Questions and Answers

Education Consulting Services - 7/5/2018 7:35:00 AM
Number: DOE 2019-01

Questions and Answers:

Q: Outside Delaware Vendors
Section number: III - Required Information Paragraph number: A. Minimum Requirements
Page number: 3
Text of passage being questioned: 1. Provide Delaware license(s) and/or certification(s) necessary to perform services as identified in the scope of work.

Prior to the execution of an award document, the successful Vendor shall either furnish the Agency with proof of State of Delaware Business Licensure or initiate the process of application where required.

Question: Will vendors with certification/licenses outside the State of Delaware be considered for this proposal?
A: Yes. This section is also referencing the need for a Delaware Business license to perform work within the State.

Q: Proprietary Information
We are submitting an RFP for this and are wondering about ownership of materials. We are using our existing copyrighted material that we have ownership over as our material for this proposal. We have written two books and several articles and have designed several trainings that we will use if selected. Thus, we would not agree to authorize Delaware to have ownership rights over our existing proprietary information. Will that be a problem with this proposal? How would we speak to this in the proposal?
A: Attachment 3 should be used to list any exceptions to the terms and conditions of the RFP.

Q: Type of Vendor
Section Number: Section II
Paragraph Number: 3
Page Number: 2
Text of Passage Being Questioned: “Within the above categories, services to be provided include but are not limited to the following functions/titles”
Question: Are you looking for firms or individuals?
A: DOE is looking for either firms or individuals.

Q: Types of Services
A: Categories were intentionally created to be broad to encompass the needs of work groups. This RFP is intended to create a preferred provider list that will be distributed to all departmental staff to utilize when a need arises.

Q: Termination of Contract

Section number: V. Contract Terms and Conditions
Paragraph number: 2 Termination of Contract
Page number: 22
Text of passage being questioned: The State may terminate this Contract at any time by giving written notice of such termination and specifying the effective date thereof, at least twenty (20) days before the effective date of such termination. In that event, all finished or unfinished documents, data, studies, surveys, drawings, models, photographs, reports, supplies, and other materials shall, at the option of the State, become its property and the Vendor shall be entitled to receive compensation for any satisfactory work completed on such documents and other materials, and which is usable to the State.

Question: If for any reason the State terminates an awarded Contract, what is the State claiming ownership of with regard to finished or unfinished documents, data, studies, surveys, drawings, models, photographs, reports, supplies, and other materials.

A: If there is partial work, the State reserves the right to the unfinished work and the vendor will receive compensation for satisfactory work.

Q: Separate Pricing Documents

Section B. RFP Submissions
Paragraph 2. Proposals
Page 5
Text of Passage Being Questioned: "Each proposal must be submitted with 5 paper copies and 2 electronic copy on CD or DVD media disk, or USB memory drive. Please provide a separate electronic pricing file from the rest of the RFP proposal responses."
Question: Regarding the separate electronic pricing file, can you clarify the total quantity of electronic copies on CD or DVD media disk, or USB memory drive is still (2), but the request is for our response to the RFP and the pricing associated to be stored as separate files?
A: There should be two separate files (RFP response and pricing file) on the two CDs/USBs.

Q: Public Works

Section number: III. Required Information
Paragraph number: B. General Evaluation Requirements
Page number: 3
Text of passage being questioned: “6. Familiarity with public work and its requirements”
Per 29 Del. C. §§ 6981 and 6982, this RFP is for professional services, not public works contracts. Should we interpret this to mean familiarity with the professional services requested?

A: Yes, this is not a public work RFP. It is for professional services.

Q: Resource Costs

Section number: C. RFP Evaluation Process
Paragraph number: 2. Proposal Selection Criteria (Criteria Weight)
Page number: 13
Text of passage being questioned: “Resource Costs - 10%”
Please define the meaning of “resource costs”.

A: Resource cost is the cost of the proposal (i.e. the hourly rate provided for each consultant title).

