

36C26218R0759 – Questions & Answers

***Please note: Questions that were received were copied and pasted verbatim.**

1. If there is an incumbent contractor, what is the name of the incumbent?

- **Answer: G2 Global Solutions**

2. If there is an incumbent contractor, what is the contract number?

- **Answer: VA26217P6861**

3. Are the estimated quantities by labor category at the Price/Cost Schedule 1) for evaluation purposes only? 2) the quantities estimated for the first Task Order? or 3) estimated total requirements for the duration of the IDIQ?

- **Answer: The estimated quantities for labor categories in the Price/Cost schedule will be used for the evaluation, and also represent the government estimates as to how many hours are needed for each year.**

4. Please reconcile the Labor Category Qualification at SOW paragraph 1.5.1 which requires all personnel to be full time with the estimated quantities by labor category at the Price/Cost Schedule which in some cases requires 1560 hours.

- **Answer: Contractor will be required to have the ability to provide the estimated hours for each labor category in the Price/Cost schedule.**

5. Given SOW paragraph 8.2, which states that the contractor "shall only bill and invoice for actual hours worked by the contractor employee[s]" please confirm that this is a Labor Hours Contract.

- **Answer: This is fixed unit price contract. Contractor shall only bill and invoice for actual hours worked by the contractor employees.**

6. Given that "IDIQ" is in the title, is the government going to award a single contract or an IDIQ contract with separate task orders?

- **Answer: An IDIQ contract will be awarded and task orders will be issued off the IDIQ.**

- If the latter, will the government specify if there will be multiple awardees under the IDIQ?

- **Answer: No**

- If the latter, will the government specify the level of effort to be proposed for the first task order?

- **Answer: The estimated quantities listed in the Price/Cost schedule represent the government's anticipated needs.**

7. Is there a sample task order to which industry should respond that will be awarded along with the IDIQ contract?

- **Answer: The Price/Cost schedule represents the anticipated task order(s) that will be issued under the IDIQ.**

8. Is the government requiring resumes for all 12 positions?

- **Answer: No, but the contractor shall have the ability to fill positions in accordance with Section 1.7.1., “FTE Vacancies,” in the Statement of Work.**

9. Throughout the RFQ there is a preference for FMS, IFCAP, eCMS, and VISTA experience. Are these ‘preferences’ merely desired or are they required of proposed staff for technical acceptability? For example, must ALL proposed candidates for each labor category possess qualifications such as FMS, IFCAP, eCMS, and VISTA experience in order for an offer to be deemed technically acceptable? Such a requirement limits vendors to only hiring personnel with prior VA experience and will substantially increase costs and limit our pool of candidates.

- **Answer: FMS, IFCAP, eCMS and VISTA experience is preferable, but not mandatory. However, the proposed contractor staff/employee(s) should have the ability to learn these systems without issues.**

10. Paragraph 1.5.5-7: Will the government remove the statement “...preferably with eCMS and VISTA applications..” from the RFQ in the labor category descriptions? In an LPTA environment where a technical threshold is clearly defined, such qualifications should either be required or not for technical acceptability. While we recognize the value in staff having these qualifications, it isn’t clear if such qualifications are required for technical acceptability. Please advise.

- **Answer: This is not an LPTA acquisition. Review the Evaluation and Basis of Award.**

11. Is private sector experience managing federal contracts with FAR and/or VAAR requirements acceptable for the purpose of this solicitation?

- **Answer: All experience, as long as it meets the requirements as stated in the statement of work, will be acceptable.**

12. 1.7.1 – Is this a labor hour contract or firm fixed price?

- **Answer: Refer to the answer for Question 5.**

13. Presently the junior specialist and entry level specialist requires more experience than a closeout specialist. Will the government consider requiring less experience for the closeout support than these roles?

- **Answer: No. Junior and entry level contracts support specialists will be supporting contracting activities. The closeout specialists will be focused on closing out contracts and purchase orders.**

14. Will the government define what is required of offerors in their proposals (i.e how many volumes it is seeking from offerors, the desired contents of each, page count exclusive of table of contents, cover letter, resumes, etc.)?

- **Answer: Review “ADDENDUM to FAR 52.212-1 INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS.” Any reference to page counts, submittal of documents, and other instructions are listed in this section.**

15. Does the government anticipate making award this fiscal year?

- **Answer: Yes**

16. Due to the holiday weekend, may we request a 1 week extension for response?

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

17. Are there incumbents in this contract or is it a new contract? If there are incumbents, please provide the contract number.

