

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Justification and Approval

For

Other Than Full and Open Competition

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs, VISN 1, VAMC BHS, Boston, MA (MAVERIC/Research 151) 150 South Huntington Avenue Boston, MA 02130 (523-14-2-9183-0108) is requesting a sole source purchase of equipment from:

Tecan US, INC.
9401 Globe Center Drive, Suite 140
Morrisville, NC 27560

2. Nature and/or Description of the Action Being Processed:

Procurement of laboratory equipment: TECAN (Product # US4525-SPS) VA Boston Buffy Coat Aliquot Workstation for aliquoting human blood fractions – referred to as a Tecan Blood Fractionator. A prior Blood Fractionator was previously purchased under contract VA241-12-C-0041 – which was an open competitive bid process. The previously purchased Blood Fractionator was integrated with our laboratory sample processing including integration with our Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) – a year-long costly process. An additional Blood Fractionator is being requested to increase laboratory throughput.

3. Description of Supplies/Services Required to Meet the Agency's Needs:

This is a request for laboratory equipment: TECAN Product number US4525-SPS VA Boston – A Blood Fractionator. It also includes item number 30001582 (Installation & Software) . Estimated cost of this item is as per document number 20110959-02. An optional service contract can be purchased for the total package .

4. Statutory Authority Permitting Other than Full and Open Competition:

Reference 41 USC §253(g), as implemented by FAR 6.302, Paragraph 1; Only One Responsible Source and No Other Supplies or Services Will Satisfy Agency Requirement

5. Demonstration that the Contractor's Unique Qualifications or Nature of the Acquisition Requires the Use of the Authority Cited Above (applicability of authority):

The MAVERIC Biorepository previously purchased one TECAN Product number US4525-SPS VA Boston Buffy Coat Aliquot Workstation which is currently installed in the laboratory (Rm 114; PM #EE137462). The laboratory is currently looking to purchase and add a second Blood Fractionator in order to fulfill the work demands being placed on our service. The service is requesting this particular piece of equipment pursuant to FAR 6.302, Paragraph 1; Only One Responsible Source and No Other Supplies or Services Will Satisfy Agency Requirements, on account of technical specifications and of the existence and previous procurement of two of these exact machines. It has recently been made clear by Central Office that sample collections for this project will increase in number and that we need to scale up our operations to fulfill processing requirements. With one machine approved, purchased, tested, and in production, the most effective way to scale in this situation is to simply add an identical machine.

The requested product will guarantee appropriate sample processing capabilities and support high quality processing of large numbers of specimens. The process of integrating a new instrument involves commissioning, quality assurance, validation, and other system integration including data and IT systems integration – a very costly process. Over the past year the first Blood Fractionator instrument purchased (i.e. described above) has been commissioned and performance validated. Consistent processing is critical when performing meaningful comparative analysis across specimens is absolutely necessary. Therefore purchasing the identical instrument (i.e. matching the first purchase) is critically important to ensure consistent and proper specimen handling and to avoid the excessive cost of integrating an entirely different instrument (i.e. in effect starting over).

The MAVERIC Core Lab has hundreds of thousands of dollars invested into developing the previous machine. When investigating other vendors for liquid handling solutions, even at seemingly reasonable or even lower base prices comparable to the requested unit, one would also need to factor in the additional costs for testing and development. Purchasing a different system from another vendor would force us to start over with development, set-up, testing, calibration, implementation, and maintenance. Conversely, since we are requesting to add a second identical machine, all efforts can be streamlined and lead to an almost effortless set up knowing what we learned from the first machine. It is simply easier, less time consuming, and ultimately more cost effective to add on and integrate one more identical machine into an already existing infrastructure. Each of the machines would run the same protocols, the same lab ware, and be serviced under one service contract. Furthermore, it would be of great risk to the integrity of the machines, our normal laboratory operations, and the interests and finances of the VA if the machine were to be solicited from or provided by any other vendor. Incomplete knowledge of the machines, and associated DNA processing could result in severely ineffective and otherwise unacceptable sample results.

6. Description of Efforts Made to ensure that offers are solicited from as many potential sources as deemed practicable:

- In the year preceding acquisition of the first machines several companies were evaluated. A Market Research Report included in that package details what vendors were investigated before submittal of the Procurement Request Package. The service had identified the following as recommended sources:
 - o Tecan US, Inc.
4022 Stirrup Creek Drive Suite 310

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Durham, NC 22703

P: 1-800-352-5128

F: 1-919-361-3601

o Hamilton Robotics, Inc.

P.O. Box 10030

Reno, NV 89520-0012

T: 1-800-648-5950

F: 1-775-856-7259

7. Determination by the Contracting Officer that the Anticipated Cost to the Government will be Fair and Reasonable:

The exact same equipment was purchased by the VAMC Boston in 2012, solicited as a full and open procurement. The cost for the new equipment will be considered fair and reasonable by comparing it to the previously purchased unit as well as the IGE.

8. Description of the Market Research Conducted and the Results, or a Statement of the Reasons Market Research Was Not Conducted:

The following task items were considered when comparing the machines made by the previously mentioned automation companies:

- Starting source – we are committed to using buffy coats as the starting source of the DNA
- Throughput – we will need to process up to 800 samples per day
- Need to recover 70% or more of the the buffy coat
- The ease of use
- The cost of the machine
- No need of method development

9. Any Other Facts Supporting the Use of Other than Full and Open Competition:

In addition to the technical descriptions and justifications noted above, it is important to recognize these machines are involved in a very large scale and very high profile genomics study known as the Million Veteran Program (MVP). MVP is one of the transformative initiatives passed down by Secretary Shinseki for the VA to fulfill. Any impediments incurred while working on this project may result in profound repercussions for our service.

10. Listing of Sources that Expressed, in Writing, an Interest in the Acquisition:

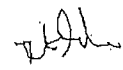
None.

11. A Statement of the Actions, if any, the Agency May Take to Remove or Overcome any Barriers to Competition before Making subsequent acquisitions for the supplies or services required:

The service and/or agency may be building a shadow lab at separate location in the future to perform similar processing. This would be a situation in which setting up separate processes and infrastructures at another location would allow the service and/or agency to consider more available options.

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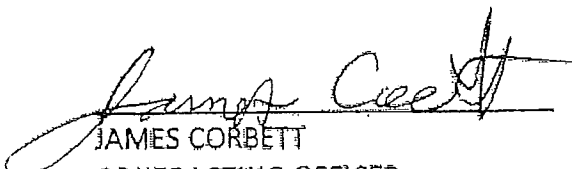
12. Requirements Certification: I certify that the requirement outlined in this justification is a Bona Fide Need of the Department of Veterans Affairs and that the supporting data under my cognizance, which are included in the justification, are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

X 

Robert Lundsten COR
Biorepository Operations Director
Signed by: Lundsten, Robert

13. Approvals in accordance with FAR 6.304

- a. Contracting Officer's Certification (required): I certify that the foregoing justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.


JAMES CORBETT
CONTRACTING OFFICER
VAMC CT West Haven

Date 4-2-14

- b. NCM/PCM (Required \$3K and above): I certify the justification meets requirements for other than full and open competition.

Ronald Hirtle
Digitally signed by Ronald Hirtle
DN: cn=Ronald Hirtle, o=Veteran
Health Administration, ou=VHA,
email=ronald.hirtle@va.gov, c=US
Date: 2014.04.09 08:23:00 -04'00'

RONALD W. HIRTLE, GS-13
SUPERVISORY CONTRACT SPECIALIST
VISN 1 Commodities Team Manager

Date _____

c.