

Question 1

L.23, 3. Mission Suitability Instructions by SubFactor, SubFactor B, page 102.

Requirements 5 and 6 refer to sections that are not in the DRAFT SOW. **Please indicate the correct sections.**

Answer 1

The revised Statement of Work (SOW) with numbering matching the DRFP will be uploaded. Requirements 5 and 6 as specified in the DRFP are addressed in the revised SOW.

Question 2

L.23, 3. Mission Suitability Instructions by SubFactor, SubFactor B, page 102.

Requirement 7 asks "Earth System Data Processing and Analysis: algorithm development and data processing and analysis for atmospheric research areas (SOW Requirement III.2.2.16 only; choose examples from any of the instruments mentioned in sub-requirements III.2.2.16.1 – III.2.2.16.5. **How many of the five examples is the Government asking us to write to? Is addressing one example sufficient given the space limitations?**

Answer 2

The Critical Requirements in Section L will be revised in the final RFP to specify the instruments the Offeror should address. The RFP is anticipated to be revised as follows: "SOW Requirements III.2.2.16.3 and III.2.2.16.4 only."

Question 3

L.24.1, Cost Volume Instructions, page 110. The DRFP states, "The Cost Volume exhibits provided in the RFP are in Portable Document Format (PDF). Prior to completing the Cost Volume exhibits, offerors shall convert the PDF file to Microsoft Office Excel either using Adobe Acrobat DC or manually recreate each individual exhibit." **Would the Government please provide the cost forms in Microsoft Excel format? Conversion from PDF to Excel frequently results in subtle but important discrepancies.**

Answer 3

In accordance with NASA Goddard Space Flight Center policies, the cost forms cannot be provided in Microsoft Excel format.

Question 4

K.1 52.204-8 Annual Representations and Certifications (DEC 2014), page 74 – Size Standard Issue. Would the Government consider reviewing the small business size standard selected for the SAMDA procurement? While the NAICS code 541712, *Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences*, is applicable, the invocation of an exception to the base size standard of 500 may not be warranted. The preponderance of work for this contract, as described in the Draft Statement of Work (DSOW), will support the full range of research and development activities of the Earth Sciences Division-Atmospheric (Code 610AT) and of the Global Modeling and Assimilation Office (GMAO, Code 610.1) and the operational activities of the GMAO. Very little, if any, of the work described in the DSOW is described by the allowed exceptions to the current size standard. We therefore request that the

exception be removed and the base size standard of 500 employees for NAICS 541712 be applied to this procurement.

Supporting Rationale

OMB NAICS 2012 defines the size standard for NAICS code 541712 as follows:

NAICS Code	NAICS Industry Description	Number of employees
541712	Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology) ¹¹	500 ¹¹
<i>Except,</i>	Aircraft	1,500
<i>Except,</i>	Aircraft Parts, and Auxiliary Equipment, and Aircraft Engine Parts	1,000
<i>Except,</i>	Space Vehicles and Guided Missiles, their Propulsion Units, their Propulsion Units Parts, and their Auxiliary Equipment and Parts	1,000

Footnote 11: For research and development contracts requiring the delivery of a manufactured product, the appropriate size standard is that of the manufacturing industry.

- a) "Research and Development" means laboratory or other physical research and development. It does not include economic, educational, engineering, operations, systems, or other nonphysical research; or computer programming, data processing, commercial and/or medical laboratory testing.
- b) For purposes of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program only, a different definition has been established by law. See section 121.701 of these regulations.
- c) "Research and Development" for guided missiles and space vehicles includes evaluations and simulation, and other services requiring thorough knowledge of complete missiles and spacecraft.

None of the three exceptions to the base size standard properly describes the preponderance of work anticipated for the SAMDA contract. The DSOB and other associated documents indicate no work of any kind for aircraft parts, aircraft engine parts, guided missiles, their propulsion units and their auxiliary parts. Furthermore, while a small fraction of the anticipated work may involve the use of space vehicles, the anticipated research and development is not on space vehicles in the intended sense, and in any event does not represent the preponderance of the types of work called for on SAMDA.

A comprehensive examination of the current work being performed on the GMAO and SAS contracts and the anticipated work to be carried out under the SAMDA procurement, as described in the DSOB and other associated documents, clearly shows that the vast majority of the SAMDA contract is for support of atmospheric science and data assimilation research conducted by GSFC scientists in the Earth Science Division (Code 610). Therefore, the preponderance of the research and development to be supported under the SAMDA contract does not require a "through knowledge of complete missiles and spacecraft." and as such this contract does not fall into any of the exceptions to the NAICS 541712 base size standard.

