

APPENDIX A - PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

I. General:

- A. Proposals shall be based on solicitation documents issued for RFP Solicitation Number **VA-701-13-R-0136**. Proposals will be in the format stipulated below in **Section “II.**

General Proposal Format.”

- B. Proposals shall be received on or before the date and time specified in Block 15 of the SF 1449. **There will be no public opening of the proposals.**
- C. Submit sealed offers to:

1. US Postal Service Deliveries:

JUSTIN C. WILSON, CONTRACT SPECIALIST
Department of Veterans Affairs
Program Contracting Activity Central (PCAC)
6150 Oak Tree Blvd., Suite 300
Independence, OH 44131

2. Commercial Delivery Services / Hand Carry (Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM (EDT)):

JUSTIN C. WILSON, CONTRACT SPECIALIST
Department of Veterans Affairs
Program Contracting Activity Central (PCAC)
6150 Oak Tree Blvd., Suite 300
Independence, OH 44131

- D. The offeror shall affix their names and return addresses on their envelope/package as well as a label containing the following information:

1. Contract Title;
2. Solicitation Number;
3. Date for receipt of Offers;
4. Time for Receipt of Offers;
5. Office Designated to receive offers.

II. General Proposal Format:

- A. Technical and Price sections of the Offerors proposals will be evaluated independently; therefore, the offeror shall submit the proposal in two (2) Volumes (Volume I: Technical

and Volume II: Price). In order that the Volume I: Technical may be evaluated strictly on the merit of the material submitted, the contractor shall include **NO** price information in Volume I. The Offeror shall separately bind Volumes I and II. Both Technical and Price volumes; therefore, must be labeled with the Offeror's organization, business address, and VA Solicitation Number. Both Volumes I and II must be received by the closing date and time set for receipt of proposals. **NO EMAIL SUBMITTALS OF OFFERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

- B. Information, within each volume, shall be organized sequentially under the specified tabs (below) to facilitate evaluation. The offeror shall submit Volumes I and II in both hard copy and in electronic format. The hard copy shall be one (1) original and one (1) copy. The offeror shall submit a CD-ROM containing Volumes One (1) and Two (2) as two separate files. *Each volume* must be submitted as a single application-generated (not scanned), searchable PDF document that is less than or equal to **15MB** in size.
- C. A page is defined as each face of an 8.5 X 11 inch sheet of paper containing information. All information (except for document numbers, page numbers, etc.) shall be provided in an image area of 7 X 9 inches. The background color of each page of the submission shall be white or ivory stock only. Text lines will be single-spaced. A smaller font size for any graphics presented in a proposal is permitted as long as the information is legible to the human eye. Fonts other than Arial are permissible in the presentation of graphic material only.

III. Technical Proposal Format(Volume I):

- A. Volume I shall include a title page, detailed table of contents, preface, and a compliance matrix that shall cross-reference the parts of the proposal with the parts of the Request for proposal. The offeror may use graphic presentations where such use will contribute to the compactness and clarity of the proposal. Include page numbers and the company name in the header and footer of each page.
- B. Volume I shall not exceed 100 single-sided or 50 double-sided pages inclusive of charts, graphs, exhibits, and any other materials the offeror deems necessary unless otherwise stated in this section. The offeror shall use font style Arial, size 12. The Contracting

Officer will count the pages in every proposal and remove any pages in excess of the page limit before evaluating the proposal.

- C. The original and all copies (including the electronic) shall be organized using the tabs specified in the chart below. The Tabs shall directly correlate to the evaluation factors identified in section C4.

LOCATION	FACTOR	DESCRIPTION
Vol. I Tab A	FACTOR 1:	Past Performance
Vol. I Tab B	FACTOR 2	Assessment and Certification Approach
Vol. I Tab C	FACTOR 3	Veterans Involvement

IV. Technical Proposal Requirements (Volume I): Submit detailed responses to the evaluation factors under each of the tabs as follows:

A. **Past Performance (Tab A):**

1. The offeror's offer shall include a summary description of at least three but no more than five completed or on-going contracts, with references, within approximately three (3) years preceding the proposal due date of contracts similar in size, complexity and scope to this project.

These references must also include the following:

- a) Contract number, brief description of the project, type of contract, and amount of the contract;
 - b) Contracting Officer's Name and Phone Number, Government Agency or Company Name;
 - c) Contracting Officer's Representative Name and Phone Number.
2. The Contractor must indicate whether they were the prime contractor, sub-contractor, or other teaming arrangement.
 3. The offeror shall submit a past performance survey (**APPENDIX D – Past Performance Survey**) to all references. The contact reference is required to complete the survey in its entirety and return it **to the Contract Specialist** for

validation by the closing date. Past Performance surveys are to be emailed to Justin C. Wilson, Contract Specialist at justin.wilson3@va.gov. In the event the company itself does not have relevant past performance, past performance surveys may be submitted on contracts performed by the Key Personnel of the company that will also be performing on this requirement. The offeror will be responsible for submitting the Past Performance Survey to its references in a timely manner. The Government reserves the right to contact the references submitted in the offer and all other references the Government deems necessary for validation of past performance information.

