

SOURCE SELECTION STATEMENT  
LABORATORY SERVICES CONTRACT  
RFP NNS15530603R

On February 11, 2015, the John C. Stennis Space Center (SSC) Procurement Officer, Deputy Procurement Officer, Associate Procurement Officer, and I met with the Acquisition Buying Team (ABT) appointed to evaluate proposals for the SSC Laboratory Service Contract (LSC). During this meeting, the ABT presented findings resulting from the evaluation process. I discussed the relative merits of each proposal with ABT members, as well as other attendees, to assure a full understanding of the ABT's evaluation. This document summarizes the procurement, evaluation process, results of that process, and basis of my selection of an offeror for award.

**Procurement Description**

The purpose of this procurement is to provide a follow-on acquisition for the current SSC laboratory services contract; this acquisition will also provide laboratory services for Michoud Assembly Facility (MAF). The successful offeror will be required to provide the following services: Measurements Standards and Calibration Laboratory (MS&CL), Gas and Material Science Laboratory (GMSL), Environmental (ENV) Laboratory, Stennis Institutional Geographic Information System (SIGIS) Laboratory, Metrology Laboratory and Test Services Laboratory Services.

This contract will be a performance-based Firm Fixed Price (FPP) contract. The base period of performance is seventeen months with two (2) one-year option periods and one (1) nineteen month option period. The option periods were evaluated and considered as part of the competition.

**Procurement History**

SSC ABT members were appointed on October 28, 2014, by Richard J. Gilbrech, SSC Director, and MAF ABT members were appointed on November 5, 2014, by Patrick E. Scheuermann, Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) Director. ABT members were responsible for evaluating proposals received in response to the solicitation. Appointed members represented the Center Operations Directorate, Engineering and Test Directorate, Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, Office of Chief Financial Officer, Office of Procurement, MAF, and Office of Chief Counsel. Prior to issuance of the Request for Proposal (RFP), the ABT released a pre-solicitation notice which requested for information from potential sources on June 13, 2014 via the NASA Acquisition Internet Service (NAIS) Business Opportunities and Federal Business

Opportunities (FedBizOps) websites. Market research indicated significant interest in the requirement from small businesses. Based on the market research, the RFP was issued as a competitive 8(a) small business set-aside.

The RFP was issued via NAIS and FedBizOps websites on December 3, 2014. A site visit, conducted on December 10, 2014, included a briefing and tour of laboratories at SSC and MAF. Three amendments, which contained administrative, or minor changes to the RFP in response to offeror questions, were posted to NAIS and FedBizOps.

Proposals were due on January 13, 2015. Four proposals, from the following offerors, were received in response to the RFP (listed in alphabetical order):

A2Research, JV

4801 University Square

Huntsville, AL 35816

- JV Majority Partner: Alcyon, Inc.
- JV Minority Partner: Alutiiq Professional Trading, LLC

AA Calibration Services, LLC

111 Roosevelt Hudson Dr.

Yahoo City, MS 39194

Adsync Technologies, Inc.

111 S. DeVilliers St

Pensacola, FL 32502

- Major Subcontractors: Ascendant Solutions, LLC  
Rohmann Services, Inc.  
Science & Management Resources, Inc.

Watring Technologies, Inc

2120 Meridian St N.

Huntsville, AL 35811

- Major Subcontractors: Geocent, LLC  
Kaya Associates, Inc.  
Professional Solutions Company Inc. (PSCI)

Upon receipt of proposals, the Contract Specialist conducted an initial review to determine if all information had been provided and whether each offeror made a reasonable attempt to present an acceptable proposal. After receiving the proposal from AA Calibration Services, LLC (AA Calibration), it was determined that the proposal was received after the time specified for the receipt of proposals. AA Calibration was notified that their proposal was determined as late in

accordance with FAR 52.212(f)(2) and would not be considered for award. The ABT then conducted an initial review to determine if all information had been provided and whether each offeror made a reasonable attempt to present an acceptable proposal. The remaining three proposals, A2Research, JV (A2R), Adsync Technologies Inc. (Adsync), and Watring Technologies Inc. (Watring), were determined to be responsive and were evaluated in accordance with the criteria identified in the RFP. Adsync was contacted for a minor clarification on their proposal; however, the information provided by Adsync clarified their proposal.