- **Answer: There are incumbent contractor personnel on this contract. Refer to the answers for Questions 1 and 2.**

18. I cannot find the 1449 within the documentation. Can you provide some direction in this matter or provide it to me directly?

- **Answer: There is no SF1449. This is a combined synopsis/solicitation.**

19. Are you using the SCA Labor standards? If yes, can you provide a crossbridge from the GS to the SCA?

- **Answer: No. The type of contractor support that is being requested is deemed to be professional-type services.**

20. What is the anticipated contract pricing type (FFP, cost-plus, T&M, etc.) ?

- **Answer: See answer to Question 5.**

21. Is there an incumbent?

- **Answer: Refer to the answer for Question 1.**

22. Is this a new requirement or a follow on?

- **Answer: This is a prior requirement that is being recompeted.**

23. Is there an incumbent? If so, can you provide name, contract number and value?

- **Answer: Refer to answers for Question 1 and 2.**

24. Will the Government consider Best Value Trade Off (BVTO) instead of LPTA?

- **Answer: No**

25. How many requirements are anticipated to be processed each fiscal year?

- **Answer: The line items and the estimated quantities on the Price/Cost schedule represent the anticipated needs of the government.**

26. Are resumes for Key Personnel being requested with the proposal response?

- **Answer: Refer to the answer for Question 8.**

27. In what format are submissions expected? Are there formatting requirements—e.g., font and font size, separate volumes for price and technical?

- **Answer: Refer to answer for Question 14. There are no specifics regarding font, font size, etc.**

28. Page 30 of the solicitation indicates E.O. 13495, Nondisplacement of Qualified Workers, applies to the contract. This in turn implies there is an incumbent contract and contractor. Can the Government release the name of the incumbent contractor, the contract number of the existing contract and its total dollar value?

- **Answer: Refer to the answers for Questions 1 and 2. The incumbent contractor will not provide names and contact information for its staff.**

29. If there are existing qualified workers who will "badge flip" to become employees of the winning contractor, can the Government provide the quantity of workers who will do so and the seniority level of each (i.e., entry level, junior level, or journeyman level contract support specialist, or contract closeout specialist)?

- **Answer: Refer to the answer for Question 28.**

30. **Paragraph 1.5.4.1** stipulates "the candidate shall assist with.....complex contracts and high-dollar acquisitions"

Question: Do you have a dollar threshold or technical characterization for "complex" and "high dollar"?

- **Answer: Journeyman level Contracts Support Specialist should have knowledge and experience in FAR 12, 13, and 15 acquisitions.**

31. Paragraph 1.7.3 OCI

Question: Is it anticipated that the contract support work, including contract closeout and pricing, preclude the offeror from competing on other work with VISN 22 or another VA VISNs? Are there any specific areas or VA services that would be impacted by OCI concerns? We are a VECTOR Prime for service Groups 2, Analytics and 5, Logistics; would this contract work cause potential OCIs with VECTOR work in VISN 22 or other VISNs?

- **Answer: Refer back to the VECTOR contract and the VECTOR contract CO regarding potential OCI concerns.**

32. Paragraph 6.1 Pass and Identification Items

Question: Will offeror's personnel have enough time after award notification, consider pass and ID services, to obtaining the PIV cards and VA systems access?

- **Answer: Yes, the VA will assist with PIV and VA systems access.**

33. Please confirm that the due date for this response is September 7, 2018 at 10 am and not September 6, 2018 as is indicated in the FBO announcement.

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

34. Please also indicate whether the due time for our response is 10 am PCT or EST.

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

35. Please confirm that the only response you want to this RFP is a 3-page document as indicated on Page 38, Subsection (g) of the RFP.

- **Answer: Review answer to Question 14.**

36. The document titled "Combined Synopsis/Solicitation for Commercial Items" shows that the "Current Response Date" is September 7, 2018, 10:00am PST. The document in FedBizOpps shows "Response Date" of September 6, 2018.

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

37. QUESTION: Can the Government please confirm that the current response date is September 7, 2018, 10:00am PST?

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

38. RFP Section 1.5 Labor Category Qualifications: The Government has provided GS equivalent levels for sections 1.5.4 Journeyman Level Contracts Support Specialist and for 1.5.5 Junior Level Contract Support Specialist.

QUESTION: Can the Government please provide GS equivalent levels for 1.5.6 Entry Level Contract Support Specialist and for 1.5.7 Contracts Closeout Specialist II?

- **Answer: GS-7 and GS-9, respectively.**

39. RFP Section 2 Services Summary for the “Performance Objective” of “Personnel Maintenance” the Government has a “Performance Standard” of “No more than two (2) instances per quarter of failure to fill vacancies with qualified personnel within 14 days of vacancy notification.”

