation** – The Government will evaluate an Offeror’s Technical Proposal as further described below in Section M.5.
- (c) **Cost/Price Evaluation** – The Government will evaluate an Offeror’s Cost/Price Proposal, as further described below in Section M.6.
- (d) **Best Value Tradeoff** – Consistent with FAR 15.101-1, the Government will conduct a “best value” tradeoff, in which differences in non-price factors and evaluated price will be compared between the Offerors in order to determine which Offeror represents the best value to the Government. The technical factors combined are significantly more important than cost or price; however, the closer the technical scores of the various proposals are to one another, the more important cost or price considerations become in determining the overall best-value for the Government.
- (e) **Responsibility Determination** – Prior to making final award decisions, the Government will make a responsibility determination, as described below in Section M.9.
- (f) **Eligibility for Award** – The Government reserves the right to make only one (1) award to the same legal entity, even if the same legal entity has submitted multiple Proposals which are otherwise eligible for Award.

M.4 ACCEPTABILITY REVIEW

- (a) **Pass/Fail Review** – The Acceptability Review for each proposal received will be conducted on a pass/fail basis. Offers that pass the Acceptability Review will proceed to the Technical Evaluation Phase of the evaluation process. Offers that fail the Acceptability Review shall not be considered further for Award.
- (b) **Acceptable Offers** – The Offeror must provide all requested documentation pursuant to Section L.12.2 in the appropriate format as specified in Section L.12.1 by the stated solicitation closing date. Offerors are solely responsible for ensuring that all requested documentation is received in the designated form and format at the correct location by the solicitation closing date.

(c) Failure to Comply – Offers that fail the Acceptability Review may not be considered further for Award. The Government expects to receive a large number of proposals in response to this Solicitation. Accordingly, the Government intends to strictly enforce all of the proposal requirements outlined in Section L. Failure to strictly comply with these requirements may result in an Offeror’s proposal being rejected as being non-conforming to solicitation requirements, and therefore unacceptable.

Examples of an Offeror’s failure to comply with solicitation requirements include (but are not limited to) the following:

- (1) Failing to provide all of the information requested in Section L.12 by the solicitation closing date [(except as otherwise permitted under FAR 52.215-1(c)(3)(ii)];
- (2) Failing to conform with the proposal instructions, such as the instructions relating to the proposal’s required form, format, page limitations, and method of proposal acceptance; etc;
- (3) Taking exception to any of this Solicitation’s terms or conditions; or
- (4) Imposing additional or conflicting terms or conditions to those provided in the Solicitation as part of the Offeror’s proposal.

(d) Contract Team Arrangements (CTAs) – Offerors who submit a proposal in the form of a CTA (as discussed in Section L.12.2, Folder D), must submit a full and complete copy of the document(s) establishing the CTA relationship by the solicitation closing date. Failure to provide the Government with the requested documentation establishing the CTA relationship shall result in the Offer being rejected as being non-conforming.

M.5 TECHNICAL EVALUATION FACTORS

The Government will evaluate its confidence level in the Offeror’s ability to manage risk and to deliver high quality service and solutions under the Basic Contract, by assigning adjectival/confidence ratings to the following two Technical Evaluation Factors.

(a) Past Performance for which the Government will look “retrospectively” and consider the Offeror’s history of success in delivering high quality service and solutions on contract efforts of similar scope and complexity to those anticipated under the Alliant SB Contract pursuant to Section C.

(b) Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan for which the Government will look “prospectively” and consider the Offeror’s level of commitment to the Alliant SB program and potential for success. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s proposed resources devoted to

Alliant SB and the degree to which the Offeror's corporate structure and program management system will facilitate high quality service and solutions for all work described in Section C.

M.5.1 Past Performance

The Government will look "retrospectively" and consider the Offeror's Past Performance. Considerations in determining the Government's confidence level, with approximate equal importance to each other, are the subfactors: (a) Quality of Service; (b) Schedule; (c) Cost Control; (d) Business Relations; and (e) Subcontract Management/Socioeconomic Goals.

(a) Quality of Service – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's ability to provide a service that met the customer's quality requirements and conformed to contract requirements. The Government will consider whether risk factors were identified, mitigated and managed resulting in high quality service and solutions. Offerors that employed innovative and unique quality assurance tools and methodologies to ensure efficient and effective design, development and implementation of quality solutions will be more highly rated. Offerors whose performance metrics and quality control solutions are comprehensive, verifiable and effective will be evaluated more favorably.

(b) Schedule – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's ability to meet all schedule goals related to completion of the contract, task orders, milestones, delivery schedules and administrative requirements (timely submission of accurate Small Business Subcontracting reports; invoices; contract closeout documentation, etc).

