

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

John H. Glenn Research Center
Lewis Field
Cleveland, OH 44135-3191



SOURCE SELECTION STATEMENT

NASA GLENN EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES (ES2) NNC12ZCE014R

DESCRIPTION

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) assists the Nation in maintaining its commitment to excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education by investing in educational programs and supporting the country's educators who play a key role in preparing and encouraging the Nation's students to become the next generation of scientists, engineers, researchers, and astronauts. NASA's Glenn Research Center (GRC) Educational Programs Office (EPO) is an Agency leader in designing, developing, and implementing educational programs at national, regional, and local levels.

NASA has a requirement for Education Support Services. This procurement will provide programmatic and technical support services for the management of educational programs offered by GRC and the NASA Office of Education. The support will include:

- Project Formulation, Planning, Coordination, and Control
- Educator Professional Development
- Student Opportunities
- Curriculum Development
- Sub Award Administration
- Data Collection, Analysis, and Development

Services will be performed at the NASA GRC Lewis Field (Cleveland, OH), its Plum Brook Station (Sandusky, Ohio), NASA Headquarters, other NASA centers, and multiple locations as deemed necessary. This procurement is consolidation of multiple contractual vehicles which include, NNC07CB33C, NNC09CA25C, NNX07AV66A, NNC09ZA01G, and a number of Cooperative Agreements and Grants for similar services.

The Government anticipates the award of a single Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee (CPFF), Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract effort. The total period of performance is sixty months with option periods coinciding with Government fiscal years.

Market research was conducted by issuing a Request for Information (RFI) on October 7, 2011. A draft Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued on June 12, 2012. An Industry Teleconference was held on June 18, 2012, with 27 potential offerors in attendance. On July 27, 2012, the Final RFP was issued as a total Small Business Administration set-aside under NAICS Code 611710. Subsequently, two Amendments to the RFP were issued. Proposals were received on September 17, 2012, from the following eight Offerors:

- **Paragon TEC, Inc.**, Ohio Aerospace Institute (OAI) and Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, Inc. (SGT)
- **The Moore Group**, Booz Allen Hamilton and Oklahoma State University (OSU)
- **IDSIVIZZions JV**, with multiple subcontractors (8)
- **Aetos Systems, Inc.**, Easi and i-Edu Global, LLC
- **The AERO Institute** and Pennsylvania State University (Penn State)
- **Logical Innovations, Inc.**, DB Consulting and Cleveland State University (CSU)
- **Careers in Transition, Inc.** and CATMEDIA
- **The Ravens Group, Inc.** and Missouri University of Science and Technology

Immediately upon receipt, the proposals were reviewed and considered acceptable for inclusion in the formal evaluation.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The proposals were evaluated by an appointed Source Evaluation Committee (SEC) in accordance with RFP Section M - *Evaluation Factors for Award*, Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 15.3, and NASA FAR Supplement 1815.3.

As indicated in the RFP, the Evaluation Factors were: Mission Suitability, Cost/Price, and Past Performance. Mission Suitability was further divided into the following subfactors:

Mission Suitability (1,000 TOTAL Points)

A. Overall Understanding of the Requirements (UR) (300 Points)

- UR1 - Technical Approach to Meeting the Requirements of the SOW
- UR2 - Risk Management Plan
- UR3 - Health and Safety Plan Overview

B. Management Plan (MP) (250 Points)

- MP1 - Organizational Structure and Management Plan
- MP2 - Phase-in Plan
- MP3 - Subcontractor Management
- MP4 - Participant Recruitment Capability
- MP5 - Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI) Plan

C. Representative Task Orders (RT) (250 Points)

- RT1- Sample Tasks (2)
- Scenarios (2)

D. Staffing and Key Personnel (SK) (200 Points)

- SK1 - Recruitment, Retention, Staffing, and Compensation
- SK2 - Key Personnel
- SK3 - Skill Mix and Experience Levels

The Cost/Price factor was not numerically scored. A cost realism analysis was performed and probable cost adjustments were made as appropriate per Section M.3 of the RFP.

The Relative Experience and Past Performance Factor was not numerically scored but was evaluated using the level of confidence ratings as stipulated in Section M.4 of the RFP. A three-tiered methodology

was utilized to review relevant contracts, client questionnaires regarding past performance of offerors, and additional past performance information from the Government Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS). An independent search was performed for all offerors to obtain any additional past performance information, including a search of the Contractor Performance Assessment Ratings System (CPARS). Relevant work experience similar in scope, contract, size, type of client, services provided, recency, and length were also considered in the evaluation.

The relative importance of evaluation Factors was Mission Suitability, Relevant Experience and Past Performance, and Cost/Price were approximately equal in importance. Mission Suitability and Past Performance, when combined, were significantly more important than Cost/Price.

The Mission Suitability Factor was evaluated by Mission Suitability subcommittees. In accordance with the RFP, subcommittee members evaluated the proposals individually and then established consensus findings as groups. These findings were then presented to the SEC voting members. The SEC voting members performed an individual evaluation of each proposal and, as a group, discussed each member's individual findings for each offeror while taking into consideration the findings of the subcommittees. Consensus findings and corresponding ratings were reached for each Mission Suitability Subfactor.

