USACE CONTRACTING WORKSHOP – OMAHA DISTRICT ACQUISITION SUPPORT TEAM

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ACQUISITION SUPPORT TEAM (AST) KEY TOPICS

1. Acquisition Support Team and Project Makeup

2. Lessons Learned/Improved Communication with Industry

3. Q&A
ACQUISITION SUPPORT TEAM (AST)

**AST Lead:**
Chris Wiehl

**AST Members:**
Doug Hadley – Contracting Officer
Tyler Hegge – Contracting Officer
Glenda Canty – Contract Specialist
Ryan Buckley – Operations Division
Carolyn Jacobson – Construction Division
Kristen Cihacek – Construction Division
Bob Lingerfelt – PM Division (Special Projects)
CPT Ericka Collins – AST PM
Amy Bowell-McClean – Planning Division
Matt Hebert – Engineering Division (A-E Coordinator)
AST PROJECTS

Notable Projects Awarded Within the Last Year:

- $49M SB Front Range Roofing MATOC – CO & WY
- $95M SDVOSB Rapid Disaster Infrastructure (RDI) – U.S.
- $60M SDVOSB ERS with MMRP (MEGA) - NWD
- $9.9M Unrestricted A-E Hydroelectric Power and Pumping Plant Engineering, Design and Analysis Services - NWD

Projected Completion (Award) this FY:

- $49M SB Front Range Flatwork/Paving MATOC – CO&WY
- $200M SB ERS with MMRP (MEGA) - Nationwide
- $60M 8(a) ERS with MMRP (MEGA) – NWD
- $120M SB ERS with MMRP (MEGA) - NWD
- $49M Unrestricted – NWD A-E Preparation of Studies, Analysis, and Design services for Military and Civil projects
- $30M SB - NWD A-E Preparation of Studies, Analysis, and Design services for Military and Civil projects
- $20M SDVOSB - NWD A-E Preparation of Studies, Analysis, and Design services for Military and Civil projects

Other Projects Currently Being Worked by the AST (subject to change):

- $99.9M Unrestricted NWD Hydropower Crane MATOC
- $245M Rapid Response 6 MATOCs (Planning Phase)
- $225M SB FSRM MATOC – NWO
- $99M SDVOSB FSRM MATOC – NWO
- SDVOSB VA/NIST FSRM MATOCs (Planning Phase) - NWD
- Future RDI MATOCs
- VA Aurora Hospital
- Other Reach Back Support
ACQUISITION PROJECT PATH

Planning
- District Acquisition Strategy Board (DASB)
- Command Services Executive (CSE) Memo
- Market Research
- Consolidation Memo
- Acq. Plan/Strategy

Solicitation
- Draft Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Identify Source Selection Team
- BCCR/Solicitation Review Board
- Issue RFP

Evaluation
- Source Selection Evaluation Board
- Cost Price Analysis
- Source Selection Advisory Counsel
- Phase II and/or Competitive Range
- Source Selection Decision Document

Award
- Draft Contract Award Documents
- BCCR/Contract Review Board
- Contract Award
- Debriefings
ACQUISITION CHALLENGES

- Often more steps/personnel involved compared to a normal stand-alone contract or task order at the pre-award stage
- The higher the dollar figure of the contract, or the larger the region the contract covers, often means longer review and approval times
  - KO, BOB, SBA, PARC, HQ, and various other disciplines within USACE both District and Division-wide.
- Competing Interests, Projects, Schedules
- Availability of Source Selection Team members
- The more proposals received, the longer it takes before we award
- Various regulations and policies to consider
AST – LESSONS LEARNED/IMPROVED COMMUNICATION WITH INDUSTRY

Key: Transparency in Processes – Avoid any Perceptions of Unfair Advantages

- #1 - Market Research: Sources Sought Notices – Tailored Questionnaires vs. Capability Statements
## AST – LESSONS LEARNED/IMPROVED COMMUNICATION WITH INDUSTRY

### #2 – PROJNET
- Ensures questions are answered by the right people
- Gives the PDT the opportunity to collaborate on thoughtful responses
- Central repository for individual projects
- Reduces redundancies, contradictions
#3 - Draft Requests for Proposal (RFPs)

12/6/2017 DRAFT RFP W9128F-18-R-xxxx Federal Business Opportunities: Notices

the approach for assessing the criteria; and any other industry concerns or questions. The attached are only the pertinent sections of the DRAFT RFP that the Government is seeking industry feedback. If and when a solicitation is released, a complete RFP (to include Division 00 and 01 Requirements and Sample or Seed Project) will be posted.

SUBMISSIONS VIA PROJNET

Comments or concerns from industry on the attached sections may be provided via ProjNet at https://www.projnet.org/projnet/ using Bidder Inquiry Key: [redacted] The Government does not intend to respond to these comments during this comment period; however, the comments and concerns will be reviewed and considered in the development of the final RFP. If and when a solicitation is released, there will be another Bidder Inquiry Key established in which the Government will respond to Industry comments.

