
Section L: Submission Instructions

1.1 Procurement overview

- A. This is a competitive acquisition as a 100% small business set aside for the award of a single contract. This RFP includes the requirements, evaluation criteria, and method of evaluation.
- B. This acquisition is a Two-Phase Design-Build (DB) procurement in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 36.3. One firm-fixed-price contract will be awarded to the responsible Offeror whose proposal the Government determines conforms to the solicitation, is fair and reasonable with regard to pricing, and whose proposal offers the best overall value to the Government considering both price and non-price factors described in Section M.
 1. **Phase I is a Request for Qualifications (RFQ)** where all potential sources can submit proposals demonstrating their capability to perform. The Government will select and invite no more than three (3) offerors to submit proposals for Phase II.
 - a. Phase I only involves non-price criteria.
 - b. Do not include either design or pricing information in the Phase I proposal.
 - c. An offer guarantee is not required for Phase I (SF 1442 block 13b).
 2. **Phase II is a Request for Proposal (RFP)** and will be issued only to successful offerors determined to be the most highly qualified in Phase I. Phase II requires offerors to provide a technical proposal and a price proposal. The technical proposal requirements involve a complete design solution to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. The design solution shall include
 - a. proposed construction methods
 - b. phasing and timelines.
 - c. The project is subject to a cost ceiling of \$5.4M for design and construction. Offerors are under no obligation to approach this ceiling. However, the Government may not be able to make an award if this dollar amount is exceeded
 3. Phase II will two confidential meetings with each short listed offeror and the Government.
 - a. A three (3) hour Pre-Proposal Conference to discuss scope and potential design and technical solutions before offerors submit proposals.
 - b. A 90-minute oral presentation of the design and technical solution.
 4. The Government intends to make an award without discussions; however, reserves the right to establish a competitive range and conduct discussions, if deemed necessary, following the evaluation of initial proposals at either or both of Phase I and Phase II.
- C. Rating Methodology
 1. The Government will first review each proposal for conformance to the submission requirements. The Contracting Officer will review Pass/Fail criteria before issuing conforming proposals to the Technical Evaluation Board (TEB) for evaluation.
 2. The TEB will evaluate non-price proposals before evaluating price proposals. The Government will then combine the results of the technical proposal evaluation and the price evaluation and make a best value award determination.

-
3. The Government will conduct evaluation of non-price proposals received for both Phases by reviewing information in accordance with the criteria stated in the RFP using an adjectival evaluation rating scheme.
 4. The price proposals will not be rated but will be evaluated against the Independent Government Estimate (IGE) and the other price proposals received to determine price reasonableness. The Independent Government Estimate will be used as a benchmark for which the price reasonableness will be conducted. The analysis of the variance between the Government's estimate and each offer and variance among the Offerors will indicate whether further review is necessary in order to determine if the price is reasonable. Both the TEB and the Contracting Officer may perform additional review.
 5. Any proposal found to have a deficiency in meeting the stated solicitation requirements or performance objectives will be considered ineligible for award unless the deficiency is corrected through discussions. A proposal with any non-price factor rating of Marginal or Unacceptable renders the overall non-price factor rating as Marginal or Unacceptable unless the factor rating is improved to an Acceptable or higher rating through discussions.
- D. Best Value/DBC Selection and Award Approval
1. Award will be made to that offeror whose proposal is technically acceptable and whose technical benefit to price relationship is the most advantageous to the Government.
 2. The Government reserves the right to make price/technical trade-offs that are in the best interest and most advantageous to the Government.
 3. The Government may reject any or all offers if such action is determined to be in the best interest of the Government.
- E. After Award, the USDA Forest Service will issue a Limited Notice to Proceed for the Design Phase.