### **Evaluation Procedures**

The ABT evaluated proposals in accordance with the criteria established in the RFP, including RFP addendum to FAR provision 52.212-1, "Instructions to Offerors," FAR provision 52.212-2, "Evaluation--Commercial Items," and addendum to FAR provision 52.212-2.

Evaluation characteristics identified in the RFP include Management Approach, Relevant Experience, Past Performance & Safety, and Price. Management Approach, Relevant Experience, and Past Performance & Safety were approximately equal. When combined, these three value characteristics (Management Approach, Relevant Experience, and Past Performance & Safety) were significantly more important than Price.

As stated in the RFP, the Government will award a contract resulting from the solicitation to the responsible offeror whose offer, conforming to the solicitation, will be most advantageous to the Government. This procurement was conducted utilizing Best Value Selection (BVS), which seeks to make an award based on the best combination of price and non-price factors (Management Approach, Relevant Experience, and Past Performance & Safety). BVS predefines the value characteristics which serve as discriminators among proposals. BVS evaluation is based on the premise that, if all proposals are of approximately equal qualitative merit, award will be made to the offeror with the lowest evaluated price (fixed-price contracts). However, the Government will consider awarding to an offeror with higher qualitative merit if the difference in price is commensurate with added value. Conversely, the Government will consider making award to an offeror whose proposal has lower qualitative merit if the price differential between it and other offers warrants doing so.

The four evaluation characteristics described in the RFP are as follows:

Management Approach:

Each proposal was evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the proposed Management Approach as outlined in the submission requirements. Offerors were required to provide/address six main areas in their Management Approach: 1) Phase-in Plan, 2) Organizational Chart, 3) Safety & Health Plan, 4) Staffing Plan, 5) Total Compensation Plan (TCP), and 6) Joint Venture (JV), Teaming Arrangement, including subcontracting relationships, or other contractual arrangement, if any. The ABT evaluated and assigned an adjectival efficiency rating of Highly Effective, Moderately Effective, or Ineffective for the overall Management Approach. The definitions for the adjectival ratings and the complete submission requirements can be found in the RFP.

Relevant Experience:

Relevant Experience was evaluated to determine if the offeror's accomplishment of work was comparable or related to the technical work required by the solicitation, and was of similar scope, size and complexity. At a minimum, offerors were required to provide experience in the following disciplines: Measurements Standards and Calibration Laboratory (MS&CL), Gas and Material Science Laboratory (GMSL), Environmental (ENV) Laboratory, Stennis Institutional Geographic Information System (SIGIS) Laboratory, Metrology Laboratory and Test Services Laboratory Services. ABT assigned an adjectival risk rating of Low Risk, Moderate Risk, or High Risk for Relevant Experience. The definitions for the adjectival ratings and the complete submission requirements can be found in the RFP.

Past Performance & Safety:

Each offeror was required to submit Past Performance & Safety information as outlined in the submission requirements. Additionally, Past Performance information obtained from other sources known by the Government [i.e., Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS)] were utilized and evaluated. An offeror's Past Performance on similar projects was evaluated to determine the quality of work previously provided and to assess the relative capability of the offeror to effectively accomplish the requirements of this contract. Past Performance information was used to assess the extent to which contract objectives (including management, technical management, quality control, safety program, and other) were achieved on comparable or related type work. The ABT assigned an adjectival rating of Outstanding, Above Average, Neutral, Satisfactory, Marginal, or Unsatisfactory based on the evaluation results. The definitions for the adjectival ratings and the complete submission requirements can be found in the RFP.

## Price:

Each offeror's proposed price, including all options, was evaluated for realism, completeness, reasonableness, and for determining best value to the Government. Price evaluation consisted of evaluation of the total price of the basic and all options, as well as each Contract Line Item Number (CLIN) encompassing each of the major cost elements (e.g., labor, material, subcontracts, overhead, G&A, profit, etc.). In addition to the total price evaluation, the hourly rates proposed by the offerors were analyzed to determine if the rates were fair and reasonable. To accomplish this two demand job scenarios were created and priced with each offerors rates. The analysis revealed that all offerors rates are fair and reasonable based on the total price. Comparison between the scenarios revealed that there wasn't a large disparity in price between any of the offerors; therefore, prices offered by all offerors are considered to be balanced, fair and reasonable.

