

Source Selection Statement
Evaluations, Assessments, Studies, Services, and Support 2 (EASSS 2)
Request for Proposal (RFP) NNL15ZB1002R

On June 1, 2015, the Source Evaluation Board (SEB) for the Evaluations, Assessments, Studies, Services, and Support 2 (EASSS 2) procurement presented its findings to me in a formal source selection briefing.

Background

The purpose of the EASSS 2 contract is to procure evaluations, assessments, studies, services, and support for the Science Office for Mission Assessments (SOMA), Independent Program Assessment Office (IPAO), and other organizations across NASA. The SOMA is responsible for the management and oversight of evaluations, assessments, and studies for the Science Mission Directorate and may provide this service to other NASA organizations. The IPAO conducts studies and independent assessments, primarily as part of Standing Review Boards during Life Cycle Review, to support Agency technical and programmatic strategic decisions.

EASSS 2 will be a Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee, single award, indefinite delivery indefinite quantity contract with a maximum contract ceiling of \$101M. The potential period of performance is five years. All work assignments will be made by the issuance of Task Orders (TOs).

Market research commenced by posting a Sources Sought Notice on the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) website and the NASA Acquisition Internet Service website on July 16, 2014. A Procurement Strategy Meeting was conducted with the Source Selection Authority (SSA) on October 8, 2014. Following approval of the procurement strategy, and completion of a Solicitation Review Board on November 19, 2014, a draft RFP was issued on November 24, 2014 for comments from industry. A pre-solicitation conference was held on December 2, 2014 at NASA LaRC after release of the draft RFP in order to allow the offerors to provide input into the final RFP. The pre-solicitation conference was attended by eight companies. The procurement was conducted as a total small business set-aside under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 541712, "Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)," sub-category "Guided missile and space vehicle engine research and development." The NAICS code and sub-category classification were deemed to be most appropriate based on the procurement providing evaluation and assessment services requiring thorough knowledge of spacecraft design, development, testing and operations; and knowledge of suborbital sounding rockets (missiles). The small business size standard is 1,000 employees or less.

The final RFP was released on January 15, 2015. The final RFP had a proposal response date of February 17, 2015, and a request for Past Performance Proposals (Volume III) to be submitted by February 2, 2015. One RFP amendment was issued which did not impact the proposal response date.

The following companies (listed in alphabetical order) responded to the RFP by the due date of February 17, 2015:

- Analytical Services & Materials, Inc. (AS&M)
- Cornell Technical Services, LLC (CTS)
- Integrated Systems Solutions, Inc. (ISS)

Evaluation Factors

The appointed SEB conducted an evaluation of proposals received in response to the RFP. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the method of evaluation and evaluation factors contained in Section M of the RFP. The RFP set forth the following three evaluation factors:

- Factor 1: Mission Suitability
- Factor 2: Cost/Price
- Factor 3: Past Performance

The RFP stated that proposals received in response to this solicitation will be evaluated by a SEB in accordance with NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) 1815.3, Source Selection. The SEB will rate Mission Suitability and Past Performance, and the SEB will consider Cost/Price in accordance with Section M of the RFP. The RFP also stated the SSA, after consultation with the SEB and other advisors, would select the Offeror that can perform the contract in a manner most advantageous to the Government, all factors considered. The SSA would make an integrated assessment of each offer and comparatively evaluate competing offers, considering input from the SEB. The SSA would consider adjectival ratings and point scores assigned by the SEB; however, the SSA would base selection on substantive proposal differences that are reflected by the adjectival ratings and point scores as opposed to basing selection on mere differences in ratings or scores. The RFP stated that overall, in the selection of a Contractor for contract award, Mission Suitability, Cost, and Past Performance, will be of approximately equal importance. All evaluation factors other than Cost, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost.

Factor 1 – Mission Suitability

The RFP stated Factor 1, Mission Suitability would be evaluated based on a 1,000 point scale. A summary of the Mission Suitability Subfactors and their weights are shown below. The RFP stated the numerical weights assigned are indicative of the relative importance of the Subfactors. The areas under each Subfactor were evaluated but not separately rated or scored.

Subfactor 1 – Staffing Approach - 400 points. NASA evaluated the Offeror's approach for staffing the contract to ensure timely and quality performance of Government requirements, including:

- a) recruiting and retaining a diverse pool of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and other required skills;
- b) staffing multiple, overlapping proposal evaluation panels of varying sizes and durations;
- c) staffing up and down quickly (including accessing personnel from sources other than direct hiring) to adapt to changing missions, requirements, priorities, workload, and funding fluctuations to meet Government requirements without adversely affecting ongoing work; and
- d) complying with FAR 52.219-14, Limitations on Subcontracting.

Subfactor 2 – Management – 600 points

1. Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI) and Personal Conflicts of Interest (PCI): NASA evaluated the Offeror's plan including its plan for complying with the requirements of NFS 1852.237-72, Access to Sensitive Information, FAR 52.203-16, Preventing Personal Conflicts of Interest, Section H.2, Organizational Conflicts of

Interest, and Section H.3, Limitation of Future Contracting; and its approach to identifying, mitigating, neutralizing, and/or avoiding OCIs and PCIs that may arise under this contract.

2. Management Approach: NASA evaluated the Offerors approach to contract and task management including:
 - a) consistent, uniform proposal evaluations within and across all proposal evaluation tasks;
 - b) logistics, facilities, and information support;
 - c) day-to-day management for responding to new tasks and managing multiple tasks, changing requirements, subcontractors, and consultants; and
 - d) controlling cost (including subcontractor/consultant cost), monitoring and reporting financial performance, and developing task plan estimates.