The Cost/Price Factor was reviewed by the price analysts. Cost was not given an adjectival rating, but was reviewed for compliance according to the stipulations of the RFP, omissions, correctness, and overall cost reasonableness. An analysis was performed for unrealistic or omitted cost information to develop a probable cost for each proposal.

The SEC voting members performed an individual evaluation and then established consensus findings as a group for the Relevant Experience and Past Performance Factor. A Level of Confidence rating was then assigned to each Offeror.

FINDINGS

The evaluation summary results are indicated below in order of Mission Suitability scoring:

Paragon TEC, Inc. (Paragon)

Mission Suitability Factor = 914 Points

Understanding the Requirements was rated "Very Good." Three significant strengths and one weakness were identified for this subfactor. Paragon received a significant strength for a thorough and in-depth technical approach to meeting the requirements of the Statement of Work (SOW) to achieve NASA objectives, including evidence of direct knowledge of NASA policies and directives; a significant strength for an exceptional understanding of the work required under the SOW, offering suggestions to improve processes and procedures, and approaches that enable EPO to reach its target audience; and a significant strength for demonstrating a thorough knowledge of risk management and identifying specific risks and mitigation strategies associated with the SOW. Paragon's proposal received one weakness for this subfactor for not providing a detailed description of the process it will use to ensure the safety and health of its subcontractors while working on NASA grounds.

Management Plan was rated "Excellent." Four significant strengths and two strengths were identified for this subfactor. Paragon's proposal received a significant strength for providing a thorough and

comprehensive approach to the organizational structure with detailed processes to effectively manage the ES2 requirements; a significant strength for a detailed and thorough discussion of its Preliminary Organizational Conflict of Interest Avoidance Plan that is in accordance with NFS 1837.203-70 per the ES2 RFP; a significant strength for presenting a detailed and thorough phase-in plan to assume full contract responsibility with no disruption in service; and a significant strength for providing a detailed and thorough recruitment and retention strategy of students in the STEM field, particularly from targeted populations. Paragon's proposal received a strength for providing a thorough approach to effectively deliver quality products and innovative approaches to improve program operation, including methods to identify efficiencies and cost savings without compromising on the level and quality of services in the ES2 SOW; and a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion of its approach to Subcontractor Management, including an effective teaming arrangement with its major subcontractors to perform ES2 tasks. The proposal contained no weaknesses or significant weaknesses for this subfactor.

Representative Task Orders was rated "Excellent." Two significant strengths and three strengths were identified for this subfactor. Paragon's proposal received significant strengths for a detailed and thorough discussion regarding the utilization of a Web-based tool to promote effective communication among team members and standardize ES2 project processes; and for demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of Scenario 2 by identifying numerous ways to motivate educators while enhancing the professional development experience. Paragon's proposal received a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion regarding key positions designated to lead ES2 operations, designating three key leadership roles in addition to providing baseline support; a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion regarding Sample Task 2, including novel ideas for enhancing the project; and a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion with regards to administering a NASA Scholarship/Internship project targeted to reach underserved/underrepresented students in Scenario 1. The proposal contained no weaknesses or significant weaknesses for this subfactor.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated "Excellent." Two significant strengths and one strength were identified for the subfactor. Paragon's proposal received significant strengths for a detailed and thorough discussion regarding staffing, administrative, business, human capital, and compensation plans for the contract effort, which were realistic and complete, covering all input as required by the RFP; and for identifying key positions that will provide a strong focus on the most critical elements of mission success, including a comprehensive discussion of highly qualified key personnel, its backup plan for each appointment and supporting rationale. Paragon's proposal received a strength for including a detailed discussion of its source of staffing by skill categories, differentiating between current employees and new hires with effective strategies to assure coverage of each critical and unique skill category, with back-up capability. The proposal contained no weaknesses or significant weaknesses for this subfactor.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = "Very High Level of Confidence"

Paragon's proposal contained three significant strengths for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. Paragon and its major subcontractors received significant strengths for having multiple contracts considered highly relevant and relevant to the ES2 requirement; for "Excellent" to "Very Good" ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires on contracts considered relevant to the ES2 requirement; and for being rated "Exceptional" by the majority of clients in the Government PPIRS.

Cost/Price Factor

Paragon proposed a cost of \$24,134,358. A probable cost analysis was performed and no adjustments were made to Paragon's cost proposal.

The Moore Group (TMG)

Mission Suitability Factor = 730

Understanding the Requirements was rated “Very Good.” Two significant strengths, one strength, and one weakness were identified for this subfactor. TMG’s proposal received a significant strength for providing a comprehensive understanding and approach to meeting the requirements of the SOW, and aligning its responses to NASA’s Objectives throughout the proposal; and a significant strength for demonstrating exceptional competency in the use of technology in meeting the requirements, which will allow NASA to seamlessly and quickly utilize its processes for educator development. TMG’s proposal received a strength for providing a detailed and thorough discussion of the risk management process, identifying potential risks and mitigation strategies associated with the SOW. TMG’s proposal received a weakness for not providing a detailed description of the process it will use for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of ES2 contract implementation.

