

PIKES SOLICITATION (NNG15487642R):

Questions & Answers

April 9, 2015

Q1) Past Performance Requirement - Are the offeror and significant subcontractor required to submit a combined total of 3 past performance write-ups or are they required to submit a combined total of 6 past performance write-ups - 3 from offeror and 3 from subcontractor? Please clarify.

A1) The requirements for submitting past performance references are separate for the prime and any significant subcontractors. Three contract references are required from the prime and three additional contract references are required for each significant subcontractor. However, if either the prime or the significant subcontractor do not have three relevant contract references that meet the RFP criteria, then less than three references may be provided.

Q2) Does the 8a have to provide all three past performances? If so, would the government consider relaxing that requirement to past performance pertaining to the team as a whole?

A2) Yes, in accordance with the RFP Provision GSFC 52.215-230 Past Performance Volume – past performance information is required from the prime offeror for the three most recent/relevant contracts within the last 3 years of the RFP release date. However, if the prime offeror does not have three relevant contract references that meet the RFP criteria, then they may submit less than three contract references. If the prime offeror has no relevant contract references, they may receive a Neutral rating.

Q3) Can one electronic copy of all 3 volumes be included on 1 CD or does the government require that each volume be included on its own CD?

A3) Yes, all 3 volumes can be included on 1 CD

Q4) Does the government intend the offeror to submit 2 additional electronic copies (1 designated as backup) of the proposal beyond the 2 electronic copies that are already requested in the table on page 44?

A4) No, the proposal shall be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided under GSFC 52.215-201 Proposal Preparation – General Instructions (the original, 5 copies, and two electronic copies, per Volume)

Q5) The table on page 45 of the solicitation - **Proposal Content and Page Limitations** indicates that the Offer Acceptability Section should be a maximum of 5 pages. However, we are required to show

evidence of the 1.5M line of credit and eligibility for award. Can we attach the supporting documents for the line of credit and eligibility as an 8a firm in an Appendix to the Offer Acceptability section that does not count against the 5 page limit?

A5) Yes, documentation to support the verification of the line of credit and 8(a) eligibility, is an exception to the page limit of the Offer Acceptability. An amendment will be forthcoming to provide clarity.

Q6) **Reference:** On page 49 of the RFP, item 3 – Offer Acceptability, bullet 3, states that “the offeror must have proof of adequate line of credit of \$1.5M from a reputable financial institution, including significant subcontractors, to have the ability to fund the requirements in advance”.

Question: With regard to "Evidence of a \$1.5M line of credit from a reputable financial institution, ..." is it acceptable that the offeror provide evidence from a reputable financial institution that a \$1.5M LOC will be established for the offeror immediately upon notification of contract award?

A6) The documentation submitted as proof of the required line of credit is to be submitted with the offeror’s proposal.

Q7) **Reference:** On page 49 of the RFP, item 3 – Offer Acceptability, bullet 3, states that “the offeror must have proof of adequate line of credit of \$1.5M from a reputable financial institution, including significant subcontractors,...”.

Question: If we include letters from our financial institutions as evidence will they count towards the 5 page limit for Offer Acceptability?

A7) See A5

Q8) **Reference:** Clause GSFC 52.215-203 Offer Volume (JAN 2014) (p. 46). Paragraph (a) states that Offerors are to submit a completed SF 1449 and the “indicated Offeror required fill-ins in the RFP ...” The fill-ins alone are nearly 17 pages long which exceeds the page count for this volume.

Question: Are these documents excluded from the 10 page limit for the Offer Volume?

A8) Yes, the model contract and required fill-ins are excluded from the page limit for the Offer Volume. An amendment is forthcoming to clarify.

Q9) **Reference:** Proposal Instructions (Competitive) (p. 49). The fourth bullet in paragraph 3 defines requirements for key personnel—one Project Manager and two Senior Event Coordinators.

Question: Are Offerors required to submit resumes of proposed key personnel for these three positions? If so, are these resumes excluded from the 5 page limit for Offer Acceptability information within the Offer Volume? Is there a page limit for each resume? Would signed letters of intent count against the page limit?

A9) Yes, resumes are required for key personnel. However, letters of intent are not required. Resumes provided with the proposal shall be limited to 2 pages and are excluded from the required page limit.

Q10) Page 49 Offer Proposal Instructions No. 3 shows two key personnel labor categories. Page 52, which discusses Price Proposal Instructions, lists five labor categories, three of which are obviously not key personnel. Are resumes required for non-key personnel in any of the three volumes?

A10) No, resumes are not required for non-key personnel individuals.