1.2 Notice to Offerors

- A. Proposals are expected to conform to solicitation provisions and be prepared in accordance with this section. To aid in evaluation, the proposal shall be clearly and concisely written, neatly presented, indexed, and logically assembled.
- B. Failure to submit any of the information requested by this solicitation may be cause for unfavorable consideration.
- C. Phase I proposals are due at the date and time listed in the Solicitation. Phase II proposals are due at the date and time listed in the Phase II RFP. Late submissions will not be accepted. It is the offeror's responsibility to make sure it is received before the submission deadline. Only electronic submission will be accepted. The contractor is encouraged to call the Contracting officer or Contract Specialist to confirm receipt of ALL volumes.
- D. Offeror's Certifications and Representations will be obtained from the System for Award Management (SAM). Offerors shall ensure that their information in SAM is current and complete prior to the Phase I response date. Anomalies and inconsistencies in the Offeror's Certifications and Representations may result in the Offeror's Proposal being deemed non-responsive.
- E. There will be no public opening of the proposals. Upon receipt, all proposals become Government property.

1.3 Conferences and Presentations

A. General

Offerors are cautioned that, notwithstanding any remarks, clarifications, or responses given at the conference, all terms and conditions of the solicitation remain unchanged unless they are changed by amendment. It is the responsibility of each offeror, prior to proposing, to seek clarification of any ambiguity created by amendment of the solicitation.

B. Phase I Pre-Proposal Conference:

The Government will host a **virtual Phase I Pre-Proposal Conference** where potential contractors may obtain a better understanding of the project scope and submission process.

1. Conference Date and Time: 12 Aug 2022; 0900-1100 ET
2. The conference will be held using Microsoft Teams. Preregistration with the Contracting Officer **two days in advance** is required for attendance.

C. Phase II Pre-Proposal Conference

The Pre-Proposal Conference will provide a confidential meeting to clarify the Government's project intent and scope and allow offerors to present technical solutions early in Phase II. This conference will also allow offerors to demonstrate to the Government their approach to collaboration and team integration to deliver a successful project.

1. **Conference Location:** Daniel Boone National Forest, London Ranger District, 761 S Laurel Rd, London, KY 40744
2. These conferences are tentatively scheduled for 5 October 2022 and 6 October 2022. Offerors will be notified of their date and time when notified of their selection for Phase II.
3. The conference will be conducted primarily in person but may include some virtual attendance by contractor team members for a portion of the conference.
4. The conference will last for no more than three hours and will begin at 8 AM or 1 PM.
5. After the conclusion of all confidential conferences, the Government will issue an amendment documenting clarifications to project intent and scope. This amendment will not include information about any offeror's team or technical solution.

D. Phase II Design Submission Presentation

The Design Presentation is intended to provide a comprehensive and integrated overview of the proposed technical solution and to answer questions about the solution from the TEB. The information in the oral presentation and presentation materials will be evaluated. The Design Presentation will have the following format:

1. The presentations will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams, tentatively scheduled for 29 November 2022. Presentation times will be assigned to each Offeror by the Contracting Officer **within 24 hours of the Phase II Proposal Submission**.
2. The Government will provide the location for the presentation, a projection screen only, power, tables, and chairs. All equipment and materials needed for the presentation are the responsibility of the Offeror. Internet connectivity will not be provided.
3. The Presentation will be attended by the Government's Contracting Officer, the TEB, and a non-participating assistant.
4. Offerors are limited to bringing no more than five of the key personnel listed in the Management Proposal and one non-participating assistant. The proposed Project Manager is required to attend the Presentation.
5. **Presentation Timeline:** The Government is allocating **90 minutes** for the Design Presentation in the following time budget with a hard stop after each portion. Offerors will be provided time before and after the presentation for setup and take down without the TEB present.