QUESTION: Will the Government consider changing this language to “within 30 days of vacancy notification”?

- **Answer: No. The Contracting Officer may allow for longer vacancies as the situation necessitates.**

40. QUESTION: Is there an incumbent contractor? If so, what is the company name and what is the current contract number?

- **Answer: Refer to the answers for Questions 1 and 2.**

41. QUESTION: Has the scope of work changed (increased or decreased) from the current contract level of effort?

- **Answer: The Price/Cost schedule and the statement of work represent the government’s needs.**

42. Question: What is the intended contract type of this Task Order?

- **Answer: Refer to answer for Question 5.**

43. Question: 1.7.3. Organizational Conflicts of Interest: Is the OCI plan to be submitted as an addendum to the proposal, prior to proposal submission, or during performance once the contract?

- **Answer: The awardee will submit the OCI Plan. The OCI Plan is not part of the proposal submittal.**

44. Question: 1.7.1.FTE Vacancies: The statement is made that a price reduction covering the total accrued hourly price of vacant FTE’s will be made and reflected in monthly invoices until the position can be filled. Is this to be understood as the contractor offering a credit against positions that are not staffed?

- **Answer: The language pertaining to the price reduction was removed. However, the contractor will be required to meet the staffing requirements within 14 calendar days unless the Contracting Officer allows for longer vacancies.**

Section 1.7.1. Now reads the following: “Any position vacancies shall not exceed fourteen (14) calendar days unless directed or approved, in writing, by the CO. FTE vacancies beyond the fourteen (14) calendar day period may result in negative past performance/CPARS ratings.”

45. Question: 8.2. States “The contractor shall only bill and invoice for actual hours worked by the contractor employee”. If the invoices are to be for actual hours then how is a price reduction and invoicing credit possible per guidance of 1.7.1.FTE Vacancies?

- **Answer: The language pertaining to the price reduction was removed. However, the contractor will be required to meet the staffing requirements within 14 calendar days unless the Contracting Officer allows for longer vacancies.**

46. Question: Section E. Item F.: “Offerors shall submit proposals via email to Stephen Y. Kwak at Stephen.kwak@va.gov by September 7, 2018 at 10:00am.” - Is this 1000 PST?

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

47. The Price/cost Schedule on page 2 of the RFP uses 2080 hours for nearly all the Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). Allowing for ten Federal Holidays (80 hours) and at least ten Paid Time Off days (80 hours), this leaves 1920 actual regular working hours for an FTE. Is it the VA’s expectation that each FTE will actually work 2080 hours on the contract (i.e., full time for 1920 hours PLUS 80 hours of overtime), or is this simply for price evaluation/comparison for the IDIQ award?

- **Answer: The Price/Cost schedule will be used for the price evaluation for the IDIQ award. The contractor staff may or may not work the full 2080 hours.**

48. For the two positions with 1560 hours on the Price/cost Schedule on page 2 of the RFP, is it intended that these be part-time personnel, or is this simply for price evaluation/comparison for the IDIQ award?

- **Answer: The Price/Cost schedule will be used for the price evaluation for the IDIQ award. The two positions with 1560 hours represent part-time personnel.**

49. Section 1.6.2 on page 6 of the RFP states (underline added): “All contractor personnel working in Government facilities must complete fingerprinting and start background investigation paperwork prior to the start of performance or placement on the contract.” Please clarify whether our staff can start work while their background investigation is in process, or if they must wait until they clear the process before starting work.

- **Answer: Contractor staff may begin work once fingerprints are cleared and initial VA network access is given. Background investigations will follow, but the completion of the background investigation is not mandatory for the contractor staff to begin work under this contract.**

50. Section 5.2 on page 9 of the RFP of the RFP addresses a Quality Control Plan (QCP). Are we correct in assuming that the QCP will be required for each resulting Task Order under the IDIQ, or does the VA require that we submit a QCP with our initial proposal?

- **Answer: The awardee will be required to submit a QCP for the entire contract to include task orders. QCP is not required as part of the proposal submittal.**

51. Section 8.2 on page 10 of the RFP states: “The contractor shall only bill and invoice for actual hours worked by the contractor employee.” Are we correct in assuming that eventual Task Orders under the IDIQ will be Time and Material (T&M) or Labor Hour (LH) type awards?

- **Answer: Refer to answer for Question 5.**

52. Near the bottom of page 30 of the RFP, invokes FAR 52.222.17 (Nondisplacement of Qualified Workers). Are there any incumbent contractors currently supporting this requirement? If so, what is/are the names and contract numbers for the incumbent contractors? Also, what is the current staffing level and labor mix?

