

April 6, 2007

NOTICE TO ALL OFFERORS

REFERENCE: AMENDMENT NO. 1
DOL071RP20113

Additional information has been requested by prospective offerors and it has been determined by the Contracting Officer that this information be made available to all bidders. The closing date and time for the receipt of proposals is still April 20, 2007, 2:00 p.m. local time.

Keith A. Bond

KEITH A. BOND
Contracting Officer

Attachment

AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION/MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT

BPA NO.

1. CONTRACT ID CODE

PAGE

OF PAGES

1

13

2. AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION NO.
00013. EFFECTIVE DATE
04-05-2007

4. REQUISITION/PURCHASE REQ. NO.

5. PROJECT NO. (If applicable)

6. ISSUED BY CODE

ETA

7. ADMINISTERED BY (If other than Item 6)

CODE

U.S. Department of Labor, ETA/OGCM
Division of Contract Services
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Room N-4655
Washington DC 20210

8. NAME AND ADDRESS OF CONTRACTOR (No., street, county, State and ZIP Code)

To all Offerors/Bidders

(X)

9A. AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION NO.

DOL071RP20113

X

9B. DATED (SEE ITEM 11)

10A. MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT/ORDER NO.

10B. DATED (SEE ITEM 13)

CODE

FACILITY CODE

11. THIS ITEM ONLY APPLIES TO AMENDMENTS OF SOLICITATIONS The above numbered solicitation is amended as set forth in Item 14. The hour and date specified for receipt of Offers is extended, is not extended.

Offers must acknowledge receipt of this amendment prior to the hour and date specified in the solicitation or as amended, by one of the following methods:

(a) By completing Items 8 and 15, and returning 0 copies of the amendment; (b) By acknowledging receipt of this amendment on each copy of the offer submitted; or (c) By separate letter or telegram which includes a reference to the solicitation and amendment numbers. FAILURE OF YOUR ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO BE RECEIVED AT THE PLACE DESIGNATED FOR THE RECEIPT OF OFFERS PRIOR TO THE HOUR AND DATE SPECIFIED MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF YOUR OFFER. If by virtue of this amendment you desire to change an offer already submitted, such change may be made by telegram or letter, provided each telegram or letter makes reference to the solicitation and this amendment, and is received prior to the opening hour and date specified.
04-20-2007 2:00PM EST

12. ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION DATA (If required)

13. THIS ITEM APPLIES ONLY TO MODIFICATIONS OF CONTRACTS/ORDERS, IT MODIFIES THE CONTRACT/ORDER NO. AS DESCRIBED IN ITEM 14.

(X) A. THIS CHANGE ORDER IS ISSUED PURSUANT TO: (Specify authority) THE CHANGES SET FORTH IN ITEM 14 ARE MADE IN THE CONTRACT ORDER NO. IN ITEM 10A.

B. THE ABOVE NUMBERED CONTRACT/ORDER IS MODIFIED TO REFLECT THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES (such as changes in paying office, appropriation date, etc.) SET FORTH IN ITEM 14, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF FAR 43.103(b).

C. THIS SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY OF:

D. OTHER (Specify type of modification and authority)

E. IMPORTANT: Contractor is not, is required to sign this document and return _____ copies to the issuing office.

14. DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION (Organized by UCF section headings, including solicitation/contract subject matter where feasible.)

(See Attachment)

Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the document referenced in Item 9A or 10A, as heretofore changed, remains unchanged and in full force and effect.

15A. NAME AND TITLE OF SIGNER (Type or print)

16A. NAME AND TITLE OF CONTRACTING OFFICER (Type or print)

KEITH A. BOND
Contracting Officer

15B. CONTRACTOR/OFFEROR

15C. DATE SIGNED

16B. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

16C. DATE SIGNED

(Signature of person authorized to sign)

BY _____
(Signature of Contracting Officer)

14. Continuation page

- A. The purpose of this amendment is to change the terms and conditions of the Request for Proposal (DOL071RP20113) in accordance with the following:
1. **Section M.1 – Basis for award (Best Value)** – is hereby deleted in its entirety and is replaced with the following:

M. 1 BASIS FOR AWARD (BEST VALUE)

The Government intends to evaluate proposals using a two-step methodology. The first step will involve the evaluation of the offeror's TECHNICAL APPROACH, INDIVIDUAL STAFF EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS, MANAGEMENT PLAN, and PRICE (evaluation factors A, B, E and F listed below). Based on these evaluations, a Competitive Range (FAR Part 15) consisting of the most highly rated proposals will be established.

The second step will involve evaluation of the CONTRACTOR'S PAST PERFORMANCE and an ORAL PRESENTATION presented by each of the offerors within the Competitive Range. Past Performance will be evaluated in accordance with Section L.5 of the solicitation and evaluation factor C listed below. Evaluation of oral presentations will consist of the offeror's CAPABILITY TO PERFORM THE CONTRACT (evaluation factor D listed below). Therefore, each offer should contain the best terms from a cost or price and technical standpoint.