## Findings

The ABT reviewed proposals from each responsive offeror and completed evaluation of all factors. On February 11, 2015, the ABT presented evaluation findings to the SSA. Final findings were as follows:

### **A2R**

Management Approach: A2R's proposal received a Highly Effective adjectival rating for its Management Approach. A2R received eight strengths and two weaknesses under this evaluation factor. A2R addressed all six areas required in their Management Approach. The proposal received a strength for the phase-in plan which included a detailed schedule with adequate time for completion of tasks. Strengths were also given for the proposal's emphasis on the retention of incumbent workforce and contingency hiring plan established for any incumbent employee that may decide to not hire with the new contract. Other strengths were given for efficiencies for the labor force by cross training employees to work in multiple labs, consolidating metrology work for SSC and MAF, and the offeror's understanding of the different operations at SSC and MAF. A2R was also assigned strengths for the proposed cost savings which were created through proposed elimination of redundant Government Furnished Property (GFP) and proposing an in-house capability to calibrate machinery which is currently sent off-site for this service. A2R was assigned a weakness because of the proposal's failure to address a computer programmer skill set. The proposal states that the Quality Assurance Manager would train and mentor junior programmers; however, there was no mention of junior computer programmers in the proposal. A second weakness was given for the failure to address Associate Contractor Agreements (ACA) as required in the RFP.

Relevant Experience: A2R's proposal received a Low Risk adjectival rating for Relevant Experience. A2R received one significant strength under this evaluation factor for A2R's performance on existing SSC LSC.

Past Performance & Safety: A2R's proposal received an Outstanding adjectival rating for Past Performance & Safety. A2R received one significant strength and one strength under this evaluation factor. A2R received a significant strength for the overall exceptional ratings received on PPIRS reports for the past three years of performance on the current SSC LSC. A strength was given for multiple awards that A2R received during performance of SSC LSC, i.e. two awards as SSC Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year and one award as NASA Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year.

Price: A2R's proposed price of \$23,655,217 was the lowest priced offer. Overall the pricing information submitted and the total proposed price showed an understanding of the work to be performed that was balanced and realistic as proposed.

## **Adsync**

Management Approach: Adsync's proposal received a Moderately Effective adjectival rating for its Management Approach. Adsync received three strengths and three weaknesses under this evaluation factor. Adsync addressed all six areas required in their Management Approach. Strengths were given for the proposal's detailed understanding of Data Requirements Descriptions (DRDs), and for the proposal's emphasis on the retention of the incumbent workforce. A strength was also given for the proposal's emphasis on maintaining MAF senior incumbents. A weaknesses was given due to the proposal's assignment of low skill levels for labor categories in the staffing plan. A second weakness was given because of the lack of detail provided when addressing the differences between operations at SSC and MAF. The third weakness was given because of insufficient detail provided when defining team member roles and responsibilities.

Relevant Experience: Adsync's proposal received a Moderate Risk adjectival rating for Relevant Experience. Adsync received two strengths and one weakness under this evaluation factor. The proposal received strengths for demonstrating relevant experience for performing metrology and calibration services, and GIS services, on previous contracts of similar scope, size, and complexity. A weakness was given for the proposal's omission of experience for gas and material science services, and limited experience for environmental science services.

Past Performance & Safety: Adsync's proposal received an Above Average adjectival rating for Past Performance & Safety. Adsync received two strengths and one weakness under this evaluation factor. One strength was given for a PPIRS report that reflected exceptional performance as prime contractor on a previous contract. A second strength was given for a

PPIRS report that reflected excellent performance by one of the subcontractors on a previous contract. One weakness was given for a PPIRS report that reflected questionable performance by one of the subcontractors on a previous contract. This was further validated by the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer Representative for that contract.

Price: Adsync's proposed price was higher than the lowest priced offer. Overall the pricing information submitted and the total proposed price showed an understanding of the work to be performed that was balanced and realistic as proposed.

