

## JUSTIFICATION FOR OTHER THAN FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION

### 1. Identification of Agency and Contracting Activity.

This Justification and Approval (J&A) for Other Than Full and Open Competition is executed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Acquisition Service-Frederick (AS-F) for Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service (VR&E).

### 2. Nature/Description of Action being Approved.

This activity proposes to negotiate a noncompetitive award (sole source) with Accord Federal Services, LLC (a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business), for the procurement of an electronic media subscription-based aptitude and interest assessment instrument to be facilitated through a national portal and 57 sub-portals for VA Regional Offices.

### 3. Description of Supplies/ Services Required to Meet the Agency's Need (including estimated value).

VR&E requires an aptitude and interest assessment instrument to be used by Veterans to promote transition planning, and to provide the basis for setting education and selecting career goals. This online electronic media subscription-based assessment allows a Veteran to take a test, which is then analyzed and the results are reported to a VR&E counselor.

The contractor shall setup a national portal and 57 sub-portals to support the assessment system. The cost for setting up and maintaining these portals are annual recurring. The contractor shall also provide assessment logo branding. The branding fee is non-recurring.

Standalone assessment systems currently exist in some Regional Offices (RO) and may contain unused assessments. The contractor will credit the sub-portal(s) from which the unused assessments were harvested dollar for dollar and re-issue new assessments for that value on that sub-portal. In this manner, the affected VA ROs shall retain their dollar value invested, but unused, in exchange for useable new assessments in the consolidated new system.

The Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) sites may also be supported under their aligned RO. In such cases where a RO has an IDES site, it is beneficial to consolidate administrative functions under the RO where technical staff is more plentiful and centralized. It is also beneficial to consolidate bulk assessment purchases to keep the unit cost lower and provide more value to the Government. Bulk price breaks (tiered pricing) for assessments are estimated to be:

5,000 @ \$6 each = \$30,000  
10,000 @ \$5 each = \$50,000  
25,000 @ \$4 each = \$100,000  
50,000 @ \$3 each = \$150,000

The contractor shall provide one half-day training to VACO VR&E Training Staff. The VACO VR&E Training Staff will, in turn provide that training to the 57 VA Regional Offices using VA facilities such as LiveMeeting or video teleconferencing.

The cost breakdown for using a nationally standardized tool at 57 Regional Offices is provided in the table below. Funding requirements are subtotaled into those expenditures required to establish and maintain the service, and the remaining optional expenditures to annually replenish used assessments.

The optional assessment CLINs are not to exceed estimates and will be purchased based on prior year utilization and any future projections for new initiatives.

### Career Assessment Integrated Portal System

Period	Item	Cost	Total
<b>Base Year (FY12)</b>			
	1 National Site Service Setup	\$299	\$299
	57 Regional Office Service Setup	\$199	\$11,343
	VR&E Branding	\$199	\$199
	54,136 Assessments	\$3 per assessment	\$162,408
	1 Training Session	\$750	\$750
	<b>TOTAL BASE YEAR</b>		<b>\$174,999</b>
<b>Option Year 1 (FY13)</b>			
	1 National Portal Maintenance	\$299	\$299
	57 Regional Office Portal Maintenance	\$199	\$11,343
	<b>Subtotal (Mandatory)</b>		<b>\$11,642</b>
	30,000 Assessments (Optional)*	\$4 per assessment	\$100,000
	<b>Subtotal (Optional)</b>		<b>\$100,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL Option Year 1</b>		<b>\$111,642</b>
<b>Option Year 2 (FY14)</b>			
	1 National Portal Maintenance	\$299	\$299
	57 Regional Office Portal Maintenance	\$199	\$11,343
	<b>Subtotal (Mandatory)</b>		<b>\$11,642</b>
	25,000 Assessments (Optional)*	\$4 per assessment	\$100,000
	<b>Subtotal (Optional)</b>		<b>\$100,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL Option Year 2</b>		<b>\$111,642</b>
<b>Option Year 3 (FY15)</b>			
	1 National Portal Maintenance	\$299	\$299
	57 Regional Office Portal Maintenance	\$199	\$11,343
	<b>Subtotal (Mandatory)</b>		<b>\$11,642</b>
	25,000 Assessments (Optional)*	\$4 per assessment	\$100,000
	<b>Subtotal (Optional)</b>		<b>\$100,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL Option Year 3</b>		<b>\$111,642</b>
<b>Option Year 4 (FY16)</b>			
	1 National Portal Maintenance	\$299	\$299
	57 Regional Office Portal Maintenance	\$199	\$11,343
	<b>Subtotal (Mandatory)</b>		<b>\$11,642</b>
	25,000 Assessments (Optional)*	\$4 per assessment	\$100,000

Subtotal (Optional)	\$100,000
<b>TOTAL Option Year 4</b>	<b>\$111,642</b>
Total Option Years Mandatory	\$46,568
Total Option Years Optional	\$400,000
Total Base Year Plus Option Years Mandatory	\$221,567
<b>Total Base Year Plus Option Years Mandatory and Optional</b>	<b>\$621,567</b>

*\*Note: Assessments are an estimated quantity, and will be based on usage from the previous year, and shown as optional. Quantities shown are estimates for future planning.*

The proposed total contract cost for the base year and four Option Years is estimated to be \$621,567. Base Year: \$174,999; Four Option Years Mandatory Maintenance: \$46,568; Four Option Years Optional Assessment Replenishment: \$400,000.