Management Plan was rated “Very Good.” Two significant strengths, four strengths, and one weakness were identified for this subfactor. TMG’s proposal received a significant strength for providing a detailed discussion of its Preliminary Organizational Conflict of Interest Avoidance Plan that is in accordance with NFS 1837.203-70 per the ES2 RFP; and a significant strength for providing a detailed quality control plan that assures the delivery of quality products, while satisfying technical, cost, and schedule requirements. TMG’s proposal received a strength for providing a complete discussion of its phase-in approach; a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion of its approach to subcontractor management, including an effective teaming arrangement between the Offeror and its major subcontractors to perform ES2 tasks; a strength for providing a detailed plan to provide educator professional development and also the recruitment of students and educators from targeted populations (underrepresented/underserved) in STEM fields; and a strength for providing a detailed, thorough and clear discussion of procedures, techniques, monitoring, and lessons learned, including details of the corporate entity’s oversight of all operations of the requirements. TMG’s proposal received a weakness for not meeting the requirements of MP1 regarding Organizational Structure and Management Plan, as details regarding the management of its financial system and levels of autonomy were not provided.

Representative Task Orders was rated “Very Good.” A significant strength, three strengths, and one weakness were identified for this subfactor. TMG’s proposal received a significant strength for including a detailed and thorough discussion of its significant expertise relative to carrying out EPO Baseline Support, describing its ability to manage disparate and geographically diverse teams to support NASA projects. TMG’s proposal received strengths for demonstrating a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the staff to provide baseline support; for including a detailed and thorough discussion with regards to administering a NASA Scholarship/Internship projects targeted to reach underserved/underrepresented students; and for providing a detailed discussion of Scenario 2 NASA Project, describing a well thought-out and effective approach to developing and delivering professional development while engaging Subject Matter Experts throughout the Agency. TMG’s proposal received a weakness for proposing to combine the National Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy (SEMAA) Office (NSO) Director and the Aerospace Education Laboratory Manager into one position, as the employee serving in the combined position would also serve as the ES2 Integration Manager. NASA has identified both of these positions as Key Positions listed within Sample Task 2, and the combining of these duties was determined to be unrealistic.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated “Fair.” Two strengths and three weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. TMG’s proposal received a strength for providing a detailed discussion to effectively recruit, retain, and staff the work effort in accordance with SOW requirements; and a strength for proposing highly qualified and properly certified key personnel to staff identified key positions highlighted in its

proposal. TMG's proposal received a weakness for not providing a total compensation plan nor information to support rationale discussed as stipulated in FAR clause 52.222-46 Evaluation of Compensation of Professional Employees and required by the RFP. The proposal received a weakness for limited discussion about how the approach for backup of key personnel will be implemented; and a weakness for not providing sufficient details to support its recommended source of staffing.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = "High Level of Confidence"

TMG's proposal contained one significant strength and one strength for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. TMG and its major subcontractors received a strength for having multiple contracts considered relevant to the ES2 requirement; and received a significant strength for "Excellent" to "Very Good" ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires on contracts considered relevant to the ES2 requirement. There existed insufficient information in the Government databases to rate Team TMG other than a "Meets" as TMG was not rated by its clients in the Government PPIRS. Booz Allen Hamilton, a major subcontractor, was rated "Excellent" and "Exceptional" by multiple clients in the Government PPIRS.

Cost/Price Factor

A probable cost analysis was performed resulting in a slight upward adjustment to the proposed costs. The final probable cost was significantly higher than that of the successful Offeror.

IDSIVIZZions JV (IDSI)

Mission Suitability Factor = 688

Understanding the Requirements was rated "Very Good." Two significant strengths and two strengths were identified for this subfactor. IDSI's proposal received significant strengths for providing a comprehensive and thorough approach to understanding the technical requirements as it pertains to the SOW, including strategic planning to support the goals of EPO and compliance with EPO Business Processes; and for providing a thorough and comprehensive approach to addressing each task with examples describing its competence to successfully achieve SOW requirements. IDSI's proposal received a strength for providing a detailed discussion of the risk management process; and a strength for providing a detailed description of the process to be used for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of contract implementation. The proposal contained no weaknesses or significant weaknesses for this subfactor.

Management Plan was rated "Fair." A significant strength, two strengths, two weaknesses, and one significant weakness were identified for this subfactor. IDSI's proposal received a significant strength for a detailed, thorough, and clear discussion of the functional lines of communication of the management structure, assignments, policies, procedures, techniques, monitoring, lessons learned, how resources beyond day-to-day will be obtained, and how surge requirements will be fulfilled. IDSI's proposal received strengths for providing an effective approach to delivering quality products that fully satisfy technical cost and schedule requirements; and for describing detailed participant recruitment strategies that exceed the requirements of the RFP. IDSI's proposal received two weaknesses for lack of adequate discussion of its contract phase-in plan and not addressing all of the requirements for phase-in per the RFP; and for not providing a detailed discussion on subcontractor management per the requirements of the RFP. IDSI's proposal received a significant weakness for not providing a detailed discussion of its Preliminary Organizational Conflict of Interest Avoidance Plan as stipulated in NFS 1837.203-70 per the

ES2 RFP and not discussing how employees will be trained on company policies and processes addressing the proper handling of sensitive information.