(c) Cost Control (does not apply to FFP or FFP w/EPA) – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's ability to deliver a service at the agreed to price/cost to include their ability to effectively forecast, manage and control contract costs, as well as report and analyze variances.

(d) Business Relations – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's ability to integrate and coordinate all activity needed to execute the contract and evaluate the degree to which the Offeror cooperated in order to be an effective business partner. Elements that may be considered include the timeliness, completeness and quality of: problem identification, corrective action plans, proposal submittals, change orders and task order requests (TORs); as well as the contractor's history of cooperative behavior and customer satisfaction.

(e) Subcontract Management/Socioeconomic Goals – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's ability to timely award and manage subcontracts and whether they have met their small business utilization goals in the past, with those exceeding their goals being evaluated more favorably.

M.5.1.1 Acceptable Past Performance

Only Past Performance information submitted, which is deemed acceptable and relevant pursuant to the requirements set-forth in Section L.12.3, will be evaluated.

M.5.1.2 Method of Selecting Past Performance Efforts for Evaluation

The Government intends to use reasonable efforts to check approximately ten (10) efforts selected from Tables 1 and 2, including the three (3) efforts which the Offeror has identified. The Government reserves the right to check more or fewer efforts, at its discretion, and does not guarantee that it will contact any particular effort listed in Table 1 or Table 2, even the efforts specifically listed by the Offeror.

M.5.1.3 Evaluation Method

Past Performance is a measure of the degree to which an Offeror, as an organization, has satisfied its customers, while fulfilling its absolute duty to comply with applicable laws and regulations. Relevant Past Performance will be evaluated to determine the relative merits of the Offeror's past performance.

In the event any Offerors are deemed virtually equivalent, the following discriminators may be used: Offerors with demonstrated success in providing integrated IT solutions including all three component areas in Section C will be evaluated more favorably. Offerors with successful performance on efforts that include OCONUS work, Cost-type contracts or include significant subcontract management will be rated more highly.

M.5.1.4 Sources of Information

The Government may rely on past performance sources including, but not limited to, interviews with Government Contracting Officers, Government Contracting Officer Technical Representatives, Government Program Managers and Small Business Administration representatives; the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) www.ppirs.gov and other past performance systems, the GWAC Center Past Performance Reviews.

M.5.2 Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan

The Government will look "prospectively" and consider the Offeror's Alliant SB Basic Contract Plan. Considerations in determining the Government's confidence level, in descending order of importance, are the subfactors: (a) Resources; (b) Program Management; and (c) Corporate Commitment. As part of its evaluation of the contract plan, the Government will evaluate the Offeror's overall capability to support the Alliant SB program by determining whether the plan sufficiently addresses any gaps or weaknesses not addressed in past performance.

(a) Resources – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's plan to determine the adequacy of internal and external resources available to perform all three component areas

of Section C including OCONUS work and effectively and efficiently administer the Alliant SB program. The Offeror's Program Management systems and processes will be evaluated as a separate subfactor. See (b) below.

(1) Internal Resources – The Government will evaluate the adequacy of the Offeror's current core capabilities which include but are not limited to the: ability to recruit, train and retain qualified personnel, number of personnel possessing security clearances and the level of the clearances, quality of key personnel and effectiveness of business systems.

Offerors that propose a Program Managers with proven track records of managing programs similar to the Alliant SB in scope and magnitude will be evaluated more favorably.

Offerors with approved purchasing systems will be evaluated more favorably.

(2) External Resources – The Government will evaluate the Offeror's methodology for supplementing its core capabilities to meet all three component areas identified in Section C for completeness and soundness of approach. Emphasis will be placed on those areas not addressed by internal resources or reflected in past performance.

The Government will evaluate the Offeror's methodology for selecting, monitoring, and managing subcontractors and teaming arrangements, as applicable; methodology for providing OCONUS support; and approach to support continuity of operations in response to sudden workload surges including contingency/disaster recovery situations.

(b) Program Management – The Government will evaluate the Offerors program management strategy to determine how well it facilitates success of the Alliant program.

The Government will evaluate the viability of the Offeror's Program Management Information System to support the Basic Contract including the data deliverables in Section F.5. Offerors providing comprehensive and thorough descriptions that demonstrate a program management information system which effectively employs electronic commerce/electronic business processes and is capable of producing timely quality data products will be evaluated more favorably.

Offerors providing a comprehensive and effective program management strategy with quantifiable performance metrics that link incentives to performance and quality controls that ensure a comprehensive and verifiable approach for monitoring and reporting performance will be evaluated more favorably.

Offerors with approved EVMS will be evaluated more favorably.

(c) Corporate Commitment – The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s plan to determine the level of corporate commitment to the Alliant program including whether it has a dedicated Alliant SB IT organization adequate to support the Alliant SB program.