4. Offeror's are invited the opportunity to provide information on any problems encountered on the identified contracts. This section shall be limited to the discussion of problems and corrective actions taken by the offeror to remediate the situation.

B. Assessment and Certification Approach (Tab B):

1. Offerors shall provide a complete description of the proposed Assessment and Certification Approach (including sample plans and reports) that demonstrates the offeror's ability to meet or exceed the requirements identified in the Statement of Work and demonstrates an overall understanding of the scope and the requirements. Proposals shall also include a sample schedule for performance of an Assessment and Certification that meets the period of performance requirements and demonstrates the offeror's ability to meet or exceed the requirements identified in the Statement of Work.

C. Veterans Involvement (Tab C):

1. Offeror's shall address the proposed Veterans Involvement approach including proposed Prime or Subcontractors. If Veteran Owned Subcontractors are proposed, offerors must state in their proposals the names of the SDVOSBs and VOSBs with whom they intend to subcontract and provide a brief description of the proposed subcontracts and the approximate dollar values of the proposed subcontracts. In addition, the proposed subcontractors must be registered and verified in the

VetBiz.gov VIP database (<http://www.vetbiz.gov>). See VAAR 852.215-70 for further information.

V. Price Proposal Format (Volume II):

- A. The original and all copies (including the electronic) shall be organized using the tabs specified in the chart below.

LOCATION	FACTOR	DESCRIPTION
Vol. II Tab A	NA	SF 1449, "Solicitation, Offer and Award"
Vol. II Tab B	NA	Completed Pricing Schedule
Vol. II Tab C	NA	Representations & Certifications

VI. Price Proposal Requirements (Volume II):

A. Standard form (SF) 1449 Solicitation, Offer and Award (TAB A):

The offeror shall complete & sign the "OFFER" section of the SF 1449. The offeror shall submit separate prices for all items (If Applicable) indicated in Block 17.

B. Pricing Schedule (TAB B):

The Offeror shall complete the pricing schedule located on page 21 of the solicitation. Offeror's shall submit one firm-fixed price for the Assessment and Certification of all the buildings in Appendix B – Task Order 1 Building List on the Contract Line Item (CLIN) Pricing Schedule As well, offerors shall provide the price of Assessment and Certification on a Per Building Basis by completing each of the Band Pricing Tables for each year of the Requirements Contract.

C. Representations & Certifications (TAB C):

The offeror shall complete their representation and certifications or indicate that the offeror has completed the annual representations and certifications electronically via the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA) website at <http://orca.bpn.gov>.

VII. EVALUATION OF OFFERS

1. General:

A. Source Selection Utilizing the Tradeoff Process:

1. The Government intends to award a contract or contracts resulting from this solicitation to the responsible offeror(s) whose proposal(s) represents the best value after evaluation in accordance with the factors in the solicitation. Responsibility determination will be made in accordance with **FAR 9.1, Responsible Prospective Contractors.**

B. Price Evaluation:

1. Price will not be rated, but will be evaluated for fairness and reasonableness using price analysis.

2. The offer:

A. The offeror shall include as part of their offer to the Government:

1. A signed offer form (SF 1449);
2. A completed pricing schedule;
3. The following items, identified as being part of the offer:
 - a) Information requested under Technical Approach;
 - b) Proposed Subcontractors;
 - c) Completed representations, and certifications.

B. The Government will consider the submission of an offer to be a manifestation of the offeror's assent to the terms of the solicitation. The price(s) shall be Firm Fixed Price. The offeror shall not submit alternate proposals (i.e. exceptions to the terms of the RFP, offeror-proposed revisions to the specifications or clauses, or offeror-proposed specifications or clauses). If such conditions or exceptions are submitted, the Government may determine the offer to be unacceptable.

C. An offeror may submit a maximum of one fully compliant proposal. No alternate proposals will be accepted, and if an offeror submits more than one proposal, all proposals shall be returned without evaluation.

3. Contingency Procedure for Proposal Evaluation:

- A. If the Government receives what it considers to be a large number of proposals, then the proposals will be evaluated in phases in order to progressively reduce the number being considered for contract award. The purpose of this contingency procedure is to reduce the time and cost of source selection, both for the Government and for competing offerors. The procedures are as follows:
1. First, The Government will determine the acceptability of each offer in accordance with the acceptability criteria in this RFP. The Government will eliminate from further consideration any offerors who submitted unacceptable offers. An offer is unacceptable when: (1) it does not manifest the offeror's unconditional assent to the terms of the RFP; (2) the offeror tries to impose additional terms; (3) the offeror submits more than one fully compliant proposal; or (4) the offeror's representations, certifications, or other statements indicate that the offeror is not eligible for contract award.
 2. If a large number of offerors still remain in contention after the elimination of offerors whose offers were unacceptable, The Government will then perform a price analysis and eliminate offerors whose prices are considered to be too high or too low to be competitive in light of the prices offered by other offerors.
 3. If a large number of offerors still remain after the elimination of offerors based on acceptability and price, The Government will then evaluate the experience, past performance, and prices of the remaining offerors and eliminate any that are not sufficiently competitive to be selected for contract award.
 4. Once the Government has reduced the number of offerors to a manageable number by completing Step 1, and, if necessary, Steps 2 and 3, above, we will evaluate proposals in accordance with the criteria specified in section D4.
 5. The decision to eliminate any offeror through this contingency procedure will not constitute the establishment of a competitive range, as described in FAR 15.306 (c), and will not obligate The Government to conduct discussions or to solicit or entertain proposal revisions. However, we reserve the right to establish a