The RFP stated that the SEB would use the adjectival and numerical ratings included in the RFP in its evaluation of the Mission Suitability Factor.

Factor 2 – Cost/Price

RFP Provision M.2, Evaluation Factors, Factor 2, Cost/Price, stated that in accordance with FAR 15.404-1(b), the Government will conduct a price analysis by evaluating the prices proposed in response to this solicitation. Specifically, the evaluations will include, but are not limited to, comparing the prices proposed in response to this solicitation, comparing the proposed prices to historical prices for the same or similar items purchased by the Government, and comparing the proposed prices to the independent Government cost estimate.

Furthermore the RFP stated that in accordance with FAR 15.404-1(d), the Government will conduct cost realism analyses by independently reviewing and evaluating specific elements of each Offeror's proposed cost estimate to determine whether the estimated proposed cost elements are realistic for the work to be performed; reflect a clear understanding of the requirements; and are consistent with the unique methods of performance and materials described in the Offeror's technical proposal. The Government will derive a probable cost, which is determined by adjusting each Offeror's proposed cost, and fee when appropriate, to reflect any additions or reductions in cost elements to realistic levels based on the results of the cost realism analyses performed. The RFP stated that the probable cost may differ from the proposed cost and will reflect the Government's best estimate of each Offeror's proposal and that the probable cost shall be used for the purposes of evaluation to determine the best value.

Factor 3 – Past Performance

RFP Provision M.2, Evaluation Factors, Factor 3, Past Performance, stated that NASA will evaluate each Offeror's current/recent record (including the record of any significant subcontractors, but not the past performance of individuals who are proposed to be involved in the required work) of performing services or delivering products as demonstrated on the individual contracts offered for relevance, that are similar in size, content, and complexity to the requirements of this solicitation. The Government will evaluate the past performance of the prime and each significant subcontractor considering the amount and type of work each firm is proposed to perform. The confidence rating assigned to Past Performance will reflect consideration of information contained in the proposal, past performance evaluation input provided through customer questionnaires, and data NASA obtains from other sources. Offerors

without a record of relevant past performance, or for whom information on past performance is not available, shall receive a neutral rating.

The RFP stated each of the confidence ratings as defined in RFP section M.2 will be used to evaluate the Past Performance factor for each Offeror. Further each confidence rating has a "performance" component and a "pertinence" component. The Offeror must meet the requirements of both components to achieve a particular rating. In assessing pertinence, the Government will consider the degree of similarity in size (in dollars per year), content, and complexity of each individual contract to the requirements in this solicitation, as well as the recency and duration of the past performance.

The RFP stated that in assessing performance, the Government will make an assessment of the Offeror's overall performance record. The Government will evaluate the Offeror's past performance record for meeting technical, schedule, cost, management, occupational health, safety, security, overall mission success, subcontracting goals, and other contract requirements. Isolated or infrequent problems that were not severe or persistent, and for which the Offeror took immediate and appropriate corrective action, may not reduce the Offeror's confidence rating. On the other hand, confidence ratings will be reduced when problems were within the Contractor's control and were significant, persistent, or frequent, or when there is a pattern of problems or a negative trend of performance.

Evaluation Procedures

Prior to issuance of the RFP, the SEB was appointed to conduct an evaluation of proposals received in response to the RFP. The SEB conducted the evaluation of proposals in accordance with Section M of the RFP. The SEB began their evaluation upon receipt of the Past Performance Volumes (Volume III), which were received from the offerors prior to the due date for Volumes I and II. The SEB performed a comprehensive review of each offeror's Past Performance Proposal, all Past Performance Questionnaires (PPQs), communications with references, if appropriate, and information obtained from other sources including the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS). To determine work content pertinence, the SEB reviewed each contract identified in each offeror's proposal by assessing the effort under each contract against the content areas addressed in the EASSS 2 SOW, with emphasis on the content areas included in the "Technical Performance" section of the EASSS 2 solicitation's PPQ. The SEB also reviewed the past performance information to determine size and complexity pertinence for each offeror. The SEB then assigned an overall pertinence rating for each offeror based on an integrated assessment of the size, content, and complexity for each offeror. The SEB then reviewed each offeror's performance ratings and assigned an overall past performance confidence level based on the definitions in the NFS.

Upon receipt of the Technical Proposals (Volume I) and the Business Proposals (Volume II), the SEB conducted an initial review of each Volume, with the Cost/Price Analyst providing a review of the Factor 2, Cost/Price proposal information, to determine if any were unacceptable proposals as defined in NFS 1815.305-70. The Contract Specialist reviewed each model contract, applicable terms and conditions, and Representations and Certifications for each offeror. All proposals warranted a full evaluation.

The SEB members performed a detailed individual review of each offeror's Technical Proposal and documented strengths and weaknesses for each Mission Suitability Subfactor. The SEB consultants also independently reviewed specific areas of each proposal relevant to the Factor for which they possess subject matter expertise and provided input to the SEB voting members

for consideration. After completion of the individual evaluations for each Subfactor, the SEB convened to discuss individual findings and to develop consensus on strengths and weaknesses for each of the offerors. The SEB then reviewed the findings for each offeror to ensure that all proposals were evaluated consistently and objectively. Upon completion of the evaluation of all Subfactors for all offerors, the SEB assigned adjectival ratings and percentage scores to each Subfactor based on the consensus findings, calculating a point score for each Subfactor by multiplying the assigned percentage score and available points, then summing the Subfactor point scores to derive the overall Mission Suitability point score.

