

Attachment 17 – Questions and Answers (Q&A)

Solicitation Number: VA24114R0712

The following are Questions and Answers (Q&A) relating to this solicitation.

#	Q & A and Reference	Amendment #
1	Q: How long is the [offer] review process?	A00001
	A: The offeror is required to extend a “firm” offer for ninety (90) days. The VA review process may be up to ninety days, however it is foreseeable that the award decision(s) will be made sooner.	
	Ref: [Reference: SF1449, page 1, block 20]	
2	Q: When will we receive the decision?	A00001
	A: Successful and unsuccessful offerors will receive notification of the decision via fax and phone call from the Contracting Officer supplemented with a mailed letter.	
	Ref: [Reference: SF1449, Section B, page 5, paragraph B.1.1.a Contract Administration Data and Section E FAR 52.212-1 Instructions to Offerors, (para. (c) and (f)(5) and Section E Evaluation of Commercial Items paragraph (c).]	
3	Q: "Statement of Work" (SOW) is mentioned a few times in the solicitation. Is it the same as "Performance Work Statement (PWS)"?	A00001
	A: Yes, as used in this solicitation, Statement of Work (SOW) is the same as (a synonym for) “Performance Work Statement: (PWS) and “Performance Based Statement of Work” (PBSW).	
	Ref: [Reference: Section B Performance Work Statement (PWS) infra]	
4	Q: . Is it possible to collect saliva (we can provide a kit for that) to obtain matched normal? We routinely request both tumor and normal samples in order to analyze tumor-specific as well as germ-line alterations. As there are typically few somatic mutations among the sea of germ-line variants, it's important that any germ-line mutations be filtered out. If no matched normal is available, we will filter out the germ-line variants using bioinformatics methods.	A00001
	A: Saliva will not be provided. We will be able to provide blood specimens for the majority of subjects.	
	Ref: General Scope, page 18 of 86 of solicitation	

5	Q: What is the policy on subcontracting? Our firm focuses on DNA analysis (i.e., targeted and whole exome sequencing). For transcriptome analysis, we have evaluated vendors and subcontracted with one vendor. Can we include them in the RFP or we should focus on what we will perform in our lab?	A00001
	A: We are OK with subcontracting as long as details are provided regarding the specific subcontractors. BTW, costs for DNA analysis and transcriptome analysis should be given separately.	
	Ref: Task 8 on page 25 of 86 of solicitation	
6	Q: . In VA241-14-R-0712-006 (the spec file), Question #4, "Instructions to Offerors A(a)(i)(6) and (7)" was mentioned. Where can we find it?	A00001
	A: Form SF 1449 page 3, SECTION E – SOLICITATION PROVISIONS; follow the ellipses to the page index for SECTION E - SOLICITATION PROVISIONS résumés***** 52.212-1 Instructions to Offerors—Commercial Items. (APR 2014) ***** Addendum: Instructions to Offerors	
	Ref: SF 1449, page 3, SECTION E	
7	Q: Will the VA cases be mainly for clinical decision or for research? Since the prices for the clinical test and research-use-only test are different, we would need such information to calculate the cost.	A00001
	A: They will be used for both clinical and research purposes.	
	Ref: Page 18 of 86 of solicitation, General Scope	
8	(The following set of questions 8 through 13 relate to what the Contractor will receive per case)	A00002
	Q: Will there be already be a pathology report with the primary diagnosis supplied with the FFPE sample being sent for sequencing & analysis?	
	A: Yes, there will be a pathology report with the primary diagnosis supplied with the block or formalin fixed tissue.	

	Ref: page 20, paragraph 5	
9	<p>Q: Will the contractor receive a clinical synopsis with each case including prior imaging, diagnosis under consideration, initial path report, patient history, clinical notes, physician contact, etc)?</p> <p>A: No. Just the pathology report.</p> <p>Ref: Page 20, paragraph 5</p>	A00002
10	<p>Q: Will there be clinical contacts for the sample?</p> <p>A: MAVERIC (VA Boston Healthcare System) will serve as the point of Contact. We have access to the clinical contacts and can facilitate communication.</p> <p>Ref: Page 20, paragraph 3</p>	A00002
11	<p>Q: Are we receiving FFPE block or samples in formalin or both?</p> <p>A: In most cases a tissue block will be submitted, but in a few cases formalin fixed tissue will be submitted</p> <p>Ref: page 19, paragraph 3</p>	A00002
12	<p>Q: What is the approximate % of samples that are FNA vs core biopsy vs resected tumor vs other?</p> <p>A: About two thirds of cases will be diagnosed from surgical pathology specimens, either biopsies or resection specimens. About one third of cases will be diagnosed from cytology FNA specimens. In most cases tissue blocks of biopsies, resected tissue, or FNA cell blocks will be submitted. For example, at Boston at total of 115 cases of primary lung cancer were diagnosed in FY2013. Of these cases 77 were diagnosed by surgical pathology, either biopsy or excision, and 38 cases were diagnosed by cytology. The breakdown of diagnoses were squamous cell carcinoma, 42 cases, adenocarcinoma, 56 cases, small cell neuroendocrine, 10 cases, large cell neuroendocrine, 2 cases, non-small cell carcinoma, unclassified, 4 cases, other, 1 case. 6 cases of 36 were positive for EGFR, and 0 cases of 30 were positive for ALK.</p> <p>page 19, paragraph 3</p> <p>Ref: NONE.</p>	A00002
13	<p>Q: Any further details on the sample types/amounts you will be sending would be welcome information.</p> <p>A: None.</p> <p>Ref: NONE</p>	A00002
14.	<p>Q: <i>When</i> shall we send our ATTACHMENT – 5 – PAST PERFORMANCE SURVEY to our references whom we are listing on ATTACHMENT – 6 – REFERENCE ROSTER?</p> <p>A: Immediately, now. <i>Statim</i></p> <p>Ref: SECTION E – SOLICITATION PROVISIONS ADDENDUM: Instructions to Offerors A.a.ii (para 1 and para 2)</p> <p>(Comment: At this juncture the offeror should self-assess the feasibility of accomplishing the required</p>	A00002

	tasking of SECTION E – SOLICITATION PROVISIONS ADDENDUM: Instructions to Offerors before the due date (page 1, SF 1449 block 8).	
	< END ATTACHMENT 17 >	