- **Answer: Refer to answers for Questions 1, 2, and 28.**

53. Section C.8(c) on page 34 of the RFP states: “The Government may issue orders requiring delivery to multiple destinations or performance at multiple locations.” What are these other potential locations, and is it the intent of the VA that the pricing used for Long Beach, CA also apply to these other sites?

- **Answer: It is anticipated that all contractor staff will work in Long Beach, CA at the location stated in Section 4.6.**

54. Section E.g on page 38 of the RFP states: “...the offeror shall provide a narrative summary in no more than three (3) pages demonstrating its experience in vetting, hiring, and providing contracts support specialists and/or contracts closeout specialists as described in the Statement of Work.” Would the VA like this as a separate proposal volume, or included in the Pricing Proposal Volume?

- **Answer: The narrative summary shall be provided in no more than 3 pages and can be on its own or included with the pricing. Cover sheets will be excluded from the three (3) page count. Offerors are reminded to review the submittal instructions in “ADDENDUM to FAR 52.212-1 INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS.”**

55. The Basis of Award for this procurement is currently lowest price and the government will award a responsible offeror “whose price is found to be reasonable, and whose proposal does not take exception with any of the requirements for this procurement specified in the solicitation”.

:Redacted: certainly wants to see that the Veteran’s Administration Contracting Office in Long Beach, CA receives the desired support. However, lowest price and Lowest Price Technically Acceptable (LPTA) contracts often expose the government to risk associated with contract performance from offerors who simply agree without exception to the requirements of the solicitation and offer the lowest price – thereby often offering the “greenest” staff in order to provide the lowest price and too often resulting in poor contract performance.

:Redacted: does not take any exception to the education and experience requirements for this procurement, as they related to the contract support specialists. As currently described in the Combined Synopsis/Solicitation, all contracts support specialists shall have bachelor’s degrees with specific coursework which includes at least 24 semester hours in the listed fields. It would seem, however, that the education and experience requirements for contract support specialists, as currently described, would make it exceedingly difficult to realistically price in a competition for

lowest price; within the Southern California region where such education and experience would demand a greater salary. Here, again, we believe that the lowest price construct would introduce the risk of successful contract performance for the government.

Would the government consider redefining the Basis of Award to include a Best Value Tradeoff, rather than lowest price? We believe this will allow the government to better secure successful contract performance.

- **Answer: No. Offeror should take into consideration the position descriptions, experience levels, the locale, etc. when developing price.**

56. Page 1 of the Combined Synopsis/Solicitation Notice states that the proposal is due on 9/6/2018; Page 2 of the Combined Synopsis/Solicitation Notice and FBO state that the proposal is due 9/7/2018. Could the Government please clarify the correct due date?

- **Answer: All proposals will be due September 7, 2018 at 4:00pm PST.**

57. Is this effort new work or a recompet?

- **Answer: See answer to Question 22.**

58. Because this solicitation is posted on FBO, could the Government please confirm that this is an open market price submission?

- **Answer: This is an open market solicitation.**

59. Line Items 0002 and 0004 in the Base Year (and all associated Option Periods) of the Price/Cost Schedule have an estimated quantity of 1560 hours. The typical billable hours for a full-time position is 1920 - 2000 hours. Can the Government please clarify if these are part time positions? Additionally, could the Government please clarify how many hours per week these positions would work?

- **Answer: The estimated quantity of 1560 hours represents part-time positions. The government anticipates these labor categories work approximately 20-30 hours per week.**

60. Would the Government specify the GS Levels for Entry Level Contracts Support Specialist and Contracts Closeout Specialist II?

- **Answer: See answer to Question 38.**

61. According to the solicitation, all positions require VA procurement experience (VAAR and VA Programs like FMS, IPPS, and VISTA), significantly reducing the labor pool. Would the Government consider experience from other Federal agencies?

- **Answer: Refer to answer to Question 9.**

62. This section states that "All Contract Support Specialists shall have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university." Does this educational requirement also apply to the Contract Closeout Specialist II in PWS 1.5.7?

- **Answer: The bachelor's degree requirement only pertains to the Contracts Support Specialists, not the Contract Closeout Specialists.**

63. The requirements in these sections state that personnel shall have "federal contracting experience". Could the Government please clarify whether this requirement is for on-site Federal contracting experience/working in conjunction with Federal employees OR having simply worked with Federal contracts?