competitive range and conduct discussions if we decide that it is in the best interests of the Government to do so.

6. The Government will not commit to a specific number for what constitutes “a large number” or “a manageable number” of proposals. This decision will be made based on the number of proposals received by the submission deadline. Furthermore, The Government will not establish an advance formula for determining how high/low a price has to be to be “too high” or “too low.”

4. Evaluation Criteria and Relative Importance:

The Government will award a contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible offeror whose offer conforming to the requirements of the Statement of Work (SOW) and the Solicitation will be most advantageous to the Government, price and other factors considered. **Non-Price factors, when combined, are equally important as cost or price.** Each proposal shall address ALL the Evaluation Factors and Sub-Factors for Award. The Evaluation Factors for Award are as follows:

- I. Past Performance (Most Important Non-Price Factor)
- II. Assessment/Certification Approach (Second Most Important Non-Price Factor)
- III. Veterans Involvement (Third Most Important Non-Price Factor)
- IV. Price (Equally Important as all Non-Price Factors combined)

5. Evaluation:

- I. **Past Performance:** The Government will evaluate the quality of the offeror’s past performance within approximately three (3) years preceding the proposal due date of contracts similar in size, complexity and scope to this project. This includes, but is not limited to, timeliness of contract completion, including adherence to contract schedules and timely submission of data deliverables; the contractor’s ability to comply with the terms and conditions of the contract; the overall quality of the work performed on the contract; the Offeror’s managerial performance’ and whether or not the reference would enter into a contract with the contractor again. The currency and relevance of the information, source of the information, context of the data, and general trends in contractor’s performance will also be considered.

In the case of an offeror without a record of relevant past performance or for whom information on past performance is not available, the offeror may not be evaluated favorably or unfavorably on past performance. In the event that the prime contractor does not have relevant past performance, surveys submitted for key personnel will be evaluated. In accordance with VA Information Letter (IL) 001AL-10-03, The Government will review available information data in PPIRS. However, the Government reserves the right to obtain past performance information from any available source and may contact customers other than those identified by the offeror when evaluating past performance.

Past performance information will be considered “relevant” when it involves the same kinds of challenges and difficulties that will confront the contractor on this contract.

- II. **Assessment and Certification Approach:** Assessment and Certification Approach will be evaluated on the complete description of the approach (including sample plans and reports) that demonstrates the offeror’s ability to meet or exceed the requirements identified in the Statement of Work and demonstrates an overall understanding of the scope and the requirements. Proposals shall also include a sample schedule for performance of an Assessment and Certification that meets the period of performance requirements and demonstrates the offeror’s ability to meet or exceed the requirements identified in the Statement of Work.
- III. **Veterans Involvement:** In accordance with Veterans Affairs Acquisition Regulation (VAAR) 852.215-70, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) and Veteran-Owned Small Business (VOSB) Evaluation Factors, the Government will assign evaluation credit for an Offeror (prime contractor) which is a SDVOSB or a VOSB. Non-SDVOSB/VOSB Offerors proposing to use SDVOSBs or VOSBs as subcontractors will receive some consideration under this Evaluation Factor.
- IV. **Price:** Award will be made to the contractor that represents the best value to the government. Price will be evaluated on the basis of its reasonableness and acceptability

to the Government. Offerors are advised that if the technical proposals are essentially equal, award will be made on the basis of the lowest price. The price offered will also be used as an aid to determine the contractor's understanding of the requirements of the solicitation, price reasonableness and to assess the validity of the contractor's approach to managing and performing the work. Offerors are cautioned that "materially unbalanced" prices and/or unreasonably high or low prices may cause their proposal to be deemed unacceptable. Prices which are unrealistically low or unreasonably high may be indicative of the Offeror's lack of understanding of the work effort or the ability to perform the contract. Evaluation of options shall not obligate the Government to exercise the option(s).

One Firm-Fixed Price for Task Order 0001 will be used to evaluate price for both the Requirements Contract and Task Order 0001. The proposed Band Prices will not be included in the Total Evaluated Price, but will be used for the purpose of establishing pricing for the duration of the Requirements Contract. A reasonable rate of increase should be applied to the prices indicated on each of the band pricing tables for each Option Year. The rate of increase shall be stated on the band pricing table for each year.

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