Q: ACA Safe Harbor

Section number: 8. General Contract Terms
Paragraph number: c. ACA Safe Harbor
Page number: 17
Text of passage being questioned: “The State requires that all Vendors shall identify the Additional Fee to obtain health coverage from the Vendor and delineate the Additional Fee from all other charges and fees.” What is meant by “Additional Fee to obtain health coverage”? We offer health insurance plans for our employees that involve different levels of fees depending upon the plans selected. We do not normally show those health insurance costs as an element of our pricing for services, and are unclear as to how we would calculate it here.

A: The ACA Safe Harbor would not apply as health insurance is provided.

Q: Drug Testing for Large Public Works

Posted On: 7/25/2018 8:43:02 AM
Answered On: 7/26/2018 1:56:45 PM

Posted On: 7/25/2018 8:44:08 AM
Answered On: 7/26/2018 1:58:12 PM

Posted On: 7/25/2018 8:44:39 AM
Answered On: 7/31/2018 9:34:20 AM

Posted On: 7/25/2018 8:45:53 AM
Section number: 8. General Contract Terms
Paragraph number: x. Drug Testing for Large Public Works
Page number: 25
Text of passage being questioned: "Pursuant to 29 Del.C. §6908(a)(6), effective as of January 1, 2016, OMB has established regulations that require Contractors and Subcontractors to implement a program of mandatory drug testing for Employees who work on Large Public Works Contracts funded all or in part with public funds."
This RFP is pursuant to 29 Del. C. §§ 6981 and 6982, and involves professional services contracts. All of our employees must be drug tested before they can be hired, however the requirement listed in this contract does not appear to be applicable.

A: This is not a public works RFP. It is a RFP for professional services.

Q: Specific Opportunities for Engagement

To date under the awarded contract we have not received any requests for quotes or otherwise opportunities to engage with the Department. We are eager to do so. Does the Department anticipate offering opportunities in the coming months? Might it be possible to understand more specifically the prospects of delivering work under the awarded contract?

A: This RFP is intended to create a preferred provider list that will be distributed to all departmental staff to utilize when a need arises.

Q: Scope of Services

Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 1&2
Page Number: 2
Text of passage being questioned: The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), seeks to establish a pool of vendors for education related consulting services which will be based on Statements of Work issued in the future on an as needed basis. As such, no specific work/deliverable is being guaranteed as a result of this solicitation. It is the specific intent of the DDOE to issue a multi-vendor award. Proposers are not required to submit proposals that cover all potential services, but can focus their proposal on the strengths of their organization.

Education Consulting Services are being solicited in nine (9) categories as identified below:

- Professional Development
- Research and Data Analytics
- Curriculum Development
- Assessment Consulting
- Program and/or Fiscal Management
- School Support Consulting
- Education Communications
- Policy/Regulation/Governance
- Early Learning Services

Question: Can the DDOE please elaborate on what specific education consulting they would like in each of the 9 areas? Worded differently, can the DDOE please define the scope and minimum requirements and expectations of each of the 9 areas?
A: This RFP is intended to create a preferred provider list that will be distributed to all departmental staff to utilize when a need arises.

Q: **Quantity of Consulting Hours**

Section Number: II. Scope of Services  
Paragraph Number: 1&2  
Page Number: 2

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Question: Can the DDOE estimate how many hours of consulting will be provided in each of the nine areas for an annual basis?

A: There is no specific work/project known at this time so it is not be possible to estimate the hours of work.

Q: **Additional Questions**
Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 1&2
Page Number: 2
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  • Professional Development
  • Research and Data Analytics
  • Curriculum Development
  • Assessment Consulting
  • Program and/or Fiscal Management
  • School Support Consulting
  • Education Communications
  • Policy/Regulation/Governance
  • Early Learning Services
Question: Will the DDOE consider an additional round of questions after defining the scope for each of the 9 areas?

A: The RFP will follow the schedule of events as outlined on page 1.