Minutes	Activity
10 before	Offeror's team admitted to the presentation room for setup
0-5	Welcome, Introductions, and Distribution of printed copies. The TEB Chair will indicate when the clock starts.
5-50	Offeror's Design Presentation
50-85	Question and Answer Session with the TEB
85-90	Closeout and Next Steps

-
6. The Government will maintain a record of the presentation and the Question and Answer session questions and will use this information during the evaluation of proposals for evaluation purposes. The presentation may be recorded.
 7. The Presentation shall include only information contained in Volume II of the Phase II Proposal. No price information is to be provided during the Presentation
- E. Inquiries and Questions
1. Submit all questions and inquiries to the Contracting Officer and Contract Specialist listed in the SAM.gov advertisement by email by the date listed in the Solicitation.
 2. The Government will provide responses to Offeror's questions by the date listed in the Solicitation. Unless the question deals with issues of a proprietary nature, responses will be posted via amendment to this solicitation announcement at SAM.gov. No hard copy, electronic copy, facsimile, or telephonic replies will be issued.
- F. Proposal Expense and Pre-Award Costs:
1. No stipend shall be provided for the preparation of Phase I proposals.
 2. The successful offeror in Phase II shall not receive a stipend.
 3. Each unsuccessful offeror in Phase II will be awarded a stipend of no more than \$25,000. The stipend is not intended to cover all proposal costs but rather enhance competition by defraying some costs. In order to be considered eligible to receive the full stipend value, the proposal shall:
 - a. Be submitted by a responsible offeror
 - b. Conform to all RFP requirements and contain no material deficiencies or omissions
 - c. Receive an overall rating of Satisfactory by the TEB
 - d. Receive a rating of Satisfactory for all non-price criteria.
- G. Limitations in Contracting
- The Architect-Engineering (A-E) design firms that prepared earlier versions of the technical requirements documents are prohibited from serving on the DB team. To prevent a conflict of interest, contractors submitting responses to this RFP are prohibited from teaming, partnering, subcontracting or engaging in any other business relationship regarding this project with Tunnell, Spangler, and Walsh (TSW) of Atlanta, Georgia.

1.4 General Submission Instructions

- A. Submit proposals to the Contracting Officer directly. Offerors who respond to this solicitation acknowledge and agree to all the instructions and procedures described in this solicitation. Please provide only the information requested. Supplemental information will not be evaluated.
- B. The Government will begin immediate review and evaluation of the submissions following the RFP closing date and time.
- C. Proposals will be evaluated on the factors listed in Section M of this Solicitation.
- D. Proposals will first be reviewed to ascertain whether they have been submitted in accordance with the instructions for each Phase before being evaluated against the Evaluation Criteria. Failure to follow the instructions may result in the proposal being removed from further consideration for award.
- E. Offerors are cautioned not to include assumptions, caveats, or exceptions within any part of their submission. Inclusion of assumptions, caveats, or exceptions to the requirement of any kind may result in the quote no longer being considered. Offerors should ONLY submit information explicitly requested in this RFP.
- F. Cross Referencing. Each volume other than the price proposal volume shall be written on a stand-alone basis without referencing other volumes of the proposal. Cross-referencing within a proposal volume is permitted where its use would conserve space without impairing clarity. Information required for proposal evaluation which is not placed in its designated volume will be assumed to be omitted from the proposal.

1.5 Common Format Requirements

- A. The proposal shall be organized into volumes as listed in the submission instructions for each phase.
- B. The cover of each Volume shall contain the following information:
 - 1. The solicitation number and name. Include acknowledgement of any and all amendments posted to the solicitation announcement.
 - 2. Volume Number and Title
 - 3. Date printed
 - 4. The name, DUNS number, mailing address, physical address, and website of the offeror.
 - 5. A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation.
 - 6. Name, title, telephone, and email of the offeror's primary point of contact who is authorized to negotiate on the offeror's behalf with the Government in connection with this solicitation.
- C. Table of Contents: Provide a table of contents for each volume.
- D. Page Formats
 - 1. Prepare all volumes for double sided printing.
 - 2. A page is one single-side piece of paper containing words, charts, tables, drawings, or graphics. Use US letter page sizes in portrait orientation for the majority of proposal content. US tabloid pages in landscape orientation may be used to supplement content and count as two pages.
 - 3. Provide a minimum one-half inch margin on all sides. Pages using forms required by this solicitation do need to conform to the one-half inch page margin.