- **Answer: Proposed contractor staff should have experience in accordance with the position descriptions for each labor category as well as the duties required.**

64. Given that the security process can take up to 2 months, is it the Government's intention that we submit a qualified candidate within 14 calendar days of a vacancy?

- **Answer: Yes. Contractors shall submit a candidate within 14 calendar days of a vacancy unless otherwise instructed by the Contracting Officer.**

65. According to the solicitation "all personnel proposed are key personnel". Does this mean that every contracting position is considered key personnel? Should a resume be submitted for every position?

- **Answer: Yes. All personnel proposed are key personnel. No, resumes are not required as part of the proposal submittal. Also, review answer for Question 8.**

66. If resumes are required, this would be a huge lift to industry to source, recruit and vet qualified personnel; would the Government consider a 5-day extension to the proposal due date?

- **Answer: Resumes are not required as part of the proposal submittal. Review answer for Question 8.**

67. Section 3 states that "The contractor personnel will work in a Government facility." Could the Government please confirm that all Contractors will be required to work on site at the duty station listed in Section 4.6?

- **Answer: Yes, contractor personnel will be working at the location stated in Section 4.6.**

68. Does the Government wish to onboard new personnel prior to receiving their PIV in order to align with the 9/23 award date? Or would the Government be willing to push out the award date in order to accommodate the length of the initial security process?

- **Answer: Once the government accepts and approves new contractor personnel, personnel will be required to complete fingerprinting. Once the fingerprints are approved, the personnel will begin the onboarding process. The security process will begin as new personnel are accepted and approved throughout the duration of the contract.**

69. Would the Government please clarify if the Price/Cost Schedule and "Proof of Compliance with the Limitations on Sub-Contracting" should be included in the 3-page Specialized Experience narrative summary or if it should be separate documents?

- **Answer: The narrative summary regarding the specialized experience shall be no more than 3 pages. The Price/Cost Schedule and the Proof of Compliance with the Limitations on Sub-Contracting will not be counted as part of the 3 page limit for the narrative summary of the Specialized Experience.**

70. Does the response for this section have a page limit or specific format other than the Price/Cost Schedule listed in the solicitation on pages 2 and 3?

- **Answer: Pricing shall be provided in accordance with the format listed in the Price/Cost schedule. There is no page limit for the Price/Cost schedule.**

71. Does the response for this section have a page limit or specific format? Must the response to paragraph h. be included in the 3 page narrative summary identified in "Paragraph g. Special Standard of Responsibility, Specialized Experience"?

- **Answer: No. There is no page limitation regarding the proof of compliance with the Limitation on Sub-Contracting. The Proof of compliance with Limitations on Sub-Contracting is not part of the 3 page narrative summary for specialized experience.**

72. SOW paragraph 1.6 states "all proposed personnel shall be considered key personnel." Will the Government consider requiring resumes and letters of commitment of key personnel to be submitted with the proposal?

- **Answer: No. Resumes and letters of commitment of key personnel are not required as part of the proposal submittal.**

73. Will the Government consider revising Section E, paragraph g - Special Standard of Responsibility, Specialized Experience to include a requirement for key personnel resumes and letters of commitment?

- **Answer: No**

74. Will the Government consider revising this section (*Evaluation*) to include evaluation criteria to include key personnel?

- **Answer: No**

75. Will the award of this contract preclude the winning bidder from pursuing future VA bids due to potential conflicts of interest?

- **Answer: No, unless there is a conflict of interest with this contract requirement and any future contract requirements.**

76. Confirm that the only proposal submission requirement is the pricing schedule, and award is made based on lowest price.

- **Answer: Review the “ADDENDUM to FAR 52.212-1 INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS” and the Evaluation provision on page 42 of the solicitation.**

77. Please provide the name of the incumbent currently performing the services.

- **Answer: Refer to the answer for Question 1.**

78. Is there an incumbent? If so, who is it?

- **Answer: Refer to the answer for Question 1.**

79. Is the incumbent eligible to bid?

- **Answer: There is nothing that prohibits the incumbent from submitting a proposal.**

80. I do not see any instructions for submission of the technical and proposal, such as, the number of pages, font, and other required elements (other than the 3 pages under Section E, sub-section g) . Can the Government provide direction?

- **Answer: There is no instruction regarding font size, font, etc. Review the “ADDENDUM to FAR 52.212-1 INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS.”**

81. Can we include executive summary, cover page and table of contents? Is there a page limit for those?

- **Answer: Cover page and Table of Contents will be excluded from the page limit. The government will be evaluating all proposals in accordance with the Evaluation provision on page 42 of the solicitation.**