The SEB reviewed each offeror's Business Proposal to determine whether the costs proposed were reasonable, realistic, and consistent with the technical approach. The cost proposals were assessed in accordance with the Cost/Price evaluation factor. The SEB provided the results of its review to the Cost/Price Analyst who incorporated the results into the detailed analysis of the offeror's cost proposals.

The Contracting Officer carefully reviewed the facts presented in the initial findings and discussed the findings with the SEB. The RFP states the Government anticipates award will be made without discussions, [ref. RFP Provision FAR 52.215-1 and RFP Provision L.14(c)], and based on the initial findings of the SEB, it was evident that the potential for an award without discussions existed. Therefore, no Competitive Range was determined and the SEB met with me, the SSA, on June 1, 2015, to present its findings.

Evaluation Findings

Factor 1 – Mission Suitability

Set forth below is a summary of the Mission Suitability Findings for the offerors.

AS&M

AS&M received a Mission Suitability score of 700. AS&M's proposal included several Strengths and there were no Significant Strengths, Weaknesses, or Significant Weaknesses. A summary of AS&M's Mission Suitability findings are provided below.

Subfactor 1: Staffing Approach

AS&M received an adjectival rating of Good for Subfactor 1.

AS&M received a strength for an effective approach to retaining a diverse pool of SMEs and other required skills. The proposal demonstrates an effective payment approach which increases the probability of retaining SME's and other required skills. AS&M received another strength for its effective approach to staffing multiple, overlapping proposal evaluation panels of varying sizes and durations and for staffing up and down quickly. The approach includes the use of existing databases of SMEs and other effective methods to staffing SMEs; and the ability to retain Certified Cost Estimators/Analysts and use of established cost estimating tools.

Subfactor 2: Management

AS&M received an adjectival rating of Good for Subfactor 2.

AS&M received a Strength for effective methods for avoiding OCIs and PCIs. The methods include quick notification to the EASSS 2 Contracting Officer when potential conflicts are identified, an effective approach to routinely communicating compliance issues with employees; and other effective methods AS&M committed to in its proposal to emphasize OCI and PCI avoidance.

AS&M received a Strength for an effective approach to conducting consistent, uniform proposal evaluations within and across all proposal evaluation tasks. The approach includes effective methods for staffing key evaluation panel positions, proposal evaluation training, and continual process improvement.

AS&M received a Strength for an effective approach to controlling, monitoring, and reporting financial performance of subcontractor/consultant costs. The approach includes methods to compile timely and uniform cost data for all the staffing, which makes contract reporting more timely and accurate and helps identify budget variances more quickly.

CTS

CTS received a Mission Suitability score of 942. CTS's proposal included several Strengths as well as a Significant Strength under each subfactor. There were no Weaknesses or Significant Weaknesses. A summary of CTS's Mission Suitability findings are provided below.

Subfactor 1: Staffing Approach

CTS received an adjectival rating of Excellent for Subfactor 1.

CTS received a Significant Strength for its highly effective approach for staffing multiple, overlapping proposal evaluation panels of varying sizes and durations and for staffing up and down quickly. The proposal includes a highly effective staffing plan that accounts for upcoming reviews over a defined period of time, appropriately distributes experienced staffing and ensures appropriate leadership is assigned; demonstrates an effective approach to increase the depth of experienced staff; and demonstrated continuity in staffing. The approach also leverages the use of a database and other methods of identifying a large number of pre-screened staff. The proposal demonstrated CTS's ability to provide the breadth and depth of critical subject matter expertise aligned with the skills required for EASSS 2 allowing it to staff multiple, overlapping proposal evaluation panels of varying sizes and durations and to staff up and down quickly.

CTS received a Strength for an effective approach to recruiting a diverse pool of SMEs and other required skills. The approach demonstrates: a continuous recruiting process that provides a sufficient number of SMEs with the unique technical skills needed for EASSS 2; an effective approach to recruit SMEs with current expertise aligned to NASA's science mission and having experience in relevant fields; and effective recruiting techniques that recognize the unique requirements for recruiting SMEs and teaming with firms that specialize in relevant skill sets.

Subfactor 2: Management

CTS received an adjectival rating of Excellent for Subfactor 2.

CTS received a Significant Strength for its approach to conducting consistent, uniform proposal evaluations within and across all proposal evaluation tasks. The proposal demonstrated CTS will build high quality evaluation teams with a proper balance of experienced evaluators in key

positions. The approach included effective methods to increase the number of experienced evaluators and staffing for key positions. The approach includes techniques to analyze cost consistently through application of consistent cost models and effective training. The approach also leverages effective cost estimating processes, partners, and tools which promotes consistent application across subpanels and proposals and promotes consistent evaluation of proposal cost estimates. The proposal includes an effective approach to train new cost analysts. The approach includes a highly effective consistency process and evaluation plan and methods to verify compliance and enable process improvement.

CTS received a Strength for its thorough assessment of the potential risk for various types of OCIs and PCIs that work under this contract may engender given CTS's current work. The proposal included a thorough assessment of current contracts and a detailed analysis of the likelihood that OCI/PCI risks may be present or arise in the future relative to the three types of OCIs. The detailed assessment demonstrates CTS has low risk for OCIs for EASSS 2 requirements.