Q: Oral Presentation Details

Section Number: IV. Professional Services RFP Administrative Information, Subsection C. RFP Evaluation Process
Paragraph Number: 5
Page Number: 14
Text of passage being questioned: After initial scoring and a determination that vendor(s) are qualified to perform the required services, selected vendors may be invited to make oral presentations to the Evaluation Team. All vendor(s) selected will be given an opportunity to present to the Evaluation Team. The selected vendors will have their presentations scored or ranked based on their ability to successfully meet the needs of the contract requirements, successfully demonstrate their product and/or service, and respond to questions about the solution capabilities.
The vendor representative(s) attending the oral presentation shall be technically qualified to respond to questions related to the proposed system and its components. All of the vendor's costs associated with participation in oral discussions and system demonstrations conducted for the State of Delaware are the vendor's responsibility.
Question: Can the DDOE please provide an estimated date and location for the oral presentation?

A: This RFP will not require oral presentations.

Q: Resources to be provided

Section Number: V. Required Data, Subsection A. Data Collection
Paragraph Number: 1
Page Number: 16
Text of passage being questioned: What data will be required in the proposal? What is the expected format for the proposal?

A: The proposal should include detailed descriptions of the proposed services, including any necessary data and documentation. The expected format for the proposal is a standard PDF format.

Q: Vendor Selection Process

Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 1
Page Number: 2
Text of passage being questioned: How will the DDOE select the vendor(s) for the project? Will there be any specific criteria for selecting the vendor(s)?

A: The DDOE will select the vendor(s) based on a combination of technical and business qualifications. The specific criteria for selecting the vendor(s) will be outlined in the RFP.

Q: Contract Duration

Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 3
Page Number: 2
Text of passage being questioned: What is the expected duration of the contract? Will there be any renewal options?

A: The expected duration of the contract is 2 years with the option for renewal for an additional 2 years.

Q: Financial Requirements

Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 4
Page Number: 2
Text of passage being questioned: What financial requirements are expected from the vendor(s)? Will there be any specific financial qualifications for selecting the vendor(s)?

A: The financial requirements for the vendor(s) will be outlined in the RFP. The specific financial qualifications for selecting the vendor(s) will be based on the vendor's past performance and financial stability.

Q: Project Timeline

Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 5
Page Number: 2
Text of passage being questioned: What is the expected timeline for the project? Will there be any specific milestones or deadlines?

A: The expected timeline for the project will be outlined in the RFP. The specific milestones or deadlines for the project will be based on the project's scope and the vendor's capacity to deliver the services.

Q: Contract Renewal

Section Number: II. Scope of Services
Paragraph Number: 6
Page Number: 2
Text of passage being questioned: Will there be any option to renew the contract for additional years?

A: Yes, the contract can be renewed for additional years based on the vendor's performance and the needs of the DDOE.
Section Number: V. Contract Terms and Conditions
Paragraph Number: 8. General Contract Terms, Subparagraph a. Independent Contractors
Page Number: 16-17
Text of passage being questioned: The parties to the contract shall be independent contractors to one another, and nothing herein shall be deemed to cause this agreement to create an agency, partnership, joint venture or employment relationship between parties. Each party shall be responsible for compliance with all applicable workers compensation, unemployment, disability insurance, social security withholding and all other similar matters. Neither party shall be liable for any debts, accounts, obligations or other liability whatsoever of the other party or any other obligation of the other party to pay on the behalf of its employees or to withhold from any compensation paid to such employees any social benefits, workers compensation insurance premiums or any income or other similar taxes. It may be at the State of Delaware’s discretion as to the location of work for the contractual support personnel during the project period. The State of Delaware may provide working space and sufficient supplies and material to augment the Contractor’s services.
Question: Can the DDOE please confirm if the State of Delaware plans to provide working space and a list of supplies to be provided?

A: Depending on the scope of work, DDOE may provide work space. Responsive bidders should be able to provide services from an offsite location.

Q: Distribution of Work
Section number III. Required Information
Paragraph number: B General Evaluation Requirements, Item 7
Page number: 3
Text of passage: Distribution of work to individuals and forms or economic considerations

What is meant by distribution of work, what work and from whose perspective?

A: This is part of the general evaluation requirement and would be from the perspective of the review panel.

Q: Other Criteria
Section number III. Required Information
Paragraph number: B General Evaluation Requirements, Item 8
Page number: 3
Text of passage: 8. Other criteria necessary for a quality cost-effective proposal

Please clarify the meaning of “Other criteria” as used here. For example, is this referring to establishing project goals, processes, and/or collaboration needs?