Answer 4

The Government performed extensive market research to support the decision for using the small business size standard selected for the SAMDA procurement. The NAICS exception is important to the SAMDA procurement because global modeling and instrumentation have multiple exacting requirements for a wide range of capabilities. Frequently modeling and instrumentation projects are joined together through work on field campaigns and instrument testing and the assimilation of data from ground and flight instruments into the models. A comprehensive range of expertise is required to support or manage a large set of critical requirements in these two coupled functional areas. The Government feels that eliminating the space vehicle exception under NAICS Code 541712 would expose the SAMDA procurement to such a high level of technical risk that it would not be in its best interest. These critical functional areas include instrumentation (Atmospheres) and GMAO operational system development and maintenance.

Question 5

Referencing Section L, Subfactor B, Page 102. In a few of the 10 selected key SOW areas there seem to be mismatches between the SOW references in Section L and the SOW information provided as Attachment A in the Draft RFP. For example in Section L SOW area #5 states, “Earth System Modeling: models describing the chemistry and physics of Earth system processes (SOW Requirement III.2.1.1 only)” but in Attachment A Earth System Modeling is covered in Section III. **Question or Comment:** Will the government revise Section L.23 to clarify the SOW areas aligning them with Attachment A?

Answer 5

The revised Statement of Work (SOW) with numbering matching the DRFP will be uploaded. Key Requirements as specified in the DRFP are addressed in the revised SOW.

Question 6

RFP Reference, Section L, Subfactor B Page 102

In the referenced section the government states: “The offeror shall identify the most significant potential risks under this contract and also describe the risk management techniques that will be used to manage identified risks during contract performance. Risk factors may be those inherent in the work or unique to the offeror’s chosen technical approach.” In this statement, the government refers to contract-wide risks; however, the placement of this requirement is under the description for Subfactor B, Understanding of the Key Statement of Work (SOW) Requirements. **Question or Comment:** Would the government clarify whether offerors should discuss contract-wide risk in their approach to Subfactor B, or if offerors should only discuss those risks relating to the 10 key SOW areas?

Answer 6

The Offeror may discuss either risks inherent in the work contract-wide, or risks unique to the offeror’s chosen technical approach relating to the 10 key SOW areas.

Question 7

Referencing Attachment A (SOW) Introduction (p. 7)

1.0 Instrumentation: Requirements for supporting the design, development, testing, maintenance, calibration, and operation of sub-orbital instruments for atmospheric and solar observations. The instruments include sensors operated at GSFC, from the ground, and aboard aircraft, balloons, or other sub-orbital platforms. **Question or Comment:** The Instrumentation SOW element describes support to design, development, testing, maintenance, calibration, and operation of instruments. However the element seems to limit the support to sub-orbital instruments only. Various orbital missions (e.g., CATS, DSCOVR) as well as sub-orbital mission have been supported by one of the predecessor contracts. If the Government anticipates that orbital missions may or will be supported under SAMDA, then we recommend the Instrumentation SOW element be updated.

Answer 7

The SOW has been revised to make clear that SAMDA will support orbital as well as sub-orbital instrument activities.

Question 8

Referencing Attachment A (SOW) Mission Science Support Element 5 (p. 14)

5.2 Provide support for project scientists and principal investigators to oversee the implementation phases of satellite missions in development including and not limited to: the Global Precipitation Mission (GPM); the NPOESS Preparatory Project (NPP); and Glory.

Question or Comment: The three referenced example missions have either already launched (GPM or NPP) or were lost during launch (Glory).

Answer 8

Attachment A (SOW) Mission Science Support, 4.2, (p. 14) has been revised to include missions currently in development or anticipated new missions that may be supported under SAMDA.

Question 9

Referencing Attachment A (SOW), (pp. 7-8), 1.0 Instrumentation:

The contractor shall support the specification, design, development, maintenance, calibration, and operation of sub-orbital instruments for atmospheric and solar observations. The instruments include and are not limited to active and passive optical and microwave sensors. The contractor shall operate instruments at GSFC, on top of buildings and in mobile trailers both, at GSFC and in the field, and aboard sub-orbital platforms such as aircraft, balloons, and sounding rockets.

Question or Comment: The Instrumentation SOW element goes on to describe design, development, testing, maintenance, calibration, and operation activities. However the element seems to limit the support to sub-orbital instruments only. Various orbital missions (e.g., CATS, DSCOVR) as well as sub-orbit mission have been supported by one of the predecessor contracts. If the Government anticipates that orbital missions may or will be supported under SAMDA, then we recommend the Instrumentation SOW element be updated.

Answer 9

Attachment A (SOW) (pp. 7-8), Section 1.0 Instrumentation, has been revised to include the orbital missions which may or will be supported under SAMDA.