CTS received a Strength for an effective approach to developing task plan estimates. The proposal recognized key distinctions in developing task plans for different parts of the EASSS 2 requirements and leverages historic cost performance data and tools. The proposed techniques promote consistent, easily understood, and fully integrated presentation of the estimated task costs that tie directly to the task plan.

ISS

ISS received a Mission Suitability score of 280. ISS's proposal included several Significant Weaknesses. There were no Strengths, Weaknesses, or Significant Strengths. A summary of ISS's Mission Suitability findings are provided below.

Subfactor 1: Staffing Approach

ISS received an adjectival rating of Poor for Subfactor 1.

ISS received a Significant Weakness for its approach to recruiting and retaining a diverse pool of SMEs and other required skills to staff multiple, overlapping proposal evaluations of varying sizes and durations and to staff up and down quickly. ISS's proposal did not adequately demonstrate they have retained or identified sufficient employees with the diverse subject matter expertise or required skills to perform the work. The approach did not adequately demonstrate that other techniques proposed to recruit and retain staffing provide the appropriate diverse SME skill sets and other required skills necessary to perform the unique proposal evaluation and assessment requirements of EASSS 2. Additionally, ISS did not adequately demonstrate a realistic approach to hiring SMEs given that historically many SMEs prefer subcontracting or consultant arrangements. The proposed approach of recruiting and retaining all individuals as employees of the prime creates a severe risk of not being able to recruit a diverse pool of SMEs, staff multiple overlapping proposal evaluation panels, or staff up and down quickly. The proposed staffing approach results in a significant risk that ISS will be unable to staff the contract with the appropriate skills and ensure timely and quality performance of Government requirements which could result in mission delays and significant cost impacts. ISS received a Significant Weakness for not demonstrating an adequate approach for meeting the Limitations on Subcontracting clause. The ISS approach to staffing was considered unrealistic given that historically many SMEs have not been amenable to the proposed approach and the ISS proposal did not provide adequate details to demonstrate that the

proposed approach could be successfully implemented in the face of this past experience. The proposed approach results in a significant risk that ISS would be unable to comply with the requirements of FAR 52.219-14, Limitations on Subcontracting.

Subfactor 2: Management

ISS received an adjectival rating of Poor for Subfactor 2.

ISS received a Significant Weakness for their inadequate OCI and PCI plan for complying with the requirements of NFS 1852.237-72, Access to Sensitive Information, FAR 52.203-16, Preventing Personal Conflicts of Interest, Section H.2, Organizational Conflicts of Interest, and Section H.3, Limitation of Future Contracting. ISS did not adequately demonstrate its approach to identifying, mitigating, neutralizing, and/or avoiding OCIs and PCIs that may arise under this contract. The approach did not adequately demonstrate recognition of the various types of OCIs as they relate to EASSS 2 requirements. Further, the approach did not adequately demonstrate a clear distinction between OCIs and PCIs. Additionally, ISS did not provide an adequate assessment of the potential risks for various types of OCIs and PCIs that the work under this contract may engender given ISS's current work; and did not adequately address an approach on how they would identify an OCI or PCI. While the proposal states that its handbook would be used for OCI and ethics training, the handbook was not provided in the proposal and the proposed training did not adequately address PCIs. The inadequate plan for complying with OCI and PCI requirements and inadequate approach to identifying, mitigating, neutralizing, and/or avoiding OCIs and PCIs that may arise under this contract, significantly increases the risk that an OCI or PCI could compromise the integrity of Agency critical proposal evaluations and assessments; which could result in mission delays and significant cost impacts.

Factor 2 – Cost

The SEB and Cost/Price Analyst performed an analysis of the proposed prices to assess price reasonableness and cost realism; and to determine whether the proposed cost elements are realistic for the work to be performed, reflect a clear understanding of the requirements, and are consistent with the unique methods of performance and materials described in the offerors' technical proposals. Based on the analysis conducted by the SEB and the Cost/Price Analyst, the Contracting Officer has determined that: the proposed price for CTS is reasonable for its proposed approach; and both the AS&M and ISS proposed prices require cost realism adjustments.

A summary of the proposed and probable cost/fee for each offeror is shown in the table below:

Offeror	Proposed Price Ranking (Lowest to Highest)	Probable Cost Ranking (Lowest to Highest)
CTS	3	1 (Lowest)
AS&M	2	2
*ISS	1	3 (Highest)
Government Estimate		\$80.5M

*ISS proposed amount contained a mathematical error that was corrected before cost realism adjustments were made. Without the correction, ISS proposed price would have been highest.

AS&M

Based on the cost realism analysis of AS&M's cost proposal, a cost realism upward adjustment totaling \$17.2M was made to AS&M's proposed costs which included increases in the proposed direct labor rate for the SME labor category for both AS&M and its significant subcontractor; and associated adjustments to indirect costs and fee. The proposed SME rate was significantly low for both AS&M and its significant subcontractor. AS&M's proposal stated the proposed rate for SMEs was based on actual rates for current AS&M identified employees, however the proposal did not identify how many current employees were being proposed nor did the proposal adequately identify the skill level that would be deployed on EASSS 2 and the relevance of the skill level to EASSS 2. Additionally, AS&M proposed to pay SMEs that are not current AS&M employees "commensurate to their current rates." However, AS&M did not demonstrate that the proposed rate reflects the current SME's salaries. The SME rate adjustment is based on the Government estimate for SME rates, which is more reflective of the Government's current experience of the SME effort required for EASSS 2. The SME rate for the significant subcontractor was based on an average of three levels of SMEs using salary market data. However the significant subcontractor did not adequately demonstrate the relevance of market data used to the skills required for EASSS 2. The proposal also used the 25-50% percentile of the salary market data. Additionally, the proposed SME rate for the significant subcontractor was significantly lower than AS&M's proposed SME rate, for which adjustments had to be made. The SME rate adjustment for the significant subcontractor is based on the Government estimate for the SME rate, which is more reflective of the Government's current experience of the SME effort required for EASSS 2. The Government also made adjustments to correct errors made in calculating AS&M indirect rates, including its subcontractor handling rate and other overhead rate.