Representative Task Orders was rated “Very Good.” Two significant strengths, one strength, and one weakness were identified for this subfactor. IDSI’s proposal received a significant strength for providing a thorough and detailed discussion with regards to managing the SEMAA project, including ideas to enhance the program; and a significant strength for providing a significant and effective approach to developing, evaluating and delivering professional development for Scenario 2, NASA Project. IDSI’s proposal received a strength for a well thought-out and effective approach to recruiting and retaining underserved/underrepresented students. IDSI’s proposal received a weakness for not providing adequate discussion regarding positions required to carry out EPO baseline support.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated “Good.” Two strengths and one weakness were identified for this subfactor. IDSI’s proposal received strengths for providing a detailed and thorough staffing plan to fulfill the requirements of the ES2 SOW with descriptions of several approaches for employee recruitment, retention, and depth of coverage; and for describing key personnel who possess highly regarded qualifications to support ES2 requirements with supporting rationale for the selections. IDSI’s proposal received a weakness for lacking discussion of proposed labor categories and salaries in its proposed compensation plan per the requirements of FAR 52.222-46, 1852.231-71 and the RFP.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = “Moderate Level of Confidence”

IDSI’s proposal contained one strength for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. IDSI and its subcontractors had three contracts with limited relevancy to the ES2 requirement; the Team received a strength for “Excellent” to “Very Good” ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires, although no questionnaires were submitted for IDSI. Insufficient information existed in the government databases to rate IDSI other than a “Meets” as IDSI was not rated by its clients in the government PPIRS.

Cost/Price Factor

A probable cost analysis was performed and cost was adjusted upward resulting in a slight upward adjustment to the proposal costs. The final probable cost was slightly lower than that of the successful Offeror

Aetos Systems, Inc. (Aetos)

Understanding the Requirements was rated “Good.” A significant strength, two strengths, and one significant weakness were identified for this subfactor. Aetos’ proposal received a significant strength for providing a thorough and complete description of the process it will use for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of contract implementation. Aetos’ proposal received a strength for demonstrating a strong understanding of Special Projects, proposing an integrated team approach to establish primary points of contact, designating responsibilities within the team to monitor contract projects; and a strength for providing a detailed and thorough discussion of the Risk Management process, identifying potential risks and mitigation strategies associated with the SOW. Aetos’ proposal received a significant weakness for failing to adequately address a significant portion of the requirements of UR1, Technical Approach to Meeting the Requirements of the SOW.

Management Plan was rated “Fair.” One strength, one weakness, and one significant weakness were identified for this subfactor. Aetos’ proposal received a strength for providing a detailed discussion of its

phase-in plan, including a detailed phase-in schedule to assume contract responsibility within 30 days and providing orientation training as well as training to fill skill deficiencies. Aetos' proposal received a weakness for not providing a detailed discussion of its Preliminary Organizational Conflict of Interest Avoidance Plan as stipulated in NFS 1837.203-70 per the ES2 RFP and not discussing how employees will be trained on company policies and processes addressing the proper handling of sensitive information. Aetos' proposal received a significant weakness for not providing an adequate recruitment and retention strategy for students in underrepresented and underserved populations in STEM fields as required by the RFP, as it lacks discussion of recruiting/retaining K-20 students.

Representative Task Orders was rated "Very Good." Two significant strengths, three strengths, and two weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. Aetos' proposal received significant strengths for providing very creative and inventive methods to manage, sustain, and monitor the SEMAA program; and for providing very creative and inventive methods to manage and monitor the Aerospace Education Labs (AELs). Aetos' proposal received a strength for providing well thought-out plans to design, develop and implement a NASA SEMAA educator community of practice social networking site by utilizing social platforms; a strength for providing details on marketing, promoting, developing and deploying NASA scholarships/internships; and a strength for providing details on a plan to develop an internal collaboration partnership. Aetos' proposal received weaknesses for providing a strategy that did not provide details on any tools or technology to be utilized in implementing professional development and content to support teachers regarding Scenario 2; and for providing details on recruitment strategy for NASA Scholarship/Internship that focuses on high school rather than undergraduate and graduate students per Scenario 1 of the RFP.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated "Good." One strength was identified for this subfactor. The proposal contained no weaknesses or significant weaknesses for this subfactor. Aetos' proposal received a strength for providing a detailed compensation plan per the requirements of FAR 52.222-46, NFS 1852.231-71 and the RFP.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = "Moderate Level of Confidence"

Aetos' proposal contained three strengths for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. Aetos and its major subcontractors received strengths for having three contracts considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 effort; receiving "Excellent" to "Very Good" ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires on contracts considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 requirement; and for being rated "Exceptional" by a client in the Government PPIRS for a contract considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 requirement.

Cost/Price Factor

Aetos did not submit the IDIQ Task Order Price Summary (*Volume II Section 2*) for the additional WYEs as stipulated in Amendment 2 of the RFP. The Government was unable to calculate probable cost due to Aetos not proposing on all requested cost portions of the RFP.