Q11) Pages 49 and 73 of the RFP refers to an “adequate line of credit of \$1.5M”. Because we are a successful and robust small business, but still smaller than the \$10M limit, we have never needed that size of a credit line. We fully understand that NASA wants to bond its programs to financially strong firms capable of delivering excellent results and capable of funding some of the requirements in advance. Nonetheless, according to a Federal Reserve’s, “Report to the Congress on the Availability of Credit to Small Businesses, September 2012”, it is very unusual (~3.5%) for a small business to have a line of credit of \$1M. Consequently, it is probably an even smaller fraction for small businesses to have a line of credit of \$1.5M. As such, is it desirable to the Government to reduce the line of credit requirement to \$500,000 to make this RFP more open to competition?

A11) The Government has considered the feedback provided and reviewed the minimum line of credit requirement. After re-consideration of the RFP requirements, estimated contract value performance risk, and level of anticipated RFP competition, the Government has determined that the required line of credit will remain \$1.5M.

Q12) Please advise whether there is reconsideration on the credit line amount. There are IDIQ ceilings higher than this contract that require a lower limit, and which are sufficient in managing programs. Will the government reconsider the amount in requiring the contractor to show their overall credit line and other documentation to show solvency?

A12) *See A11*

Q13) The SF 1449 lists a due time of 1630, but the RFP cover letter lists a due time of 3:30 PM. Because the Shipping and Receiving dock closes at 3:30 PM, could the Government verify the due time is 1530 / 3:30 PM? As such, will an updated SF 1449 document be provided or may we correct the time in the SF 1449 copies that we submit in our proposal?

A13) Yes, In accordance with GSFC 52.215-205 PROPOSAL MARKING AND DELIVERY, of the RFP, proposals must be marked with the date and time of receipt no later than 3:30 Eastern Standard Time on the proposal due date. The RFP (SF 1449) will be amended.

Q14) The SF 1449 lists size standard of \$11.0 [Million]. However, the RFP cover letter lists a size standard of \$10M and page 56 of the RFP contains references to “\$10,000,000”. Could the Government

verify that the size standard is \$10M? As such, will an updated SF 1449 document be provided or may we correct the size standard in the SF 1449 copies that we submit in our proposal?

A14) In accordance with the Small Business Administration Small Business Size Standards for NAICS Code 561920, the correct listed size standard is \$11M. Page 56, the reference of \$10M is standard language in FAR 52.209-7 and is not related to the NAICS Code size standard.

Q15) Page 73 of the RFP states that the adequate line of credit is for the small business to “provide services and pay all associated cost in advance and not receive payment for up to 30 days afterwards”. Could the Government clarify this aforementioned phrase? That is, we recognize and applaud NASA’s excellent treatment of small businesses and that NASA strives to adhere to the Prompt Payment Act. Nonetheless, that aforementioned phrase may be interpreted multiple ways, so we ask that the Government clarify the intent of that phrase.

A15) Invoice payments received under this contract, are payable/paid within 30 days of receipt, therefore, costs associated with the issuance of tasks under this contract may require payment by the prime contractor prior to contract invoice payments.

Q16) Page 44 (a) (2): last sentence doesn't make sense (..... shall include one (1) additional separately packaged hardcopy of their price proposal marked "Enter correct RFP number/NASA Proposal Evaluation Material")

A16) The additional separately packaged hardcopy of the offeror’s Price Proposal must be marked with the correct RFP number (NNG15487642R) and marked “NASA Proposal Evaluation Material”.

Q17) RTO 1 states International Travel Orders is authorized for 4 participants: I assume we should include estimated travel costs into our FFP for RTO1. Can the Government provide the pre-paid airfare costs? Or will the Government identify the country the International Travelers will originate from?

A17) All travel cost for RTO’s Exhibits 1 & 2 have already been provided, therefore, there are no other required travel cost associated with the RTO’s. However, in accordance with the last paragraph of GSFC 52.215-222 Price Volume Instructions, Section 2(a), (management and administrative (M&A) purposes only), if there are any charges/factors of M&A that an offeror deems applicable, those costs shall be listed in the ODC’s section and reflect both the amount and the method of calculation.

Q18) RTO 1: I assume we should provide estimated costs for ODC in addition to the labor costs, please confirm.

A18) *See A17 above*

Q19) RTO-1: What is the authorized honorarium amount?

A19) The honorarium amount is already included in the provided ODC amounts for RTO#1. Therefore no other ODC amounts are required, except for what is stated in A17 above.

Q20) **Reference:** GSFC 52.215-222 Price Volume Instructions (MAY 2014) (p. 51). The second paragraph of section 2(a) requests information on how indirect rates are defined, derived, computed and applied. However, as an IDIQ contract that will be used to award firm fixed price (FFP) Task Orders, the Government has no cost exposure to subsequent rate fluctuations. Further, since adequate competition is expected, it is not clear that this information is necessary to support the reasonableness of the proposed rates. Additionally, the pricing Exhibits 1A and 2A and RFP Attachment B require only fully loaded labor rates; therefore, no indirect rate information is required in these submittals.