-
4. Large format pages for drawings and graphics: This size is only allowed in Phase II Proposals. Use Architectural D size sheets in landscape orientation. These drawings shall be legible and readable at a half size reproduction on Architectural B paper. Large format pages and half-size reproductions shall be printed single-sided only.
 5. Page numbering: Number each page sequentially in the form "Page M of N", where M is the page number and N is the total number of pages. Include the cover page, table of contents, and pages intentionally left blank in the count of pages. Place the page number in the lower outside corner of each page.
 6. Page Limit: Defined in the instructions for each phase.
 7. Font size: Minimum 11 point size for body text and 9 point size for tables and charts.
 8. Header information:
 - a. Place the Offeror's Short Name in the outside corner
 - b. Place the solicitation number and date printed in the inside corner.
- E. Electronic Volumes
1. File name conventions: Use the format "Solnum_P#_TeamShortName_V#.pdf" where:
 - a. Solnum is the solicitation number
 - b. P# is P1 for Phase I and P2 for Phase II
 - c. TeamShortName is a shortened version of the Team's name. For example, if the team's full name is "The Smokey Bear-Woodsy Owl Awesome Builders" the short name could be "SmokeyWoodsy". The Short Name
 - d. V# is the volume number
 2. File format: PDF generated from authoring software with a maximum file size of 8 MB. Price forms in Phase II shall be submitted in both PDF and MS Excel.
 - 3.
- F. Printed Volumes – None. ALL data must be submitted in PDF format. The contractor is responsible for ensuring the pdf is 508 compliant and accessible and compliant.

1.6 Phase I: Request for Qualifications Response Requirements

- A. The submittal for this phase consists of a non-price proposal only. ***Design is not included in this phase. Do not submit Phase II responses in Phase I.***
- B. Electronic copies of the proposals are due at the date and time listed in the Solicitation.
- C. **Volume IA** - Technical and Management Quote
 - 1. Page limit is thirty six (36) pages.
 - 2. Use SF 330 for the Statement of Qualifications
 - 3. Provide a narrative response to all Phase I evaluation criteria in Section H of the SF 330.
- D. **Volume IB** – Substantiation Materials
 - 1. This volume does not have an explicit page limit but shall include ONLY the material requested.
 - 2. Contents
 - a. Letter(s) from surety providing bonding
 - b. Letter(s)/backup documenting EMR for the last three years
 - c. Maximum of five (5) CPARS evaluations or completed Past Performance Questionnaires.
 - d. Team member commitment letters
 - e. Joint Venture Agreements

1.7 Phase II Pre-Proposal Conference

No documentation from offerors for this conference is required.

1.8 Phase II: Request for Proposals Response Requirements

- A. Electronic copies are due at the date and time listed in the RFP. Physical copies are due at the Design Presentation and shall match exactly the content in the electronic versions.

B. Design Proposal

1. Volume IIA (Criterion 4 -7)

- a. Page limit is thirty-six (36) pages.
- b. Provide a narrative response to all Phase II evaluation criteria.

2. Volume IIB: This volume is solely for large format drawings part of the design proposal.

- a. Page limit is twenty (20) pages
- b. Architectural D size: provide one electronic copy

C. Volume IIC: Price Proposal (Criterion 8)

- 1. Offerors shall submit a Firm-Fixed Price proposal for all work described in the Solicitation.
- 2. Page limit is twenty (20) pages at minimum 11 point font size.
- 3. The pricing form shall be in MS Excel Format. Missing or incomplete pricing data may result in the quote no longer being considered, or downgraded.
- 4. Provide a detailed breakdown of the line item pricing following the requirements listed in Section 012000 - Price and Payment Procedures, Schedule of Values. Provide an equivalent breakdown for design and commissioning services within the form by primary labor category