The strategy for business development, proposal management, contract administration and pursuit of technological innovations will be evaluated for completeness, understanding of the requirement and potential for optimization of the Alliant SB program.

Offerors that provide well-defined lines of authority, responsibility and communication in their corporate structure as well as detailed processes for early problem identification with efficient and effective mitigation will be evaluated more favorably.

Offerors with plans that demonstrate their ability to develop and implement successful business process improvements will be evaluated more favorably.

M.6 COST/PRICE EVALUATION

The technical factors combined are significantly more important than cost or price; however, the closer the technical scores of the various proposals are to one another, the more important cost or price considerations become in determining the overall best-value for the Government.

Cost/price proposals will be evaluated using proposal analysis techniques consistent with FAR 15.404-1 to ensure that proposed direct and indirect rates for each labor category during the base period and option period are fair, reasonable, and predictable for anticipated work under the Basic Contract.

Pursuant to FAR 15.404-1(g), an offer may be rejected if the Government determines that the lack of balanced pricing poses an unacceptable risk to the Government.

As defined in FAR 3.501, an Offeror may be rejected if the evaluation determines that an Offeror submitted prices below anticipated costs. Proposals that include unrealistically low labor rates, or that do not otherwise demonstrate cost realism, will be considered a high risk assessment and will be evaluated for award in accordance with that assessment.

M.6.1. Price Analysis

Price analysis is the process of examining and evaluating a proposed price without evaluating its separate cost elements and proposed profit.

The Government may use various price analysis techniques and procedures to ensure a fair and reasonable price such as, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Comparison of proposed Loaded Hourly Labor Rates received in response to the Solicitation. Normally, adequate price competition establishes price reasonableness.
- (b) Comparison of previously proposed Loaded Hourly Labor Rates for the same or similar labor categories using independent Government Price estimates.
- (c) Overall evaluated price using independent Government estimates for labor hours as set forth in Section L, Attachments 2 and 3.

M.6.2. Cost Analysis

Cost analysis is the review and evaluation of the separate cost elements and profit in an Offeror's proposal and the application of judgment to determine how well the proposed costs represent what the cost should be, assuming reasonable economy and efficiency.

The Government may use various cost analysis techniques and procedures to ensure a fair and reasonable price, given the circumstances of the acquisition such as, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Verification that the Offeror's cost submissions are in accordance with the contract cost principles and procedures in FAR Part 31 and, when applicable, the requirements and procedures in 48 CFR Chapter 99 (Appendix to the FAR loose-leaf edition), Cost Accounting Standards.
- (b) Verification from DCAA/DCMA that the Offeror's cost controls and surveillance systems are adequate as demonstrated through approved cost accounting and estimating systems, including all the Offeror's approved provisional billing rates and forward pricing rate agreements from DCAA.
- (c) The application of audited indirect cost rates and direct labor rates in the Offeror's basis of estimate for each Loaded Hourly Labor Rate, and if necessary, a cost realism analysis to demonstrate the Offeror's understanding of the requirements of this Solicitation.

M.7 RESERVED

M.8 COMPENSATION PLAN FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES.

The Offeror's Compensation Plan for Professional Employees will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis. The Government will evaluate proposed compensation levels, including salaries and fringe benefits for the professional labor categories anticipated on the contract. The salary rates or ranges must take into account differences in skills, the complexity of

various disciplines and professional job difficulty. Supporting information shall include recognized national and regional compensation surveys and studies of professional, public and private organizations, used in establishing the total compensation structure. Proposed compensation levels should reflect a clear understanding of work to be performed and should indicate the capability of the proposed compensation structure to obtain and retain qualified personnel to meet mission objectives.

M.9 RESPONSIBILITY DETERMINATION

The Responsibility Determination will be on a pass/fail basis. In accordance with FAR Part 9, Offerors that are not deemed responsible will not be considered for award.

If an Offeror's proposal is favorably considered for award, the PCO may elect to conduct a pre-award survey to determine the Offeror's ability to perform on the Basic Contract, if the Government determines that the information on hand or readily available to the PCO, including information from commercial sources, is not sufficient to make a determination regarding responsibility.

The pre-award survey will follow the guidance in FAR 9.104-1, and will consider financial, technical, quality assurance and security capabilities. The Offeror's current financial statements and other pertinent financial data will be considered. A satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics will be required.

M.10 EVALUATION SUPPORT

Offerors are hereby notified that the General Services Administration may use the services of non-government evaluators. These evaluators may have access to some of the information contained in the Offeror's proposals and will be subject to appropriate conflict of interest and standards of conduct requirements. The non-government evaluators are also required to comply with strict confidentiality restrictions. All personnel working on this acquisition will sign and provide to GSA a conflict of interest acknowledgement and nondisclosure agreement.

(END OF SECTION M)