NASA identified additional concerns during its review that did not result in cost adjustments. First, the total hours proposed, and associated cost, may be underestimated. There was a lack of clarity in the cost and technical proposals related to Program Manager and Deputy Program Manager as the proposed hours for the Program Manager were taken from Study Manager hours provided in the RFP and the proposed hours for the Deputy Program Manager were taken from Senior Scientist hours provided in the RFP. Additionally, the role of the Deputy was unclear in the technical proposal. Second, the program management support costs included in indirect rates may not be compliant with FAR 31.2. Finally, in addition to the SME rates, many of the proposed direct labor rates for the significant subcontractor were significantly lower than AS&M's rates.

CTS

Based on the cost realism analysis of CTS's cost proposal, the derived probable cost is determined to be realistic for the CTS approach. The only concern noted, for which no adjustment was made, was that CTS's proposed rate, and associated cost, may be slightly overestimated for the Cost Analyst position. CTS proposed the same rate for the Cost Analyst as they proposed for the SME, which may be high. No adjustment was made due to the small number of Cost Analyst hours proposed for CTS; and the miniscule impact the adjustment would make.

ISS

Prior to the cost realism analysis, NASA identified a mathematical error in the ISS proposal. Correction of the obvious mathematical error resulted in a significant reduction in ISS's

proposed price. Based on the cost realism analysis of the ISS cost proposal, a cost realism upward adjustment totaling \$26.8M was made to the ISS proposed costs, as corrected. These adjustments included increases in the proposed direct labor rate for the SME labor category and associated adjustments to indirect costs and fee. ISS proposed to retain incumbent contractor personnel and recruit qualified new hires to staff EASSS 2. ISS based their SME rates on salary survey data; however, they did not demonstrate that this data reflected salaries that must be paid to hire an adequate numbers of appropriately qualified SMEs. The SME rate adjustment is based on the Government estimate SME rate, which reflects the Government's experience of what must be paid to obtain the number of qualified SMEs required for EASSS 2 work.

NASA identified additional concerns during its review that did not result in cost adjustments. The Mission Suitability proposal identified a Program Manager; however, no costs were proposed for a Program Manager in the cost proposal. Additionally, ISS stated all costs associated with managing and administering contract are included in G&A, which may not be compliant with FAR 31.2.

Factor 3 – Past Performance

The SEB evaluated the offerors' past performance records in accordance with RFP Provision M.2, Evaluation Factors, Factor 3, Past Performance; and the confidence ratings identified therein:

Offeror	Pertinence Rating (size/content/complexity)	Performance Rating	Level of Confidence
AS&M Team	PERTINENT (SP/P/HP)	EXEMPLARY	MODERATE
CTS	VERY HIGHLY PERTINENT (HP/VHP/VHP)	EXEMPLARY	VERY HIGH
ISS	SOMEWHAT PERTINENT (SP/SP/SP)	EXEMPLARY	LOW

Pertinence Ratings: VHP = Very Highly Pertinent; HP = Highly Pertinent; P = Pertinent; SP = Somewhat Pertinent; NP = Not Pertinent
 Performance Ratings: Exemplary; Very Effective; Effective; Meets; Does Not Meet

AS&M

The SEB assigned a **Moderate Level of Confidence** rating to Factor 3, Past Performance, for the AS&M team.

For content pertinence, the AS&M Team was found to have Somewhat Pertinent to Highly Pertinent experience in contracts of similar content as related to EASSS 2. The AS&M team was found to have Highly Pertinent past performance experience in three content areas assessed: SME staffing and staffing surges, studies, and logistics/facilities support. The AS&M team was found to have Pertinent past performance experience in the two content areas that represent the vast majority of the EASSS 2 contract work: proposal evaluation and assessments. For proposal evaluations, AS&M's proposal demonstrated experience with

proposal evaluations for BAAs and NRAs; however, it did not adequately demonstrate the number of full proposal evaluations nor the details of AS&M's involvement in the overall proposal evaluation process. Although a significant subcontractor was found to have Highly Pertinent past performance with proposal evaluations, given that AS&M was proposed to perform the majority of the work in this content area, the AS&M team demonstrated Pertinent past performance experience. For assessments, AS&M demonstrated past performance experience with technical assessments; however, they did not adequately demonstrate past performance experience with management, cost, or schedule assessments. Although AS&M's proposed significant subcontractor demonstrated Very Highly Pertinent experience with the four main types of assessments, given that AS&M is proposed to perform the majority of the work in this content area, the AS&M team was found to have Pertinent past performance for assessments. The AS&M team was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance experience in quick studies and assessments, however this areas represents a small portion of EASSS 2. Given the ratings in the areas that represent the vast majority of the EASSS 2 contract work, proposal evaluations and assessments, the AS&M team was found to have Pertinent past performance experience for content.

