

Sources Sought Synopsis NNA10SMS001L
Strategic Management Support
Questions and Answers
Updated January 21, 2010

1. Q: Is this a new requirement or is there an incumbent associated with this program? If there is an incumbent, could you please provide the vendor name and contract number?

A: This is a new requirement.

2. Q: What is the expected value of this solicitation?

A: No solicitation has been issued. If an RFP is issued, its value is expected to be less than \$500K per year.

3. Q: While you stated that the government would consider a small business set-aside, are you leaning in that direction? Or would that question only be answered after the RFI responses are received?

A: No decision has been made at this time regarding a small business set aside. We will consider responses to the synopsis, as well as other information, when we make that decision.

4. Q: Part of the strategic management support for ARC is adherence to new, complex federal directives such as the Federal Information Security Management Act FISMA and Homeland Security Policy HSPD 12. This statement implies that the ARC submits, or under this solicitation, will submit annual FISMA Report Card for its IT systems. Does ARC management currently include FISMA compliance staff and is envisioned to be completely or partially supported by contractors?

A: ARC management does not currently include FISMA compliance staff. FISMA issues currently are addressed at the directorate level by a combination of civil service and contractor personnel. The intention is to support these efforts and ensure consistency across the center.

5. Q: Are the IT systems at ARC accredited?

A: ARC executes a formal FISMA based certification & accreditation program in line with direction from OCIO. All IT systems are certified and accredited per a schedule that tracks each phase of the process. Note that the term certification & accreditation has been replaced with assessment & authorization per NIST SP 800-53 Rev 3 released August 2009.

6. Q: System inventories, Vulnerability and Risk Assessment as well as POAMs are important supporting documentation for determining the FISMA compliance. Is generation of data for this documentation and their development manual or automated process? If manual, does ARC anticipate the acquisition of any FISMA-related automated solutions?

A: NASA as a whole has an Assessment & Authorization repository that has been in place for a number of years that houses all IT Security documentation. The application facilitates the C&A process including generation of all pertinent documents and well as the POA&Ms that are the result of certification efforts. There is currently an evaluation taking place that will culminate in the replacement of this application with another one that meets the Agencies C&A requirements to an even higher degree. Much of the data that is put into the documentation is input manually by nature as it takes intelligence and someone competent in FISMA requirements to formulate the documents. But the application supports the process with predefined templates and document package baseline generation that automatically incorporates portions of the documents that are common elements for the Agency and Center level components. The new repository will have functionality that will facilitate this process to an even higher degree.

7. Q: Do ARC IT systems contain a mix of general support and specific application systems and if the latter is the case did the ARC develop sets of NIST 800-53 and agency specific controls to protect sensitive ARC applications?

A: ARC executes a formal FISMA based certification & accreditation program in line with direction from OCIO, OBM, & NIST. This includes implementation of NIST SP 800-53 controls appropriate for the FIPS 199 security categorization of the system in question. In relation to the question as it was posed ARC does not develop Agency level controls which are selected by OCIO for implementation throughout the Agency. The controls that are applied to systems as the Center level include Agency Common Controls, Center level Common Controls, and System Specific controls. The aggregate of these controls are applied to the system by the entities which own the responsibility for implementation and maintenance of the various controls.

8. Q: Do ARC IT systems include classified systems?

A: Yes

9. It is not clear whether or not the Strategic Management Support for the requirement for FISMA compliance will be resolved as a procurement of commercial or commercial-type FISMA automation product, i.e. under FAR 2.101 or ARC is seeking contractual service support for FISMA Compliance services or both?

A: This is a procurement for services.

10. Vendors must have proven expertise in strategic planning and analysis, "green technologies" and federal requirements for IT system security. ARC requires general management support across a range of activities to support the initiatives, including Security, FISMA Compliance and others across a range of activities. Must the applicant demonstrate proficiency in all example items listed above or provide a convincing expertise in a specific area(s) of strategic management, such as security, Information assurance, FISMA compliance? In

other words, will teaming be considered so that the expertise to address the requirements can be met?

A: The vendor must possess or have immediate access to the required expertise in all these areas. Teaming may be utilized to meet requirements. If a solicitation is issued, an award will only be made to one vendor/company.

11. Q: Would a successful bid on strategic management support preclude responding to subsequent RFPs from ARC, due to a perceived Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI)?

A: Possibly. If a solicitation is issued, offerors will be required to submit an acceptable plan to avoid and/or mitigate organizational conflicts of interest.

12. Q: Please state the sponsoring organization.

A: Code D, Office of the Director.

13. Q: What programmatic capability is required? Can you give some examples of the kind of management support that is needed to support the activities listed? Is NASA looking for a response in how companies can support strategic planning in green technology or a response is required to provide support in strategic planning and analysis, green technologies and federal requirements for IT system security?

A: ARC requires general management support across a range of activities. Specific task requirements have not been defined. Vendors considered to have the capability to support this requirement must have broad expertise, or have quick access to it, in ARC's areas of interest. Capable vendors must possess an understanding or describe how they will obtain an understanding of the ARC environment, including knowledge of ARC's objectives, capabilities, processes, leadership, strengths and weaknesses in a timeframe that will ensure timely and effective performance of near term work requirements. Extensive knowledge of the aerospace industry and of NASA – at the agency level – is also required. The necessary knowledge and understanding must be thoroughly described in responses to this notice.

14. Q: Can you assist in helping us partner with other/large vendors? If so, how would this process work?

A: Offerors may partner to demonstrate the capability needed to respond to this synopsis. NASA does not anticipate publishing a list of interested parties.

15. Q: What is the anticipated release date for the RFP?

A: There is no planned release date at this time.

16. Q: Green technology is a broad category, in that it can cover many different facets of technology and human development - energy usage, computer technology and agriculture are just a few. Would you mind providing an explanation of green technology for the purpose of the solicitation?

A: ARC is interested in being a lead NASA Center for green technology. This already has several facets, including a LEED platinum building, biofuels, and certain innovative partnerships. ARC is interested in exploring possible partnerships with other organizations (e.g., universities, national labs, etc.) to identify any areas of mutual interest that might help achieve the "lead NASA Center" objective. These can include aviation, biofuels, solar power, efficiency through computing -- no areas have been ruled out.

17. Q: Some of the language in the RFI covers areas of work that could easily be interpreted to overlap or envelope work that is currently authorized on existing contracts. If a solicitation were generated, is it expected that the SOW would include work that is currently on contracts, and would then be extracted from the existing contracts?

A: It is not ARC's intent to issue a new solicitation for services that can be procured through existing contracts. Contractors that feel these requirements are or may be within scope of their current contracts should explain that thoroughly in their response to this synopsis.

18. Q: What contract mechanism would be most likely for this if it resulted in a solicitation – CPAF, CPFF, FFP? Work packages issued through unique task orders?

A: Award of a single IDIQ contract with firm fixed price task orders seems most likely at this time.

19. Q: Do firms have to respond to this RFI and be deemed fully qualify in order to be considered in any resultant solicitation for the requirement?

A: No, we will not "qualify" vendors. This sources sought synopsis has been issued as part of ARC's market research. Responses to this synopsis will be considered as ARC determines the appropriate acquisition strategy. See response to question 3.

20. Q: What time do responses need to be submitted by on January 22, 2010? Can you extend the respond date/time?

A: All responses will be considered that are submitted no later than 8:00 am Pacific Standard Time (PST) on January 25, 2010. The synopsis has been amended to indicate this response date and time.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL OF QUESTIONS HAS PASSED. NO FURTHER QUESTIONS WILL BE ADDRESSED REGARDING THIS SYNOPSIS.