A: This may include the ACA Safe Harbor Additional fee (if relevant).

Q: Demonstrated Ability

Posted On: 7/25/2018 10:49:05 AM
Answered On: 7/31/2018 6:07:43 PM

Posted On: 7/25/2018 10:54:26 AM
Answered On: 7/31/2018 6:16:45 PM

Answered On: 7/31/2018 10:32:40 AM
For the criteria, "Demonstrated ability providing similar services to what is being proposed" should the vendor focus on description of the services or the results and outcomes from the services provided?

A: If able to provide both the description of the services as well as results that would be preferable.

Q: ACA Safe Harbor

Could you please provide clarification regarding the required ACA Safe Harbor Additional Fee for this selection criteria?

Under the General Contracts Terms, C. ACA Safe Harbor (page 17), the first paragraph states: The Common-law Employer Safe Harbor Exception can be attained with the State and/or its agencies are charged and pay for an "Additional Fee" with respect to the employees electing to obtain health coverage from the Vendor. The second paragraph states: The Common-law Employer Safe Harbor Exception under the ACA requires that an Additional Fee must be charged to those employees who obtain health coverage from the Vendor, but does not state the required amount of the fee.

Are Vendors required to charge both the State an Additional Fee, and our employees an Additional Fee? If vendors are required to charge our employees an additional fee, does our employee’s share of the health insurance premium qualify for this? Or, would vendors be required to charge employees a fee above and beyond the employee’s share of the premium?

A: The ACA Safe Harbor would not apply if health insurance is provided.

Q: Scope of Categories Listed in the Proposal

The RFP lists nine different categories for which proposers can seek approval (Professional Development, Research and Data Analytics, Curriculum Development, Assessment Consulting, Program and/or Fiscal Management, School Support Consulting, Education Communications, Policy/Regulation/Governance, and Early Learning Services). Is any additional information available that describes the scope of these categories (including possible content knowledge or services that may be sought from the pool of vendors once established) or are proposers to identify the scope of their capacity for services in a given category as part of their proposal?

A: Work groups will reach out when there is a need for a specific scope of work.
Q: **Policy/Regulation/Governance**

Section Number: 2  
Paragraph Number: 2  
Page Number: 2  
Text of passage being questioned: "Policy/Regulation/Governance"  
Can you define what is meant by this category of services?

A: This is part of the general evaluation requirements and would be from the perspective of the review panel.

Q: **Research and Data Analytics**

Section Number: 2  
Paragraph Number: 2  
Page Number: 2  
Text of passage being questioned: "Research and Data Analytics"  
Can you define what is meant by this category of services?

A: Categories were intentionally created to be broad to encompass the needs of work groups. This RFP is intended to create a preferred provider list that will be distributed to all departmental staff to utilize when a need arises.

Q: **Assessment Consulting**

Section Number: 2  
Paragraph Number: 2  
Page Number: 2  
Text of passage being questioned: "Assessment Consulting"  
Can you define what is meant by this category of services?

A: Categories were intentionally created to be broad to encompass the needs of work groups. This RFP is intended to create a preferred provider list that will be distributed to all departmental staff to utilize when a need arises.

Q: **Page limit**

Is there a page limit for the proposal?

Section number: IV.B.2 - Proposals  
Paragraph number: 8  
Page number: 6  
Text of passage being questioned: The State of Delaware discourages overly lengthy and costly proposals. It is the desire that proposals be prepared in a straightforward and concise manner. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other promotional materials beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired.
**Q: Formatting**

Is there a recommended font and/or line spacing?

Section number: IV.B.2 - Proposals

Paragraph number: 8

Page number: 6

Text of passage being questioned: The State of Delaware discourages overly lengthy and costly proposals. It is the desire that proposals be prepared in a straightforward and concise manner. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other promotional materials beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired.

A: There is not a recommended font nor line spacing.

**Q: Previous Projects**

What projects have you invited the previous pool of vendors to compete for in the past two years?

A: DDOE has utilized the current preferred vendor matrix for a variety of work across multiple work groups.

**Q: Upcoming projects**

What are the types of upcoming projects in which you anticipate the need for professional services from this pool of pre-selected vendors?