Question: Would the Government please confirm that this level of detailed information concerning indirect costs is required, and if so, in what format it should be provided?

A20) The Government needs certain supplemental information regarding component rates utilized in the development of the fully burdened labor rates, as well as rates applied to ODCs. Irrespective of competition and cost exposure considerations, the Government must establish price reasonableness for each offer, which may entail analysis of proposed prices at a level other than total price. However, upon reviewing the instructions for submission of indirect rate supporting information, it has been determined that the required data can be reduced and the instruction will be simplified as part of an amendment to the RFP.

Q21) **Reference:** 52.212-2 Evaluation – Commercial Items (OCT 2014) (p. 72). This section states that “Offerors need to ‘pass’ the Offeror Acceptability” and that “All Offerors passing Offeror Acceptability will then be evaluated based upon the Price Factor and Past Performance Factor.” Further, it states that “As individual factors, Offer Acceptability is most important and the Price Factor is more important than the Past Performance Factor.” GSFC 52.215-300 Source Selection and Evaluation Factors—General (JAN 2014) (p. 73), paragraph 3 reiterates that Offerors need to “pass” the Offer Acceptability and will then be evaluated based upon the Past Performance and Price Factors, and that the Price Factor is more important than the Past Performance Factor. From this combination of statements, it is unclear as to whether the Offer Acceptability Factor is evaluated only on a pass/fail basis or if it is somehow further evaluated or scored.

Question: Will the Government please confirm that Offeror Acceptability is evaluated only on a Pass/Fail basis, and once an offeror is determined to have “passed,” the only factors considered for the award determination will be the Price and Past Performance Factors.

A21) Yes, as stated under the Offer Acceptability Evaluation Factor (page 73) Section 1 - Evaluation Factor Description, “The Government will evaluate offerors based on a Pass/Fail of the offeror’s Offeror Acceptability that address and pass each of the following elements: 1) 8(a) certification; 2) Not debarred, suspended, excluded or disqualified, or declared ineligible from receiving Federal contracts; 3) Evidence of \$1.5M line of credit; and 4) Offeror’s demonstrated proposed Key Personnel. Therefore,

Offeror's must pass the Offeror Acceptability Factor in order to be evaluated for Price and Past Performance.

Q22) **Reference:** Offer Acceptability Evaluation Factor (p. 73). Paragraph 1, fourth bullet defines evaluation criteria for Key Personnel.

Question: Will the Government please confirm that Offeror's Key Personnel will be evaluated against the factors listed under the fourth bullet point only on a pass/fail basis.

A22) Yes, this is correct. The Offeror's Key Personnel will be evaluated as part of the pass/fail evaluation.

Q23) **Reference:** Pricing Exhibits 1A and 2A. These Exhibits include specific dollar amounts for Contractor Travel, Material and Equipment, and Miscellaneous costs.

Question: Will the Government please confirm that these amounts represent the Government-provided estimate for these costs for each respective RTO and only these costs should be used in pricing the RTOs.

A23) That is correct. The provided cost for each respective RTO represents the Government-provided estimate and only these cost should be used except as stated in A17 above. An amendment to the RFP is forthcoming to clarify this.

Q24) **Reference:** Pricing Exhibit 2A, RTO 2. This exhibit specifies "Contract Year 5." The RTO 2 description states that the subject meeting is to be conducted on June 11 – 12, 2015.

Question: Will the Government please confirm that RTO 2 should be priced using Contract Year 1 rates?

A24) Pricing for RTO 2's Exhibit 2A should be representative of the Contract Year 5 rates as the subject meeting represented in RTO 2 will be conducted in Year 5 and not Year 1. An amendment is forthcoming to clarify.

Q25) **Reference:** On page 52 of the RFP, five labor categories are listed including a Graphic Designer and Web Designer. In Exhibit 1 and 1A it appears that the Graphic Designer labor category is referred to as a Graphics Specialist. In Exhibit 1A it appears that the Web Designer is referred to as a Web Programmer.

Question: Will the Government consider aligning these labor categories across the RFP and all exhibits for clarity?

A25) An amendment is forthcoming to correctly identify a Graphic Designer and Web Designer within RTO 1 and Exhibit 1A.

Q26) **Reference:** On page 45, regarding Proposal Content and Page Limitations, the table showing volume structures shows the Price Volume and Past Performance Volume as Volume III.

Question: Will the Government revise and clarify the numbering in this table?

A26) An amendment is forthcoming to identify the Price Volume as "Volume II" and Past Performance Volume as "Volume III".