AERO Institute (AERO)

Mission Suitability = 448

Understanding the requirements was rated "Good." Two strengths and two weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. AERO's proposal received a strength for providing detailed discussion of its understanding of SOW requirements and an effective approach to accomplishing the work effort; and a strength

for providing a detailed and thorough discussion of its risk management process, identifying potential risks and mitigation strategies associated with the SOW. AERO's proposal received weaknesses for not adequately addressing how it will support the Higher Education requirements under Student Opportunities; and for not providing a detailed description of the process that will be used for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of the contract implementation.

Management Plan was rated "Good." One significant strength, three strengths, and one significant weakness were identified for this subfactor. AERO's proposal received a significant strength for providing a complete and realistic phase-in plan demonstrating an understanding of the phase-in process to assume full contract responsibility within 30 days after award. AERO's proposal received a strength for providing a detailed description of its organizational structure with procedures and techniques to effectively manage the contract work effort; a strength for a detailed discussion of its approach to Subcontractor Management, including an effective teaming arrangement between the Offeror and its major subcontractor to perform ES2 tasks; and a strength for a detailed plan regarding the recruitment and retention of university level students in the STEM field, especially from underserved/underrepresented populations. AERO's proposal received a significant weakness for lacking details discussing its ability to recruit and retain K-12 students and professionals in STEM fields, especially from underserved/underrepresented populations.

Representative Task Orders was rated "Poor." Two significant strengths, one strength, two weaknesses, and two significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. AERO's proposal received significant strengths for demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the NASA Scholarship/Internship requirements and providing details on its extensive partnerships, a virtual mentoring program and an extensive database that can be used to reach underrepresented and underserved groups; and for providing a thorough strategy for professional development that includes utilizing a large significant database of educators. AERO's proposal received a strength for providing detailed techniques to effectively target the underserved/underrepresented population based on similar work performed at other NASA Centers for Sample Task 2 (SEMAA) of the RFP. AERO's proposal received a weakness for not demonstrating an understanding of adequate knowledge of GRC's six state region, but rather focusing on NASA Glenn, NASA Ames, and Penn State regions where it has performed work or plan to do work; and a weakness for failing to address public engagement in its description and implementation of NASA scholarships/internships in Scenario 1. AERO's proposal received significant weaknesses for failing to articulate the staffing level and the appropriate skill mix needed for work described in Sample Task 1, Office Baseline Support; and for not providing specific details on the key components of SEMAA and key aspects of the AEL that need IT support for Sample Task 2.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated "Fair." One strength and three weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. AERO's proposal received a strength for providing a detailed overview of the qualifications of the individuals selected to fill key positions as well as the rationale for their selection. AERO's proposal received a weakness for lack of detailed discussion regarding staffing and compensation per the requirements of FAR 52.222-46, 1852.231-71 and the RFP; a weakness for lack of an adequate approach regarding the backup for key personnel as required by the RFP; and a weakness for lack of adequate discussion regarding its proposed skill mix and experience levels as required by the RFP.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = "Moderate Level of Confidence"

AERO's proposal contained one strength for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. AERO and its major subcontractor received a strength for having four contractual vehicles considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 requirement including Cooperative Agreements & Grants; insufficient information exists to rate the team other than a "Meets" for past performance questionnaires as no past performance questionnaires were submitted for AERO; but

Pennsylvania State University, the major subcontractor, received “Excellent” ratings for one submitted past performance questionnaire on a contract considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 requirement. There existed insufficient information in the Government databases to rate Team AERO other than a “Meets” as the AERO was not rated by its clients in the Government PPIRS.

Cost/Price Factor

A probable cost analysis was performed resulting in a slight upward adjustment to the proposed cost. The final probable costs were significantly higher than that of the successful Offeror.

Logical Innovations, Inc. (LI)

Mission Suitability = 383

Understanding the Requirements was rated “Fair.” A weakness and two significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. LI’s proposal received a weakness for not providing a detailed description of the process it will use for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of the contract implementation. LI’s proposal received a significant weakness for not presenting a realistic approach to accomplishing the technical requirements of the SOW, but an approach that relies heavily on the utilization of volunteers, educators/teachers, and students instead of using its own staff members to provide the required support necessary to successfully perform the contractual specifications; and a significant weakness for providing a discussion of NASA’s capabilities and technologies that lacked detail as to how these capabilities will be used to fulfill significant SOW requirements.

Management Plan was rated “Fair.” Three strengths, two weaknesses, and one significant weakness were identified for this subfactor. LI’s proposal received a strength for providing clear roles and responsibilities of the ES2 Project Manager and a Quality Control Process “blueprint” covering safety, health, customer satisfaction, and corporate oversight; a strength for providing a detailed discussion and a relevant and complete phase-in plan that covers all the requirements of the RFP; and a strength for a detailed discussion of its Preliminary Organizational Conflict of Interest Avoidance Plan that is in accordance with NFS 1837.203-70 per the ES2 RFP. LI’s proposal received weaknesses for lack of evidence of an effective approach to deliver quality products that fully satisfy schedule requirements; and for not providing specific and complete information in responding to Subcontractor Management. LI’s proposal received a significant weakness for not providing details on all areas of the Organizational Structure & Management plan to manage the ES2 requirements.