For size pertinence, AS&M was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance and a significant subcontractor was found to have Very Highly Pertinent past performance. Given that AS&M is the prime contractor and will perform the majority of the work, AS&M was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance because the annual dollar value of its largest reference contract is about 24% of the proposed cost for EASSS 2.

For complexity pertinence, AS&M was found to have Highly Pertinent past performance and a significant subcontractor was found to have Very Highly Pertinent past performance. Given that AS&M is the prime contractor and will perform the majority of the work, and as EASSS 2 was found to be more complex than AS&M's references, the AS&M team was found to have Highly Pertinent past performance for complexity.

For overall pertinence, given that the AS&M team was found to have **Pertinent** past performance for content, **Highly Pertinent** past performance for complexity, and **Somewhat Pertinent** past performance for size, AS&M was determined to be **Pertinent**.

For performance, the AS&M Team was found to have Exemplary past performance. Considering the PPQ's, communications with references, and CPARs reports, both AS&M and its significant subcontractor were found to have a preponderance of exceptional ratings under both technical performance and general performance. No significant, persistent, or frequent problems; pattern of problems; or a negative trend of performance were identified that were within each contractor's control. Based on a comprehensive review of the past performance record, and given the preponderance of exceptional ratings, the AS&M team was found to have **Exemplary** past performance.

The AS&M Team's overall pertinence rating of **Pertinent** and overall performance rating of **Exemplary** resulted in a **Moderate Level of Confidence** for the Past Performance factor.

CTS

The SEB assigned a **Very High Level of Confidence** rating to Factor 3, Past Performance, for CTS.

For content pertinence, CTS was found to have Very Highly Pertinent past performance experience in four content areas, including two areas that comprise the vast majority of the EASSS 2 contract work (proposal evaluation and assessments); and one of the most complex content areas (SME staffing and staffing surges). CTS also demonstrated Very Highly Pertinent past performance in logistics/facilities support and Highly Pertinent experience with quick studies/assessments. While CTS was found to have Somewhat Pertinent experience for studies, this content area represents only a small portion of the EASSS 2 effort. Given that CTS was found to have Very Highly Pertinent past performance in key content areas, including those that make up the vast majority of EASSS 2 contract work, CTS was found to be Very Highly Pertinent for content.

For size pertinence, CTS was found to have Highly Pertinent past performance because the annual dollar value of its largest reference contract is about 70% of the proposed cost for EASSS 2.

For complexity pertinence, CTS referenced work was found to be similarly complex to EASSS 2. Consequently, CTS was found to have Very Highly Pertinent past performance for complexity.

For overall pertinence, given that CTS was found to have **Very Highly Pertinent** past performance for content, **Highly Pertinent** past performance for size, and **Very Highly Pertinent** past performance for complexity, CTS was determined to **Very Highly Pertinent**.

For performance, CTS was found to have Exemplary past performance. Considering the PPQ's, communications with references, and CPARs reports, CTS was found to have a preponderance of exceptional ratings under both technical performance and general performance. No significant, persistent, or frequent problems; pattern of problems; or a negative trend of performance were identified that were within CTS's control. Based on a comprehensive review of the past performance record, and given the preponderance of exceptional ratings, CTS was found to have **Exemplary** past performance.

The CTS overall pertinence rating of **Very Highly Pertinent** and overall performance rating of **Exemplary** resulted in a **Very High Level of Confidence** for the Past Performance factor.

ISS

The SEB assigned a **Low Level of Confidence** rating to Factor 3, Past Performance, for ISS.

For content pertinence, ISS was found to have a range of Not Pertinent to Somewhat Pertinent experience in contracts of similar content as EASSS 2, with most content areas being found Somewhat Pertinent. ISS did not demonstrate pertinent past performance experience in two content areas: proposal evaluations, which represents the majority of the work on EASSS 2, and quick studies/assessments. ISS was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance experience in the four other content areas including: SME staffing/surges, assessments, studies, and logistics/facilities. ISS was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance experience for content.

For size pertinence, ISS was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance because the annual dollar value of its largest reference contract is about 24% of the corrected proposed cost for EASSS 2.

For complexity pertinence, given that EASSS 2 was found to be significantly more complex than ISS's references, ISS was found to have Somewhat Pertinent past performance for complexity.

For overall pertinence, given that ISS was found to have **Somewhat Pertinent** past performance for content, size and complexity, ISS was determined to be **Somewhat Pertinent**.

For performance, ISS was found to have Exemplary past performance. Considering the PPQ's and communications with references, ISS was found to have a preponderance of exceptional ratings under both technical performance and general performance. No significant, persistent, or frequent problems; or pattern of problems; or a negative trend of performance were identified that were within ISS's control. Based on a comprehensive review of the past performance record, and given the preponderance of exceptional ratings, ISS was found to have **Exemplary** past performance.

ISS's overall pertinence rating of **Somewhat Pertinent** and overall performance rating of **Exemplary** resulted in a **Low Level of Confidence** for the **Past Performance** factor.

Basis for Selection

The SEB presented its findings, as summarized above, to me on June 1, 2015, and I am convinced that the SEB conducted a thorough, fair, and objective evaluation of all proposals in accordance with the established evaluation criteria in the RFP. I am also convinced that for specific areas of the evaluation criteria where no findings were identified, the board fully assessed the proposals and found that the Offeror met the contract requirements for that area and no strengths or weaknesses were identified. I comparatively assessed the proposals against all evaluation factors and subfactors in the RFP. I also considered all factors, and their relative weights, in the selection of the Offeror that can perform the contract in a manner most advantageous to the Government.