Bidder Inquiry will be open for a full 30-day comment period, beginning on the date of this announcement posting. This is just for informational purposes only and so there will be no extension for the Bidder Inquiry. To submit and review inquiry items, prospective vendors will need to use the Bidder Inquiry Key stated above and follow the instructions listed herein.
AST – LESSONS LEARNED/IMPROVED COMMUNICATION WITH INDUSTRY

• #4 AMRDEC SAFE (Proposal Submission)

IMPORTANT: After submitting your information, you will receive two (2) notifications:
1. “The files were successfully uploaded.”
2. “Your files cannot be downloaded by recipients until you verify your email address. Please check your email for further instructions.”

***OFFERORS MUST FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS SENT TO YOUR EMAIL TO COMPLETE YOUR SUBMITTAL PROCESS***

Offerors should also provide their best effort to submit the electronic copy via AMRDEC SAFE website before the date and time specified on the Standard Form 1442 or any subsequent amendments. For the purposes of determining whether the proposal was received “late” in accordance with FAR 15.208, the date and time the file(s) are uploaded into the AMRDEC SAFE website as identified in the AMRDEC e-mail sent to the Contract Specialist(s)/Contracting Officer will be the time and date the Government received the proposal. Please note that the process involves two steps, after the proposal has been uploaded to the AMRDEC SAFE website the Offeror must verify its email address in order for the Government to receive access to the proposal uploaded onto the AMRDEC SAFE website. Do not assume that electronic communication is instantaneous. Please make allowances for delays in transmittal.
In this scenario, the offeror failed to submit a timely proposal. But also, the offeror failed to complete Step 2 of the proposal submission process. Consequently, the Government did not receive notification of the offeror’s submission for almost a week!
AST – LESSONS LEARNED/IMPROVED COMMUNICATION WITH INDUSTRY

- Other Suggestions
- Contact SBA Rep – Charles Mason, PCR
- Practical Tips:
  - Submit projects that most closely match the scope, cost, and complexity of the solicitation scope of work. Also, read the source selection criteria (Sections L and M).
  - Make sure SAM.gov profile is current and updated (notarized).
  - Be aware of the location and time zone for the RFP submittal. Do not assume since it is a Colorado project that the proposal due time is Mountain time.
  - We suggest that proposals that don’t require up-to-date pricing, e.g., Phase 1 proposals, A-E Proposals, solicitations with sample projects, etc. be sent in well before the time the proposal is due. There can be issues with computer systems that can be addressed if the Government knows there is a problem.
  - If hand delivering a proposal, call ahead and provide a window when it will be delivered, not when you walk in the door because the person may not be at his/her desk at that specific moment.
AST – LESSONS LEARNED/IMPROVED COMMUNICATION WITH INDUSTRY

• Debriefings
  • The AST will provide as much information as permissible under FAR 15.505/15.506.
  • Have open, honest dialogue about the proposal.
  • Understand that the Government is sometimes delivering bad news – but it is never a reflection of the firm or its personnel.
  • We will seek input from the firms so that the Government can do the next one better. We always think our solicitation is very clear but we want honest communication (preferably during the solicitation phase) if our selection criteria is not clear.
  • Let us know how we could do the next solicitation better. We welcome constructive criticism.

• Source Selection Criteria
  • Price or cost must be evaluated in every solicitation.
  • Past Performance must be evaluated unless the Contracting Officer determines it is not an appropriate evaluation factor. (Rare cases.)
  • Goal is only use evaluation factors that are true discriminators. Extra evaluation factors doesn’t make it better. Focused source selection criteria/factors is better for all parties.
AST – LESSONS LEARNED/IMPROVED COMMUNICATION WITH INDUSTRY

• General Lessons Learned:
• The Government and the Offeror/Contractor have to develop a level of understanding between the parties. That requires honest, open communication.
• The Government needs to be open to finding innovative solutions to the problem, e.g., CTI Log.
• The Government and the Offeror/Contractor need to be able to trust each other. And that requires commitment to the promises made.
• The Government needs to use the right tool from the contracting tool box to fix the problem, e.g., Fixed Price Incentive Firm Target (FPIF) at VA Medical Center, CO.
• The Government needs to listen to the contracting community to understand the issues so that it can come up with workable solutions, e.g., dialog with Fuels Contractors.
• The Offerors/Contractors need to understand that the Government comes up with solutions that provide the greatest improvement – and sometimes that may mean that an individual Offeror/Contractor may not get his/her specific problem/issue fixed.
Other Lessons Learned:

- Discuss market research results and development of acquisition strategy with the Project Delivery Team (PDT) to make sure that the strategy meets the needs of the customer and provides maximum opportunity for small business.
- Engage the PDT, including the PM group, in development of the Scope of Work in order to ensure that the anticipated requirements are covered.
- Ensure the PDT is involved in responding to RFI's and solicitation inquiries.
- Have potential SSEB members involved in development of the RFP.
- Designate a lead person to manage RFI's and solicitation inquiries to ensure that responses are timely and consistent.
- When feasible, post the “draft” Phase 2 RFP at the same time the Phase 1 RFP is posted.
- Use “searchable” electronic proposals (except for certain sections like Past Performance information).