Representative Task Orders was rated “Fair.” Three strengths, two weaknesses, and two significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. LI’s proposal received a strength for a thorough and relevant discussion regarding risks associated with carrying out Sample Task 1; a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion with regards to implementing a NASA Scholarship/Internship program targeted to reach underserved/underrepresented students; and a strength for a detailed and thorough discussion of Scenario 2, NASA Project, demonstrating a thorough understanding of how to obtain and deliver NASA content to educators. LI’s proposal received weaknesses for not displaying a clear understanding of the Aerospace Education Laboratory (AEL) portion of Sample Task 2; and for showing a limited understanding of the requirements in Scenario 1 by including numerous unfounded assumptions related to administering a NASA Scholarship/Internship project. LI’s proposal received significant weaknesses for not displaying a clear understanding of the overall role and responsibilities of the National SEMAA Office (NSO) in Sample Task 2; and for not displaying a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities associated with necessary positions to carry out EPO baseline support.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated “Fair.” There was one weakness identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. LI’s proposal received a weakness for providing an approach for recruiting, hiring, training, and retention that lacked adequate discussion regarding specifics on staffing, contract support, and compensation.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = “High Level of Confidence”

LI’s proposal contained one significant strength and one strength for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. LI and its major subcontractors received a strength for having multiple contracts considered relevant to the ES2 requirement; and received a significant strength for “Excellent” to “Very Good” ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires on contracts considered relevant to the ES2 requirement. There existed insufficient information in the Government databases to rate the LI team other than a “Meets” as LI was not rated by its clients in the Government PPIRS. DB Consulting, a major subcontractor, was rated “Excellent” and “Exceptional” on contract deemed relevant by multiple clients in the Government PPIRS.

Cost/Price Factor

A probable cost analysis was performed and no adjustments were made to LI’s cost proposal. The proposed costs were slightly lower than that of the successful Offeror.

Careers in Transition (CIT)

Mission Suitability = 318

Understanding the requirements was rated “Poor.” Three significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. CIT’s proposal received significant weaknesses for not addressing numerous significant key technical requirements stipulated in the SOW; for not demonstrating adequate knowledge of the SOW requirements; and for not providing a complete description of the process it will use for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of the contract implementation.

Management Plan was rated “Fair.” One strength and two significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. CIT’s proposal received a strength for providing a detailed discussion of its Preliminary Organization Conflict of Interest Avoidance Plan that is in accordance with NFS 1837.203-70. CIT’s proposal received significant weaknesses for failing to demonstrate a complete understanding of the phase-in plan requirements per the RFP and not addressing its approach; and for not providing a detailed discussion on Subcontractor Management per the requirements of the RFP.

Representative Task Orders was rated “Fair.” Two significant strengths, one strength, and three weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. CIT’s proposal received significant strengths for providing a very thorough and detailed discussion on the summary of items that will be utilized to recruit and retain students in Scenario 1; and for providing a very thorough, detailed, and well thought-out strategy for professional development for Scenario 2. CIT’s proposal received a strength for providing a detailed listing of several collaborative tools and methods for data collecting to provide interactivity with content. CIT’s proposal received weaknesses for restating summary positions and requirements from the SOW and omitting additional information for key positions in Sample Task 1; for re-stating of the requirements listed in the SOW for SEMAA and the AEL with no additional details for the four key subtasks listed in Sample Task 2; and for lack of discussion and specifics on addressing public engagement and

evaluation/reviews in its description and implementation of NASA scholarships and internships in Scenario 1.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated “Fair.” Three weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. CIT’s proposal received weaknesses for not adequately addressing staffing and compensation requirements as stipulated in the RFP; for not adequately addressing all the requirements of key personnel per the requirements of the RFP, lacking an approach for backup of key personnel; and for lack of adequate discussion regarding skill mix and experience levels as stipulated in the RFP.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = “Moderate Level of Confidence”

CIT’s proposal contained two strengths for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. CIT and its major subcontractor had two contracts with limited relevancy to the ES2 requirement, resulting in insufficient information to rate the team other than a “Meets” for relevancy; and received strengths for “Excellent” to “Very Good” ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires for contracts that were considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 requirement; and for being rated “Exceptional” and “Very Good” by a client in the Government PPIRS for a contract considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 effort. These exceptional ratings were provided for one contract year.

Cost/Price Factor

Complete cost or pricing data was not submitted by CIT for the Sample Tasks, or the additional WYEs as stipulated in Amendment 2 of the RFP. The Government was unable to complete a probable cost estimate.

The Ravens Group, Inc. (TRG)

Mission Suitability = 220

Understanding the Requirements was rated “Poor.” Three significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. TRG’s proposal received significant weaknesses for not demonstrating an understanding to the requirements of the SOW, mentioning that its proposal is comprehensive and states that various methodologies and processes will be used, but offers no explanations to support these statements; for including an incomplete risk management plan lacking in details and specifics; and for not providing a complete description of the process it will use for assessing and mitigating safety and health risks and hazards as part of the contract implementation.