A cost realism analysis and a Field Pricing Review will be performed for all offerors. Contract award will be based on the combined evaluations of the Technical Approach, Individual Staff Experience and Qualifications, Contractor's Past Performance, Contractor's Capability to Perform the Contract, Management Plan, and Price. The contract resulting from this solicitation will be awarded to the responsible offeror whose proposal, conforming to the solicitation, is determined to provide the "best value" to the Government, which may not necessarily be the proposals offering the lowest cost nor receiving the highest technical score. It should be noted that cost is not a numerically weighted factor.

Although non-cost factors are significantly more important than cost, cost is an important factor and should be considered when preparing responsive proposals. The importance of cost as an evaluation factor will increase with the degree of equality of the proposals in relation to the remaining evaluation factors.

When the offerors within the competitive range are considered essentially equal in terms of technical, past performance and other non-cost factors (if any), or when cost is so significantly high as to diminish the value of the technical superiority to the Government, cost may become the determining factor for award. In summary, cost/non-cost trade-offs will be made, and the extent to which one may be sacrificed for the other is governed only by the tests of rationality and consistency with the established factors.

Prospective contractors are advised that the selection of a contractor for contract award is to be made, after a careful evaluation of the proposals received, by a panel of specialists chosen by ETA.

Each panelist will evaluate the proposals for technical acceptability using a range of scores assigned to each factor. The factors are presented in the order of emphasis that they will receive (i.e., Factor A has the greatest weight, Factor B the second greatest weight, etc.). The scores will then be averaged to select a contractor for award on the basis of their proposal being the most advantageous to the Government, price and other factors considered.

2. **Section M.3 – Determining Best Overall Value** - is hereby deleted in its entirety and is replaced with the following:

M.3 DETERMINING BEST OVERALL VALUE

In order to determine which offeror represents the best overall value, the Contracting Officer will make a series of paired comparisons among only those offerors that submitted acceptable offers (proposals). If, in any paired comparison, the offeror with the higher technical score also has the lower price, then the Contracting Officer will consider that offeror to represent the better overall value. If the offeror with the higher technical score has the higher price, then the Contracting Officer will decide whether the difference in technical score is worth the difference in price. If the Contracting Officer decides that it is, then they will consider the offeror with the higher technical score and the higher price to represent the better overall value. If not, then the Contracting Officer will consider the offeror(s) with the lower technical score and the lower price to represent the better value. The Contracting Officer will continue to make paired comparisons in this way until they have identified the best overall value.

Pursuant to FAR Subpart 52.215-1 Instructions to Offerors – Competitive Acquisition, the Contracting Officer reserves the right to award without discussion to the source(s) whose offer is the most advantageous to the Government, price and other factors considered.

B. *RESPONSES TO TECHNICAL QUESTIONS*

1. The RFP states that all individuals determined eligible for SCSEP by national grantees...would be randomly assigned..." Does this mean that only national grantees are to be included in the study?

Answer: No. For the purpose of bidding, it can be assumed that selected grantees will be national grantees. However, the grantees may include both state and national organizations. The actual grantees to participate in the study will not be chosen until after the contract is awarded.

2. The RFP states that offerors' "proposed budgets should include reimbursement of SCSEP grantees for any costs of participating in the evaluation." Would DOL consider providing some reimbursement outside the evaluation funds to increase grantees' motivation to participate in the evaluation?

Answer: Yes. The strategy for recruiting grantees to host the evaluation will be decided during the study's design phase, but the proposal should discuss viable strategies for doing so.

3. The RFP states that past performance information should include five "'relevant' contracts and subcontracts completed during the past three years..." Can projects that are ongoing be included in the past performance information, in addition to completed contracts?

Answer: Yes, projects that are ongoing can be submitted as a past performance reference, as long as the reference is for work that is at least 12 months in duration and is relevant to the RFP.

4. Are there any requirements DOL has placed upon the SCSEP grantees to participate in the impact evaluation?

Answer: No, there are no requirements for grantees to participate in the impact evaluation.

5. Is there a page limit for the technical approach or any of the other parts of the proposal? Are there any specifications regarding margins, paper size, font, or use of color for the proposal?

Answer: There is no page limit on the technical approach. Margins should be set at 1". Paper size must be letter. The font must be 12 pt., Times New Roman. Use of color in the technical approach portion of the proposal is not prohibited. Offerors who fail to respond to this requirement may be found technically unacceptable and eliminated from the competition.