I have considered the SEB's presentation and after reviewing the findings concur with them. For the reasons set out below, ISS's proposal was the lowest rated for Mission Suitability and Past Performance at no cost saving over the other proposals. Consequently, I determined that ISS's proposal does not offer the Government the best value in this competition and my trade-off discussion below, will primarily focus on the distinctions between the offers of AS&M and CTS.

In comparing the Offerors in the Mission Suitability Factor, Subfactor 1, Staffing Approach, I note:

ISS received no Strengths, Significant Strengths, or Weaknesses, but received two Significant Weaknesses and was rated Poor by the SEB. One Significant Weakness was for ISS's inadequate approach for (1) recruiting and retaining a diverse pool of SMEs and other required skills to staff multiple overlapping proposal evaluations of varying sizes and durations and (2) staffing up and down quickly to adapt to changing mission requirements and priorities. I conclude that the inadequate approach presents a significant risk that ISS will be unable to staff the contract which could result in mission delays and significant cost risks. The second Significant Weakness was for ISS's inadequate approach to meeting the Limitations on Subcontracting clause requirements. Each of these Significant Weaknesses were explained to me and after consideration, I conclude that each of these issues pose significant risks that ISS will be unable to

comply with the contract requirements. Therefore I concur with the SEB findings and the Poor rating.

AS&M's proposal received no Significant Strengths, Significant Weaknesses, or Weaknesses but received two Strengths and was rated as Good by the SEB. Each of these Strengths were explained to me and after consideration I concur with the SEB's findings.

CTS's proposal received no Significant Weaknesses or Weaknesses, but received one Strength and one Significant Strength and was rated Excellent by the SEB. Each of these Strengths were explained to me and after consideration I concur with the SEB's findings.

In comparing the staffing approach proposed by AS&M and CTS for Subfactor 1, I find that CTS's staffing approach was appreciably superior to that of AS&M.

AS&M received a Strength for its approach to retaining a diverse pool of subject matter expertise which demonstrated an effective payment approach which increases the probability of retaining SME's and other required skills. CTS received a Strength for its approach to recruiting a diverse pool of subject matter expertise. I find that the CTS Strength provides greater value because it includes a continuous recruiting process, an effective approach to recruit SMEs with current and relevant expertise, and includes effective recruiting techniques that recognizes NASA's unique requirements for recruiting SMEs and teaming with firms that specialize in relevant skill sets.

While AS&M received a Strength for staffing multiple, overlapping proposal evaluation panels of varying sizes and durations and for staffing up and down quickly, CTS received a Significant Strength in this area. Based on my review of the information I concur that CTS's approach to staffing is more robust and merits a Significant Strength because it appreciably increases the probability of successful contract performance supporting vital Agency evaluations, assessments, and studies. It is my judgment that CTS has an appreciably superior proposal for Subfactor 1, which is weighted at 40% of the available points for the Mission Suitability Factor.

For Subfactor 2, Management Approach, I note:

ISS received no Strengths, Significant Strengths, or Weaknesses, but received one Significant Weakness and was rated Poor by the SEB. The Significant Weakness was for ISS's inadequate (1) plan to comply with the several contract requirements related to OCI and PCI, and (2) approach to identifying, mitigating, neutralizing, and/or avoiding OCIs and PCIs that may arise under this contract. I conclude that the inadequate plan for complying with OCI and PCI requirements and inadequate approach to identifying, mitigating, neutralizing, and/or avoiding OCIs and PCIs that may arise under this contract, significantly increases the risk that an OCI or PCI could compromise the integrity of Agency critical proposal evaluations and assessments; which could result in mission delays and significant cost impacts. Therefore I concur with the SEB findings and the Poor rating.

AS&M's proposal received no Significant Strengths, Significant Weaknesses, or Weaknesses but received three Strengths and was rated as Good by the SEB. I concur with the SEB's findings.

CTS's proposal received no Significant Weaknesses or Weaknesses, but received two Strengths and one Significant Strength and was rated Excellent by the SEB. The Significant Strength was for conducting consistent, uniform proposal evaluations within and across proposal evaluation tasks. I concur with the SEB's findings.

In comparing the management approach proposed by AS&M and CTS for Subfactor 2, I find that CTS' management approach was appreciably superior to that of AS&M.

AS&M received a strength for aspects of its proposed methods for avoiding OCIs and PCIs which exceeded standard approaches. CTS received a strength for its thorough assessment of the potential risk of OCIs and PCIs that work under this contract may engender given CTS's current work. I find that the CTS strength provides greater value as CTS's robust assessment of the potential risk for various types of OCIs and PCIs given CTS's current work, and detailed analysis of the likelihood that OCI/PCI risk may arise in the future, demonstrated CTS has a low risk for OCI's on EASSS 2 which significantly reduces the risk that OCIs and PCI will impact Agency missions.

AS&M received a Strength for its effective approach to conducting consistent, uniform proposal evaluations within and across all proposal evaluation tasks. This included its effective approach for staffing key evaluation panel positions, proposal evaluation training, and continual process improvement. CTS received a Significant Strength for its effective approach to conducting consistent, uniform proposal evaluations within and across all proposal evaluation tasks. CTS's proposal presented an even more robust approach which demonstrated its ability to build high quality evaluation teams with a proper balance of experienced evaluators in key positions; proposed effective methods to increase the number of experienced evaluators and staff for key positions; proposed effective techniques to analyze cost consistently through application of consistent cost models and effective training; proposed effective approaches to promote consistent application across subpanels and proposals; and an effective approach to train new cost analysts.