Management Plan was rated “Fair.” Two strengths, one weakness, and three significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. TRG’s proposal received strengths for providing a detailed plan of its recruitment of students and professional participants, for educational programs and projects, in under-represented and underserved populations in STEM fields; and for providing a detailed discussion of its Preliminary Organization Conflict of Interest Plan that is in accordance with NFS 1837.203-70, per the ES2 RFP. TRG’s proposal received a weakness for not providing an adequate discussion and details of its contract phase-in plan lacking details and specifics. TRG’s proposal received significant weaknesses for lack of a detailed discussion on subcontractor management, not adequately addressing RFP requirements; for not providing sufficient evidence of an effective approach to deliver quality products that fully

satisfy schedule requirements, or unique approaches for improving program operation; and for not adequately addressing a plan to effectively manage the ES2 contract.

Representative Task Orders was rated “Poor.” Two weaknesses and three significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. TRG’s proposal received weaknesses for focusing on an alternative method of recruiting students by targeting non-STEM students rather than STEM students as stipulated in Scenario 1; and for failing to provide discussion of an overall strategy on how to provide professional development. TRG’s proposal received significant weaknesses for a complete lack of details and specifics addressing all portions of the Sample Task 1 with no discussion regarding the general requirements, description of work, or appropriate skill mix needed for the work and the technical requirements for each staffing level; for failing to address all four subtasks and technical requirements listed for Sample Task 2; and for failing to show how it will recruit or retain underrepresented and underserved populations in STEM disciplines, from undergraduate through entry into graduate school and/or scientific and technical workforce.

Staffing and Key Personnel was rated “Poor.” One weakness and two significant weaknesses were identified for this subfactor. There were no significant strengths or strengths identified for this subfactor. TRG’s proposal received a weakness for not providing a detailed discussion to effectively recruit, retain and staff the work effort as stipulated in the RFP. TRG’s proposal received significant weaknesses for lack of details and specifics regarding the selection of key personnel and any approach to provide backup for key personnel in the event of absences or vacancies as required by the RFP; and for not adequately discussing its proposed skill mix or providing detailed information on the source of staffing as required by the RFP.

Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating = “Moderate Level of Confidence”

TRG’s proposal contained one strength for Relevant Experience and Past Performance. No weaknesses were identified for this factor. TRG and its major subcontractor had four contracts with limited relevancy to the ES2 requirement, resulting in insufficient information to rate the team other than a “Meets” for relevancy. TRG received a strength for “Excellent” to “Very Good” ratings on submitted past performance questionnaires for contracts that were considered somewhat relevant to the ES2 requirement. Insufficient information existed in the Government databases to rate the TRG team other than a “Meets” as TRG was not rated by its clients in the Government PPIRS for any contracts deemed relevant to ES2.

Cost/Price Factor

A probable cost analysis was performed and no adjustments were identified. The proposed costs were significantly higher than that of the successful Offeror.

REPORT OF FINDINGS

On January 18, 2013, a presentation of findings was made to the Source Selection Authority. In attendance were the SEC members plus key management personnel. The presentation included detailed findings for all offerors. The detailed findings were supplied to the Source Selection Authority in advance.

DECISION

I reviewed the source selection information prior to the formal presentation. The findings for all offers were included in the presentation. I understand the evaluation process, the SEC findings, and concur with the overall results. I acknowledge the SEC’s approach to not indicate a strength or weakness for Mission

Suitability when an offeror's response was deemed to merely meet the requirements. Based upon the proposals received, I determined award on initial proposals is appropriate in accordance with section M.2 *Source Selection and Evaluation Factors* of the RFP, which advised the offerors that award without discussions might be made.

I consider the top two offerors, Paragon and TMG, to have an advantage over the other offerors. In reviewing the next two offerors, IDSI and Aetos, both proposals have much lower numerical scores. In the Management Plan subfactor, IDSI and Aetos received "Fair" ratings. The proposals contained both weaknesses and significant weaknesses and did not fully address the requirements of this subfactor. I consider a "Fair" rating with multiple weaknesses to indicate a risk to successful contract performance. In the Relevant Experience and Past Performance Factor, both offers received a "Moderate Level of Confidence" rating. In the area of Cost, the IDSI offer was slightly lower than the highest rated proposals. However, I find IDSI's lower Mission Suitability score and Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating to clearly offset the slightly lower price difference. I note the Aetos probable price could not be calculated due to Aetos' omission of proposal information. Overall, I do not consider these proposals to offer any advantage over the higher rated proposals.

In reviewing the four remaining proposals, I find these proposals to have received less than half of the available Mission Suitability points. Each proposal contained multiple subfactor ratings of "Fair" with multiple significant weaknesses. In the Relevant Experience and Past Performance Factor, all offerors, except for LI, received a "Moderate Level of Confidence" rating. Additionally, except for LI, the probable costs were higher than the highest ranked Offeror in Mission Suitability and Relevant Experience and Past Performance. Overall, I do not believe these offers provide any advantages over the higher rated offers.

Relative to LI, the Mission Suitability Score was 534 points lower than Paragon. No subfactor was rated higher than "Fair." The proposal contained multiple significant weaknesses indicating a risk of successful contract performance. In the Relevant Experience and Past Performance Factor, LI received a "High Level of Confidence" with identified strengths in relevancy and performance. Additionally, LI had a probable cost substantially lower than the highest ranked Offeror in Mission Suitability and Relevant Experience and Past Performance. However, I find the significantly lower Mission Suitability score, with no subfactor rating exceeding "Fair," accompanied by the multiple weaknesses and the lower Relevant Experience and Past Performance rating, to offset LI's lower proposal costs.