Question 10

Referencing Section L, Subfactor B, Page 102: The instructions to address key SOW requirement #7 state: Earth System Data Processing and Analysis: algorithm development and data processing and analysis for atmospheric research areas (SOW Requirement III.2.2.16 only; choose examples from any of the instruments mentioned in sub-requirements III.2.2.16.1 – III.2.2.16.5). **Question or Comment:** Given the varying complexity of the mentioned instruments, their data systems, and data products, offeror responses to this factor may cover drastically different technical requirements. How will the evaluation criteria take into account such differences in complexity?

Answer 10

The Critical Requirements in Section L will be revised in the final RFP to specify the instruments the Offeror should address. The RFP is anticipated to be revised as follows: “SOW Requirements III.2.2.16.3 and III.2.2.16.4 only.”

Question 11

Referencing Attachment A (SOW) General Functional Requirements Support (pp. 22-24) IV. General Functional Requirements Support: Question or Comment: The SOW section titled “Functional Requirements for GMAO Research and Development Support” is section IV of the SOW. Thus, we believe that the section for “General Functional Requirements Support” is mis-numbered and should be Section V. Please clarify.

Answer 11

The most current SOW with correct numbering of the sections will be uploaded.

Question 12

RFP Reference, Section L, Subfactor C, The GMAO MERRA-3 Reanalysis Project Scenario, Page 103: Within the Scenario requirements the Government states that the contractor will be responsible for, “all aspects of the management, staffing, planning, execution and monitoring of the MERRA-3 reanalysis, as well as selected parts of its in-house scientific validation. For the purpose of demonstrating your thorough understanding of the work you are required to support, please describe in detail how you, the contractor, would meet these responsibilities to ensure the success of the MERRA-3 Reanalysis Project.” **Question or Comment:** In order to provide a comprehensive response to the scenario will the Government define a period of performance for the MERRA-3 Reanalysis described in the Scenario?

Answer 12

The period of performance for the Scenario is five (5) years.

Question 13

Referencing Section L.24 (p), Cost Volume Instructions, Page 115

Offerors shall propose the total firm-fixed-price associated with the 45-day phase-in period, which will be performed under a separate, firm-fixed-price order. **Exhibits 9 and 9-A** shall be used to state the proposed price for the phase-in, which is expected to commence on or about January 18, 2017. **Question or Comment:** The instructions cited above indicate that the 45-day phase-in period is projected to start on or about January 18, 2017. Based on the 45-day phase-in

duration, this implies a start date on or about March 5th for the SAMDA contract. However, Exhibits 1, 2-A, and 2-B show the Base Year starting on 3/1/2017. Please clarify what we should use as the assumed start dates for the phase-in period and for the Base Year of the SAMDA contract.

Answer 13

Offerors should use January 14, 2017 for the assumed start date for the phase-in period and March 1, 2017 for the Base Year of the SAMDA contract.

Question 14

Referencing Section L.25, Past Performance Volume Instructions, Page 116

Prime Offerors shall furnish the information requested below for all of your most recent contracts (completed and ongoing) for similar efforts with a minimum average annual cost/fee incurred of \$3.5M that your company has had within the last 5 years of the RFP release date.

Question or Comment: Given that the maximum value of the SAMDA contract is set at \$170M, we believe that contracts with an average annual cost/fee of \$3.5M are too small to be representative of the size, scope, and complexity necessary to demonstrate an ability to perform successfully as a prime contractor for SAMDA.

Answer 14

Given that the maximum value of the SAMDA contract, the Government believes contracts with an average annual cost/fee of \$3.5M are a good representation of the size, scope, and complexity necessary to demonstrate an ability to perform successfully as a prime contractor for SAMDA.

Question 15

Referencing Section L.25, Past Performance Volume Instructions, Page 116: For the purposes of the Past Performance Volume, a proposed significant subcontractor is defined as any proposed subcontractor that is estimated to meet/exceed an average annual cost/fee of \$3.5M. *Note, the definition of significant subcontractor for the past performance evaluation may be different than for the cost evaluation.* The Offeror shall provide the information requested below for any significant subcontractor(s) for those similar efforts within the last 5 years of the RFP release date with a minimum average annual cost/fee incurred of at least 10% of the estimated average annual dollar value of the proposed significant subcontract. **Question or Comment:** We believe that contracts with an average annual cost/fee corresponding to 10% of the estimated value of the proposed subcontract for significant subcontractors are too small to be representative of the size, scope, and complexity necessary to demonstrate an ability to perform successfully as a significant subcontractor for SAMDA.

Answer 15

The Government believes that contracts with an average annual cost/fee corresponding to 10% of the estimated value of the proposed subcontract for significant subcontractors is a good representative of the size, scope, and complexity necessary to demonstrate an ability to perform successfully as a significant subcontractor for SAMDA.