AS&M received a Strength for its proposed approach for controlling, monitoring, and reporting financial performance of subcontractor and consultant costs that is considered effective. CTS received a Strength for its proposed effective approach to developing task plan estimates that recognizes distinctions between the various types of work to be done. These two strengths are similar in nature and I consider them offsetting strengths for purposes of the selection.

Considering all these factors, it is my judgment that CTS has the appreciably superior proposal for Subfactor 2, which is weighted at 60% of the available points for the Mission Suitability Factor.

Overall, for Mission Suitability, for the reasons stated above, I conclude that CTS provides an appreciably superior proposal as compared to either AS&M's or ISS's proposal.

Regarding Factor 2, Cost/Price, I note that the contract resulting from this solicitation will be a cost type contract and while ISS (after correction of an obvious mathematical error) and AS&M proposed lower pricing, I concur with the SEB that the probable cost adjustments made to those two offers were necessary and appropriate. The reason is that neither offeror provided an adequate rationale or approach for obtaining the caliber and number of SMEs needed for EASSS 2 at the pricing submitted. Lacking some reasonable explanation or plan demonstrating how an adequate number of SMEs, with the unique capabilities needed to perform the EASSS 2 work could be retained at substantially reduced rates of pay, the pricing offered becomes

unrealistic and therefore subject to a probable cost adjustment. Therefore, I do not have confidence that AS&M or ISS can perform EASSS 2 for the prices proposed. The adjustments are more reflective of what will be required to perform EASSS 2. After adjustment all three offerors' probable cost (to include fee) were in line with the Government estimate. I note that the ISS probable cost is higher than the CTS probable cost. I also note that AS&M's probable cost is higher than the CTS probable cost; however only by a negligible margin. Therefore, while AS&M's probable cost was negligibly higher than that of CTS, these two offers were so close to each other that I conclude that there is no key discriminator in this Factor between AS&M and CTS.

Regarding Factor 3, Past Performance, for the Pertinence component of Past Performance, CTS received the highest rating of Very Highly Pertinent, compared to that of AS&M and ISS who received Pertinent and Somewhat Pertinent ratings, respectively. AS&M demonstrated Pertinent past performance for content, Highly Pertinent past performance for complexity, and Somewhat Pertinent past performance for size. CTS demonstrated Very Highly Pertinent past performance for content and complexity, and Highly Pertinent past performance for size. ISS demonstrated Somewhat Pertinent past performance for content, size, and complexity. I find significant value in CTS's demonstrated experience in successfully performing a contract with very highly pertinent content and complexity and highly pertinent size; and this experience included very highly pertinent experience with meeting challenging staffing and conflict of interest requirements that are highly similar to that of EASSS 2. AS&M, CTS, and ISS all received Exemplary performance ratings. Considering the pertinence and performance components of past performance as prescribed in the solicitation, CTS received the highest Level of Confidence past rating of Very High, compared to AS&M's Moderate rating and ISS's Low rating. Therefore, for Factor 3, Past Performance, I concur with the SEB's findings and confidence ratings for all three proposals; and I find that CTS's proposal was superior to that of AS&M and ISS.

SOURCE SELECTION DECISION

In making the selection decision, I conducted an integrated assessment of each proposal against all Evaluation Factors and Subfactors in the RFP and considered the relative weights of the Evaluation Factors. I also considered that the RFP stated that overall, in the selection of a Contractor for contract award, Mission Suitability, Cost, and Past Performance will be of approximately equal importance. All evaluation factors other than Cost, when combined, are significantly more important than Cost.

As stated above, I considered the SEB's presentation and after reviewing the findings concur with them. For the reasons set out above, ISS's proposal was the lowest rated for Mission Suitability and Past Performance at no real cost saving over the other proposals. Consequently, it is my determination that ISS's proposal does not offer the Government the best value for EASSS 2.

For the reasons set out above it is my determination that CTS has an appreciably superior proposal for Mission Suitability as compared to AS&M. In particular, most notable to me were CTS's Significant Strengths for conducting consistent, uniform proposal evaluations and for its approach to staffing, as well as its Strength for the robust assessment of the potential risk for various types of OCIs and PCIs. This substantially lowers contract performance risk and appreciably increases the probability that CTS will successfully support vital Agency evaluations, assessments, and studies as compared to AS&M. As stated above, I conclude that

there is no key discriminator for the probable cost/price between AS&M and CTS. Further I have confidence that CTS can perform EASSS 2 at their proposed cost.

Finally, for the reasons set out above it is my determination that CTS has an appreciably superior proposal for Past Performance as compared to AS&M. CTS received a Very High Level of Confidence rating, two confidence levels higher than AS&M's Moderate Level of Confidence rating.

Looking at the three Factors and applying the selection criteria, it is my determination that CTS submitted the best proposal for Mission Suitability and the best proposal for Past Performance, and given that Cost is not a distinguishing factor, at the proposed price and probable cost of \$73.5M, CTS provides the best value to the Government in this source selection.

Accordingly, I determine it is in the best interest of the Government to select Cornell Technical Services, LLC for award of the EASSS 2 contract as it presents the best value to the Government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Peri". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" and "P".

Frank Peri
Source Selection Authority