**4. Identification of Statutory Authority Permitting Other than Full and Open Competition.**

The statutory exception permitting other than full and open competition for this acquisition is 41 USC 253(c)(5), Authorized or Required by Statute as implemented by FAR 6.302-5. The applicable statute is PL 109-461, Veterans First Contracting Program (codified at 38 U.S.C. §§ 8127 and 8128).

**5. Demonstration of Contractor's Unique Qualifications.**

Accord Federal Services, LLC. (Accord) is a registered and verified Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) that provides training, project support and Veteran preferred staff augmentation to Federal, DoD, State, and Commercial Clients. They have experience in providing cost effective human capital support and professional development training solutions to various agencies within the federal government, inclusive of the Department of Veteran Affairs. Accord provides work under NAICS 541612, Human Resource Consulting Services; specifically Employee Assessment Consulting Services and has having expertise in performing services under 518210 Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services, both which are integral to standing up a national portal that hosts and processes the vocational assessments.

**6. Description of efforts made to ensure offers are solicited from as many potential sources as practicable.**

Not applicable per VAAR 819.7007(b). A notice of intent will be posted to the Federal Business Opportunities System.

**7. Determination of Fair and Reasonable Prices.**

No award shall be made until the Contracting Officer determines the costs to the Government to be fair and reasonable. This determination will be based on sources such as comparison of other contracts' for same or similar services, the contractor's public price list, GSA price lists, and other market research.

**8. Description of Market Survey.**

Not required per VAAR 819.7007(b). Market research was conducted using VetBiz.gov. Accord Federal Services, LLC is a responsible source with respect to this contracting opportunity. It is registered and verified in VetBiz.gov as a SDVOSB with the NAICS code for this requirement.

**9. Other facts supporting the use of other than full and open competition.**

PL109-461 Section 502(c) states:

**SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR CONTRACTS ABOVE SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION THRESHOLD.** For purposes of meeting the goals under subsection (a), and in accordance with this section, a contracting officer of the Department may award a contract to a small business concern owned and controlled by Veterans using procedures other than competitive procedures if:

- (1) Such concern is determined to be a responsible source with respect to performance of such contract opportunity;
- (2) The anticipated award price of the contract (including options) will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (as defined in section 4 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act (41 U.S.C. 403)) but will not exceed \$5,000,000; and
- (3) In the estimation of the contracting officer, the contract award can be made at a fair and reasonable price that offers best value to the United States.

It is anticipated that this procurement will meet all of these conditions.

**10. Listing of Interested Sources.**

Vocational Research Institute (VRI)  
1845 Walnut Street, Suite 660  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
(Large Business)

Accord Federal Services, LLC  
9737 Cogdill Lane, Suite 217  
Knoxville, TN 37932-3300  
(SDVOSB)

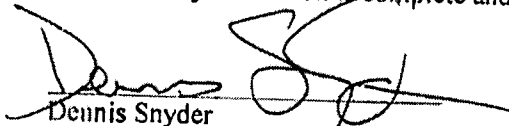
**11. Actions Taken to Remove Barriers to Competition.**

All future requirements will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Market research will be conducted at that time to determine if a more cost effective/ efficient system would better meet the evolving needs to the organization.

**CERTIFICATIONS AND APPROVAL**

**Technical Representative Certification:**

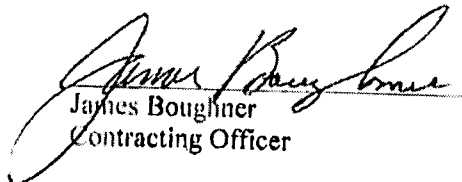
Pursuant to FAR 6.303(c), I certify that any supporting data that is my responsibility and which forms a basis for the justification is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

  
Dennis Snyder  
Technical Representative Requirements Person

10 Aug 2012  
Date

**Contracting Officer Certification:**

Pursuant to FAR 6.303-2(b) (12), I certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief and approval is thus provided.

  
James Boulhner  
Contracting Officer

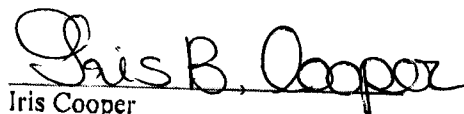
13 AUG 2012  
Date

**Legal Sufficiency**

Provided in email dated August 9, 2012.

**Competition Advocate Approval**

Upon the basis of the above justification, I hereby approve, as Competition Advocate, the solicitation of the proposed procurements described herein using other than full and open competition, pursuant to the authority of 38 U.S.C. §§ 8127 and 8128.

  
Iris Cooper  
~~ADAS for Acquisition~~ Exec. Dir. OAC  
Competition Advocate

9/17/12  
Date