6. Did the previous evaluation (in 2004) have the same scope and magnitude as the above-referenced RFP?

Answer: No. The 2004 evaluation was an implementation and outcomes analysis of SCSEP. The proposed evaluation seeks to examine the net impact of SCSEP on various outcomes and to examine whether the program is cost-effective.

7. Will the DOL facilitate access to administrative data (SSA eligibility and earnings records, etc.)?

Answer: Yes. When grantees agree to participate in the evaluation, there is an understanding that the evaluators will require access to this type of information.

8. Is the incumbent evaluator eligible to compete for this evaluation contract?

Answer: There is no incumbent for this solicitation.

9. Is there any estimate as to the time and cost the Contractor should budget for OMB

clearance?

Answer: There is no estimate for the cost to budget for OMB clearance. Contractors should anticipate 6 months or more after submitting the survey instruments to DOL for OMB clearance.

10. For planning purposes, typically how long does the OMB clearance process take from the time the paperwork is submitted through concept/content approval?

Answer: Contractors should anticipate 6 months or more after submitting the survey instruments to DOL for OMB clearance.

11. Does this project require any type of security or agency clearance?

Answer: No.

12. The Contractor acknowledges the Level of Effort information provided in Section F3. Is the Government able to release any additional budget assumptions?

Answer: No. It is the offeror's business decision to determine the exact level of effort for the project. Section F.3 of the RFP is only an estimate.

13. If travel is necessary, does the Government wish to provide an estimate for roundtrip airfare?

Answer: The offeror is responsible for determining the travel estimate for the project. Please be advised that all travel must be in accordance with section H.4 of the RFP, TRAVEL AND PER DIEM.

14. It is noted that the text of the Technical Approach must be in 12 point font or higher—does this include the font size required for charts, tables, and other exhibits?

Answer: There is no font size requirement for charts, tables and other exhibits in the technical approach.

15. May the contractor use 8 ½ x 14 and/or 11 x 17 sized pages (properly folded to 8 ½ x 11 size) for spreadsheets and/or Exhibits?

Answer: Please see the answer to question No. 5. Exhibits may be submitted on larger paper than letter size.

16. Please confirm that the Contractor is required to submit Oral Presentation overheads/materials at the same time as the proposal—April 20, by 2:00 pm..

Answer: Yes, offerors are required to submit Oral Presentation overhead slides at the same time as the proposal.

17. Please confirm that Consultant payment will be determined on case-by-case basis and there is no daily rate limit.

Answer: DOL's maximum daily rate of pay for experts and consultants is \$547 per day. Deviations from this maximum are reviewed on a case by case basis, by the Contracting Officer.

18. Approximately how many individuals enter the SCSEP program in a calendar year?

Answer: For PY 2005, over 61,000 participant slots were funded. However, length of stay in the program is over a year, so there are somewhat fewer individuals entering in a calendar year.

19. What is the expected date of the award?

Answer: Tentatively June 29, 2007.

20. Regarding Past Performance, Section L5 stipulates a requirement of five past performance references, including a minimum of three for the prime. May the Contractor submit more than five in total?

Answer: Yes, a contractor can submit more than five references in total. However, no more than five references will be used for the past performance evaluation.

21. Is there any requirement that the Key Personnel noted (Project Director, Principal Investigator(s), Task Leader(s)) be employees of the prime Contractor?

Answer: The Project Director must be an employee of the prime Contractor, but Principal Investigator(s) or Task Leader(s) can be employees of the subcontractor(s). However, offerors must not violate FAR 52.219-14, LIMITATIONS ON SUBCONTRACTING (DUE 1996). Offerors that violate FAR 52.219-14 will be found technically unacceptable and eliminated from the competition.

22. The cover page of the Solicitation indicates that a Proposal/Bid Intent Form must be submitted. Where can this form be located and when is it due?

Answer: Offerors are not required to submit a Proposal/Bid Intent Form.

23. Will each vendor's response to the second step evaluation factors be viewed by the evaluators prior to setting the Competitive Range?

Answer: No, a competitive range will be established by the Contracting Officer at step one based on the scores submitted by the evaluation panel from offerors' technical approach; individual staff experience and qualifications; management plan; and a cost analysis on the business management proposal. At step two, the offerors' past performance and their oral presentation will be evaluated by the panel.

24. Does "relevant past performance history mean a history of federal contracts?

Answer: No. Offerors may submit past performance references for non-federal contracts, provided that the reference is for work that is at least 12 months in duration, was performed in the last three years and is relevant to the solicitation.

25. The total possible evaluation points is 130? 80 for step 1 and 50 for step 2?

Answer: This is correct.