A: There is no specific work/project known at this time.

**Q: ACA Additional Fee**

Page 13, C2 Criteria Weight:

What is the "ACA Safe Harber Fee"?

A: For any contract involving temporary employee placement or the hiring of contractors that could be considered employees of the state (i.e. provided work space on state property and under the direct supervision of state employees).

**Q: Scope of this RFP?**

Could you explain the scope of this RFP please?
A: The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), seeks to establish a pool of vendors for education related consulting services which will be based on Statements of Work issued in the future on an as-needed basis. As such, no specific work/deliverable is being guaranteed as a result of this solicitation. It is the specific intent of the DDOE to issue a multi-vendor award.

Q: Clarification on acceptance of approved vendors?

Does this RFP, upon acceptance, award SDF Software the designation of an approved vendor(s) list which will provide SDF Software with the opportunity to bid on projects, or is this for an open contract?

A: This is for an open contract.

Q: Notifications of Statements of Work.

Once a vendor list is determined by the submission of a response to an RFP, how will approved vendors be notified of Statements of Work for future initiatives?

A: Vendors would be contacted by workgroups within DDOE when there is a need for a specific scope of work.

Q: Question on submission of multiple services.

Do we submit one RFP response per service, or are they compiled together?

A: Please submit one RFP with the multiple areas of service.

Q: Question on requirements for submission of multiple services.

If we do bundle services together into one RFP response, would failure to meet requirements for one service exclude us from the others as well?

A: Vendors will either be selected for the awarded vendor matrix or not selected at all.

Q: Insurance and liability question.

If our current liability insurance coverage is less than what is in your solicitation, do we need to increase our coverage prior to this RFP submission, or will we be allowed to when bidding on projects?

A: It is not required at the time of the RFP submission. Awarded vendors would need to have the required levels of insurance at the time a contract is executed for a specific scope of work.

Q: Program and Fiscal Management

What does "Program and Fiscal Management" mean? Why type of services or supports would fit into this area?
**Q: Costs**

Can we submit a range of possible costs or hourly rates for staff by title?

**A:** Yes, please submit hourly rates by title.

**Q: Geographical Location Criteria**

Section Number: III

Paragraph Number: B.4

Page Number: 3

Text of Passage Being Questioned: "4. Location (geographical)"

Question: On a typical project, what percentage of the work would be expected to be performed on-site versus remotely? How much weight will be given to in-state versus out-of-state firms in evaluation?

**A:** On-site compared to remote work varies based upon the type and scope of work. Please refer to the criteria weight on page 13.

**Q: Documentation of Capacity**

Section Number: III

Paragraph Number: B.3

Page Number: 3

Text of Passage Being Questioned: "3. Capacity to meet requirements (size, financial condition, etc.)"

Question: Are attached resumes acceptable as part of meeting the capacity criteria?

**A:** Yes, a resume would be acceptable.

**Q: Subcontracting - Attachment 6**
Q: ACA Safe Harbor

Section Number: V

Paragraph Number: 8.c

Page Number: 17

Text of Passage Being Questioned: "The Common-law Employer Safe Harbor Exception under the ACA requires that an Additional Fee must be charged to those employees who obtain health coverage from the Vendor, but does not state the required amount of the fee. The State requires that all Vendors shall identify the Additional Fee to obtain health coverage from the Vendor and delineate the Additional Fee from all other charges and fees. The Vendor shall identify both the Additional Fee to be charged and the basis of how the fee is applied (i.e. per employee, per invoice, etc.). The State will consider the Additional Fee and prior to award reserves the right to negotiate any fees offered by the Vendor. Further, the Additional Fee shall be separately scored in the proposal to ensure that neither prices charged nor the Additional Fee charged will have a detrimental effect when selecting vendor(s) for award."

Question: We have previously determined that our organization does not plan to charge any Additional Fee for Safe Harbor. Can you please provide some additional guidance or resources on whether a fee is required or how we should determine a fee if required? Is it acceptable to enter a fee of $0 or indicate N/A?

A: The ACA Safe Harbor would not apply if health insurance is provided.