Question 16

Referencing L.24 section (d) PRIME OFFEROR CORE REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED COST PLUS FIXED FEE, page 108. The section references Exhibit 1 but no Exhibit 1 is provided in the Draft RFP's exhibits. **Question or Comment:** Will the government provide an Exhibit 1 or will the offeror need to generate their own summary?

Answer 16

Exhibit 1 is provided in the Draft RFP's exhibits.

Question 17

Referencing L.25, section (b) PRIOR CUSTOMER EVALUATIONS (PAST PERFORMANCE QUESTIONNAIRES), page 118. The section references Exhibit 14 but no Exhibit 14 is provided in the Draft RFP's exhibits. **Question or Comment:** Will the government provide an Exhibit 14 or will the offeror need to generate their own questionnaire?

Answer 17

Exhibit 14 will be uploaded and included as part of the Draft RFP's exhibits.

Question 18

Referencing Attachment B Section 5 SUBCONTRACTOR FULLY-LOADED LABOR RATE MATRIX (For All Task Orders), page 4. Attachment B references the Prime Contractor for the labor rate matrix. **Question or Comment:** Should the attachment reference the Subcontractor?

Answer 18

The language in the attachment has been verified to be accurate.

Question 19

Referencing Attachment B Section 6 POSITION QUALIFICATIONS page 5: Position Qualifications have historically been provided by NASA, however, the DRFP indicates that these are TO BE PROPOSED. **Question or Comment:** Will the Offerors be responsible for generating these qualifications, or will they be provided by NASA??

Answer 19

The Offeror will be responsible for generating the qualification as part of the proposal response to the RFP.

Question 20

Referencing Exhibit 2-B CORE REQUIREMENTS: Question or Comment: Will Significant Subcontractors be required to breakout their hours by labor category, like the Prime

is required on Exhibit 2-A?

Answer 20

Significant Subcontractors will be required to breakout their hours by labor category, like the Prime is required on Exhibit 2-A.

Question 21

Referencing Exhibit 2-B CORE REQUIREMENTS: It appears that the Prime Contractor is required on Exhibit 2-A to list DIRECT LABOR HOURLY RATES by category; however, this is not indicated for Significant Subcontractors. **Question or Comment:** Will Significant Subcontractors be required to provide hourly rates by DL Category as well?

Answer 21

Significant Subcontractors are required to provide hourly rates by Direct Labor Category. Exhibit 2-B will be revised accordingly.

Question 22

Referencing Exhibit 3A Prime Offeror GPM

The exhibit includes a subtotal line for Offeror Management and Administrative Hours/Costs, however, there is not a section above that subtotal line included in the Exhibit. **Question or Comment:** Are Offerors allowed to modify the spreadsheet to include this section?

Answer 22

Offerors may modify the spreadsheet to include information necessary to complete the Government Pricing Model.

Question 23

Referencing Exhibit 4A Non-Management Labor Category Conversion: The exhibit references 6A in the footer notes, however, Exhibit 6 is the SUMMARY OF INDIRECT RATES. **Question or Comment:** Should the reference in 4A be to Exhibits 2A, Core Requirements, and 2B Significant Subcontractor Core Requirements?

Answer 23

The reference in 4A should be to Exhibits 3A, Prime Offeror Government Pricing Model (GPM), and 3B Summary Prime Offeror Government Pricing Model (GPM). Exhibit 4A will be revised to include the correct references.

Question 24

Referencing Exhibit 6, Summary of Indirect Rates: Exhibit 6 requests, however, only onsite and offsite are included as options on all other exhibits. **Question or Comment:** Should the Overhead Mfg Site bid rates column be removed from Exhibit 6?

Answer 24

The Overhead Manufacturing Site bid rates column should be removed from Exhibit 6. Exhibit 6 have been revised to omit the Manufacturing Site column.

Question 25

Referencing Exhibit 6, Summary of Indirect Rates: In the exhibit the IDIQ portion is listed for 6 years, however, the cover letter states the period of performance has a potential for 5 years.

Question or Comment: Should the offeror provide rates for 5 or 6 years?

Answer 25

The Offeror should provide rates for 6 years.

Question 26

Referencing Exhibit 7, Summary of Recurring ODCs / CERs: In the exhibit the IDIQ portion is listed for 6 years, however, the cover letter states the period of performance has a potential for 5 years. **Question or Comment:** Should the offeror provide rates for 5 or 6 years?

Answer 26

The Offeror should provide rates for 6 years.

Question 27

Referencing Enclosure 3, Historical Direct Labor Rate Data: Enclosure 3 provides historical weighted averages for labor categories on the SAS and GMAO contracts. **Question or Comment:** Have the provided averages been escalated for the Base Year? Will the Government provide information on when these rates were last escalated?

Answer 27

The provided averages have been escalated for the Base Year. A straight escalation was applied to the weighted actual direct labor rates as of April 2015.