I therefore concluded that the top two offerors, Paragon and TMG presented distinct advantages over the remaining offerors. I therefore requested the SEC to focus the presentation on these two offerors.

In the Mission Suitability Factor, I note a 184 point difference between Paragon and TMG. Paragon received an "Excellent" in three out of the four subfactors. There existed multiple significant strengths throughout each of the subfactors, reflecting a balanced and comprehensive proposal across the entire spectrum of evaluated items. Of particular note, was in the Management Plan subfactor where Paragon received four significant strengths centering on its management approach and organization; approach to deliver quality products; approach to assume full contract responsibility; and a detailed and thorough recruitment and retention strategy of students in the STEM field, particularly from targeted populations. This overall response in the management area indicates a highly effective approach to managing the contract effort. I further note, Paragon received an "Excellent" in Understanding the Requirements of the work effort, and an "Excellent" in the Representative Task Orders subfactor with multiple significant strengths. I consider these findings to indicate detailed knowledge of the specific work effort. Paragon also received an "Excellent" in the Staffing and Key Personnel subfactor clearly indicating its intent to provide highly capable and quality personnel. Overall, I find that the Paragon proposal displayed an

excellent understanding of the work effort and a highly effective approach to successfully perform the contract effort.

Relative to TMG, I note the proposal received a “Very Good” in three of the four subfactors and a “Fair” in one subfactor. The proposal contained multiple significant strengths throughout the various subfactors. The management plan displayed an effective approach to accomplish the work effort with a significant strength for providing a detailed, thorough and clear discussion of how the contract would be managed and a significant strength for providing a detailed quality control plan. I do note a single weakness in this area. Overall, the proposal had an effective approach to manage the effort. I further note that TMG received a “Very Good” in both the Understanding the Requirements and Representative Task Orders subfactors. This also indicated a good understanding of the work to be performed. I note that TMG received a “Fair” in Staffing and Key Personnel with three weaknesses relating to the total compensation plan, a limited discussion on the approach for backup of key personnel, and for not providing sufficient details to support its recommended source of staffing.

In a direct comparison of the two offerors in the Mission Suitability Factor, I find Paragon to have provided a superior proposal throughout the subfactors. Of particular note, were the findings throughout the Management Plan and Understanding the Requirements subfactors. Significant strengths were identified throughout these subfactors. I find this to represent a comprehensive approach to management, a thorough understanding of the work effort and a high likelihood of successful contract performance. Overall, I believe that the findings indicated that the Paragon proposal was superior to TMG in the Mission Suitability Factor. I therefore find Paragon to have a meaningful advantage in this Factor.

In the Relevant Experience and Past Performance Factor, I note that Paragon received a “Very High Level of Confidence” rating. The proposal received three significant strengths. The Paragon Team had multiple contracts considered highly relevant and relevant to the ES2 requirement. The proposal received “Excellent” to “Very Good” performance ratings. These ratings were in multiple areas for both the prime contractor and the teammates. I also note that Paragon has direct experience at GRC in similar work efforts.

I note that TMG had a “High Level of Confidence” rating in the Relevant Experience and Past Performance Factor. The proposal contained two strengths. The TMG Team had multiple contracts considered relevant to the ES2 requirement and received “Excellent” to “Very Good” past performance ratings. I note that the SEC found that insufficient information existed in the Government databases to rate Team TMG other than a “Meets” in that TMG was not rated by its clients in the Government Past Performance databases.

In a direct comparison of the two proposals, I find the Paragon Team to have more direct highly relevant contract experience to the anticipated effort. I note that as a prime contractor, Paragon has direct relevant experience at GRC in contracts similar to the anticipated effort. I consider the consistent “Excellent” and “Very Good” performance ratings across multiple contracts, in both performance rating methods (PPQ, CPARS/PPIRS), to be positive indicators of future contract performance. While I find that TMG also has relevant contract experience and positive past performance ratings, I do not consider it to be to the depth and breadth of the Paragon Team. I therefore find Paragon to have a meaningful advantage in this area. In the area of Cost/Price, I note Paragon’s probable cost of \$24.1M. No adjustments were made by the Government. TMG had a significantly higher proposed price as well as probable upward adjustments made by the SEC. I understand and agree with the upward adjustments made.

In a direct comparison of the probable costs, I find Paragon to have a distinct advantage in the area of Costs being significantly lower than TMG.

In consideration of all three evaluation Factors, I find Paragon to have an advantage in all three Factors. The proposal had a higher Mission Suitability score, higher Past Performance rating, and probable costs significantly lower than TMG.

With an understanding that all three evaluation factors are equal in importance, I select Paragon Tec, Inc. to perform the contract work effort for the NASA Glenn Educational Support Services.



James M. Free
Director, NASA Glenn Research Center
Source Selection Authority

15 Feb 2013

Date

Concurrence:



Bradley J. Baker
Procurement Officer, NASA Glenn Research Center

2/12/2013

Date