Q27) **Reference:** On page 54 of the RFP, section (b), it states that "the offeror shall instruct each of its references to return the questionnaire directly to the Government in a sealed envelope".

Question: Will the Government consider allowing our references to submit questionnaires via email or fax for convenience?

A27) Yes, email and fax submittals are acceptable. The fax number is provided in Section (b) of GSFC 52.215-230 Past Performance Volume and an amendment is forthcoming to add an email address.

Q28) **Reference:** On page 54-55 of the RFP, section (b), it states that "Offerors shall include in their proposal the written consent of their proposed significant subcontractors to allow the Government to discuss the subcontractor's past performance evaluation with the Offeror".

Question: This is typically provided in the form of a signed consent letter on the subcontractor's letterhead; will the Government allow this letter to not be included in the page count for the Past Performance Volume?

A28) Yes, the RFP will be amended to allow this type of consent documentation to be excluded from the page limits.

Q29) **Reference:** RFP Page 4, FAR Clause 52.219.14, Limitations on Subcontracting

Question: Will the limitations on subcontracting be applied at the IDIQ or task order level? This has impacts on our cost proposal and limits our flexibility during task order execution.

A29) The limitations on subcontracting applies at the contract level.

Q30) **Reference:** RFP page 54, item (b), Prior Customer Evaluations.

Question: If we are concerned that our past performance as a subcontractor may not receive an accurate or completed questionnaire from our prime contractor, can we use a Government contact that has direct knowledge of our performance to submit a questionnaire for work performed as a subcontractor?

A30) Yes

Q31) **Reference:** RFP page 54, item (b), Prior Customer Evaluations, states "The questionnaire respondent shall be a representative from the technical customer and responsible Contracting Officer

with direct knowledge of your firm's performance." This implies that two questionnaires are required for each citation, one for the technical customer and one for the Contracting Officer.

Question: Will the Government accept one questionnaire by the technical customer OR the Contracting Officer, rather than two separate questionnaires?

A31) Yes, the Government will accept one questionnaire that incorporates responses from both the technical customer and the Contracting Officer that meets the RFP requirements.

Q32) **Reference:** Exhibit 3, Past Performance Questionnaires, Section VI. This section shows and estimated cost and fee. For Firm Fixed Price and Time and Materials contracts the customer may not have insight into this information, and it appears more geared to an award or incentive fee type contract.

Question: Will the Government revise the questionnaire to just total contract value, or for Time and Materials and Firm Fixed Price contracts should we put Not Applicable for Estimated Cost and Fee and only provide the Total Value?

A32) No, the questionnaire will not be revised. However, the questionnaire should be completed with the required information based on the contract type of the reference, regardless of the estimated cost and fee language contained in the questionnaire.

Q33) **Reference:** RFP Page 49, item 3, bullet 1, 8(a) certification status.

Question: If we include our 8(a) certification letter from the SBA will it count against the page limit for this section?

A33) *See A5*

Q34) **Reference:** Attachment 163476-SOL-001-015

Question: This workbook contains two spreadsheets. The first indicates "Contract Year 1" the second indicates "Contract Year 5". Should Contract Year 5 read Contract Year 1?

A34) No, the RTO Exhibit 2A correctly reads "Contract Year 5" and should be proposed based on CY 5 rates.

Q35) **Reference:** Attachment 163476-SOL-001-006

Question: The file is not accessible. An error message appears when trying to open/access the file. Will the government reissue the document?

A35) The Enclosure will be reposted.

Q36) **Reference:** Attachment A Statement of Work (SOW). The SOW does not indicate the place of contractor performance.

Question: Will the Government please indicate (a) the place of contract performance (on-site at GSFC, HQ or other locations or contractor site), (b) whether tele-work is allowed, and (c) extent of travel required to Government site locations for general planning and/or status meetings.

A36) (a) Place of performance for this contract will be the contractor's site. No "on-site" seats will be provided under this procurement; (b) Telework for any contractor and/or its employees is the sole responsibility of the contractor; (c) The extent of travel required to any Government site will be based upon individual task requirements.

Q37) **Reference:** Attachment 163476-SOL-001-002, Price Proposal Format

Question: Does the Government require the same information for subcontractor?

A37) "In accordance with GSFC 52.215-222 Price Volume Instructions and GSFC 52.215-201, Proposal Preparation, paragraph (a) (2), offers must submit pricing exhibits for proposed significant subcontractors that are likely to exceed 25% of a proposed RTO price and shall include a hard copy of the subcontractors price proposal".

Q38) Would the incumbent qualify to bid on this recompetete considering the size standard?

A38) All 8(a) certified Offerors are eligible as a prime to submit a proposal for this solicitation.