26. Could a contractor without federal experience score "favorably" on the Past Performance section?

Answer: Past performance shall include evaluating offerors with no relevant performance history, and shall provide offerors an opportunity to identify past or current contracts (Federal, State and local government, and private) for efforts similar to the Government requirement. Offerors will be provided the opportunity to address unfavorable reports of past performance, if the offeror has not had a previous opportunity to review the rating. Offerors shall provide information on problems encountered on the identified contracts and the offerors' corrective actions. The Government shall consider this information, as well as information obtained from any other sources, when evaluating the offeror's past performance. The contracting officer shall determine the relevance of similar past performance information. Offerors shall submit past performance information regarding predecessor companies and key subcontractors that will perform major or critical aspects of the requirement. Offerors without relevant past performance history or for whom information on past performance is not available may not be evaluated favorably or unfavorably on past performance and would receive a neutral score.

27. Will a capable experienced contractor be evaluated "unfavorably" if they only have state and local contract experience?

Answer: See the answer to question No. 24.

28. The RFP cites a study conducted by DAH Consulting, SPR, and the Corporation for Skilled Workforce. We could not find this report on DOL's website. Can we get a copy of this report?

Answer: The Department has not completed review of this report, so it is not yet available for release. A draft copy of the report will be provided to the firm awarded the contract to perform the evaluation.

29. Do the SCSEP sites have the capacity to recruit sufficient numbers of participants to support random assignment? That is, in order to maintain their current caseloads, they will need to be able to recruit twice as many prospective participants as they are currently serving annually.

Answer: Additional funds may be provided to grantees for increased recruitment. This will be determined after the contract is awarded.

30. Are the national grantees required to participate in a random assignment evaluation? That is, is participation in random assignment tied to funding of the program?

Answer: No. Participation is voluntary.

31. What type of administrative records might be available to support the evaluation? Does the program have a tracking system in place?

Answer: There is a standardized reporting format across all grantees that collects and maintains data for the SCSEP.

32. Should the evaluation include only the national grantees or does the Department have an interest in including some of the state grantees as well?

Answer: Please see the answer to question No. 1.

33. The RFP states that the minimum level of effort the Project Director and Principal Investigator(s) anticipates that the Project Director will also be a Principal Investigator. Is this a requirement?

Answer: The Project Director is expected to be substantively involved in the evaluation. However, it is not required that he or she be a Principal Investigator.

34. Since one of the objectives is focused on an estimate of SCSEP's impact on post-program earnings, employment and "self-sufficiency", will the contractor have access to selected states' unemployment insurance wage detail and/or WRIS data to assist them in their estimates of these outcomes?

Answer: Access to states' UI wage data, if needed for the evaluation, must be arranged between the contractor and the individual states. DOL will assist in this where possible.

35. All SCSEP grantees have been collecting and reporting data about participants, host agencies, unsubsidized placements, other performance measures mandated by the Older Americans Act of 2000. Will the contractor be allowed access to these data? The answer to this question will help in the evaluation design process for data collection.

Answer: Yes. See answer to question No. 31.

36. In 2004, many grantees participated in an independent national evaluation of SCSEP commissioned by the DOL/ETA and conducted by DAH Consulting and other subcontractors. Will these data and reports be made available to the new contractor? The answer to this question will help in the literature review and outcome evaluation design

process.

Answer: Please see the answer to question No. 28.

37. In 2006, the US Government Accountability Office conducted a national evaluation of the SCSEP program and reported that DOL/ETA has been collecting performance data on grantees. Will these data be available to the new contractor? The answer to this question will help with the cost-effectiveness study design.

Answer: Please see the answers to question No. 28 and 31.

38. Will ETA/DOL require a participation analysis?, (i.e., who among the SCSEP-eligible population participates and why, what are the determinants participation and nonparticipation among the SCEP-eligible population?) The answer to this question will help in the general evaluation design process.

Answer: This will be up to the offeror to decide if it is something they want to include in their technical approach.

39. As part of the process evaluation will ETA/DOL require an analysis of operational differences over time at the same grantee site or any given site? The answer to this question will help in the process evaluation design.

Answer: This will be up to the offeror to decide if it is something they want to include in their technical approach.

40. In Section J it lists all the attachments but I do not see any of the attachments in the PDF file. Amendment 1 gives you Attachment J-10 but I don't see Attachments J-1 thru J-9. Can you please post these attachments? Since the Attachments were not provided for us to review and ask questions, can there be an extension on the time allotted for questions?

Answer: For Attachments J-1 thru J-9, please see <http://www.doleta.gov/sga/rfpforms.cfm>. No, a time extension will not be allotted.

41. In Section L.7 Submission of Proposal it describes the three separate parts that we are to submit and the number of copies. It doesn't state whether you would also like an electronic copy of any of the parts. Should we submit a disk with all our proposal information also or email all the information?

Answer: DOL will accept only hard copies. Please do not submit a disk or any other electronic copies of the proposal.

Bidders List

Abt Associates Inc.
55 Wheeler Street, Cambridge,
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Sharon Christenson
617-349-2857

Chickasaw Nation Industries
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