## **Watring**

Management Approach: Watring's proposal received a Highly Effective adjectival rating for its Management Approach. Watring received ten strengths and two weaknesses under this evaluation factor. Watring addressed all six areas required in their Management Approach. Strengths were given for Watring's detailed phase-in plan, centralized management approach for work orders, profit sharing for repair or replacement of GFP, and emphasis on the retention of the incumbent MAF workforce. Other strengths were given for Watring's understanding of the NASA business process with other government agencies and commercial entities, the production process at MAF, ACA process and Foreign Object Debris (FOD) program. Additionally strengths were given for Watring's Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) approved property management system and compliance with AS9100. One weakness was given for lack of detail in proposed TCP. A second weakness was given for failure to address compliance with ANS/NCSL Z-540.3-2006.

Relevant Experience: Watring's proposal received a Low Risk adjectival rating for Relevant Experience. Watring received one significant strength and two strengths under this evaluation factor. A significant strength was given for Watring teaming with the contractor currently performing metrology and calibrations, and gas and material science services, for MAF. The proposal received strengths for demonstrating relevant experience for performing metrology and calibrations, GIS, and environmental services on previous contracts of similar scope, size and complexity.

Past Performance & Safety: Watring's proposal received an Outstanding adjectival rating for Past Performance & Safety. The proposal received three strengths under this evaluation factor. One strength was given for a PPIRS report that reflected exceptional performance as prime contractor on a previous contract. A second strength was given, and validated by a provided reference, for above average performance by one of the subcontractors on a previous contract. A third strength was given for development of a shearography technique to perform thermal protection system inspection and tests, that otherwise could not be performed.

Price: Watring's proposed price was significantly higher than the lowest priced offer. Overall the pricing information submitted and the total proposed price showed an understanding of the work to be performed that was balanced and realistic as proposed.

### **Selection Decision**

At conclusion of the ABT's presentation of findings, I considered its evaluation of the proposals against evaluation criteria outlined in the RFP. During the presentation, the Procurement Officer, Deputy Procurement Officer, Associate Procurement Officer, and I thoroughly questioned the ABT on a number of findings and were satisfied with responses provided by the team. I concluded that the evaluation criteria were followed and evaluation of the proposals was comprehensive, thorough and well-documented. As the SSA, I concurred with the findings of the ABT and adopted those findings without exception. I made my selection decision based on a detailed comparative assessment of the relative merits of the proposals against all source selection criteria stated in the RFP. I considered the potential impact of each strength and each weakness on the proposed effort. I then concluded that it is in the Government's best interest to award to A2R. The reasoning for my decision is outlined below.

The RFP states that Management Approach, Relevant Experience, and Past Performance & Safety are approximately equal. When combined, these three value characteristics are significantly more important than Price. In making the source selection decision, I carefully considered the ABT findings, the results of each evaluation factor, and used the evaluation factors as set forth in the RFP.

Under the Management Approach and Relevant Experience factors, A2R and Watring received adjectival ratings of Highly Effective and Low Risk, respectively. Under the Management Approach and Relevant Experience factors, Adsync received an adjectival rating of Moderately Effective and Moderate Risk, respectively. Under the Past Performance & Safety factor, A2R and Watring received adjectival ratings of Outstanding and Adsync received an adjectival rating of Above Average. Because proposals for A2R and Watring were of high qualitative merit, I then looked at each offeror's price. The price proposed by A2R was significantly lower than the price proposed by Watring. Upon review of responsive proposals, and in accordance with the evaluation process identified in the solicitation, the Government determined that a selection and award could be made without discussions.

Based on my considerations outlined above, I have determined that the offer from A2R is clearly the most advantageous to the Government. The Highly Effective Management Approach rating, Low Risk Relevant Experience rating, and Outstanding Past Performance & Safety rating, coupled with its lower price, demonstrates A2R's ability to successfully perform the contract requirements while providing the overall best value to the Government. Accordingly, I select A2R for award of the LSC.

As a result of the above, the Small Business Administration (SBA) was contacted by the Contracting Officer to determine if A2R was an SBA approved Joint Venture (JV). The SBA directed A2R to change the name of the JV; therefore, A2R submitted all necessary name change documents to effect the name change from A2R to AAR (Doing Business As) A2R. Subsequently, the SBA approved AAR as a Joint Venture. The award document will reflect AAR (Doing Business As A2R).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerald Norris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gerald Norris

Source Selection Authority