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DATE: April 18, 2024

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR ON-CALL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (RAMP ID # 213257)

FROM: Felicia Ansley, Contract Administrator

Pursuant to the Request for Proposals (RFP), all proposers were to submit any questions regarding this RFP by no later than April 18, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. Questions were to be submitted in writing, and all questions and responses were to be posted on [the Department's website](#) and www.rampla.org.

Due to the large volume of questions received about this RFP, and the need to address certain questions that have been repeatedly asked, the Q&A document will be released in **two parts**.

Part two of the Q&A document will be published on or before the date referenced in the RFP, April 30, 2024. Part two will include only the questions received that have not already been answered in part one.

Below is a list of questions received from proposers, and the Department's response **as of April 18, 2024 (PART ONE)**:

1. Q: I haven't been able to find the availability to outreach on RAMP. However, the requirement is to utilize the RAMP process for outreach. Can you help to provide further guidance?

A: The Harbor Department does not require that proposers conduct outreach on the Regional Alliance Marketplace for Procurement (RAMP) in the same way that it is performed for the Business Inclusion Program (BIP) for public works contracts. As part of the BIP process, the RAMP system sends out e-mail notifications to a specified number of Minority Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, etc. Because the Harbor Department's opportunities do not require the BIP, you will not see any links on RAMP to begin that process.

The Harbor Department's Small Business Enterprise (SBE)/Very Small Business Enterprise (VSBE) Program requires that proposers utilize RAMP to *find* certified SBEs and VSBEs. You can use the ["Business Profiles" section of](#)

RAMP to search for certified businesses using various criteria. Communications between businesses are conducted outside of the RAMP system and are not monitored or scored by the Harbor Department.

2. Q: Could you please clarify the mandatory requirement for the Business Enterprise Program to have an SBE and a VSBE small business?

A: As stated in Section 3.5.5A of the RFP, there is a mandatory 25% Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation requirement, which includes a 5% Very Small Business Enterprise (VSBE) participation requirement. This participation requirement is not a “goal”, and both the SBE and VSBE participation requirements must be met or the proposal will be deemed non-responsive.

If the Prime consultant is both a certified “SBE (Proprietary)” and a certified “VSBE (Harbor)” on RAMP, the mandatory 25% SBE and 5% VSBE mandatory participation requirement will be deemed as met.

If the Prime consultant is not a certified SBE or VSBE, the Consultant Description Form submitted with the proposal must indicate that 25% of the project will be awarded to a certified SBE subconsultant (or it can be multiple SBEs, for a total of 25%). The Consultant Description Form must also indicate that 5% of the project will be awarded to a certified VSBE subconsultant.

If a single subconsultant is both a certified “SBE (Proprietary)” and a certified “VSBE (Harbor)” on RAMP, and the Consultant Description Form in the proposal indicates that the subconsultant will receive 25% of the award (in the “Award Total” field), the mandatory 25% SBE and 5% VSBE mandatory participation requirement will be deemed as met.

It is strongly recommended that all prospective proposers review the supplemental document that was posted with the opportunity on RAMP called “Tips for a Successful Proposal Submission”.

3. Q: The spreadsheet has 48 titles, but the RFP [Section 3.5.3, “Personnel and Staffing] says to “Provide complete resumes for only the services listed below, as part of an appendix to the proposal”. Are those 16 the only ones to which we can respond, or can we choose from among the 48?

A: As stated in Section 3.5.2 of the RFP, proposers must complete Attachment 1 and indicate for **each** one of the 48 services listed if it can be provided, and if so, whether it will be provided by the Prime or by a subconsultant. The Excel version of Attachment 1 includes a dropdown menu with “Prime” and “Subconsultant” as options in column C.

In Section 3.5.3, proposers are being asked to provide complete resumes in an appendix for only the 17 (not 16) services listed.

4. Q: Is this a new initiative? If not, please provide the name of the current vendor(s) providing the services.

A: This is not a new initiative. The three incumbents are Birdi and Associates, Sierra Cybernetics Inc., and Satwic Intelligent Solutions.

5. Q: Can you please let us know the previous spending of this contract?

A: The total combined budget, for all contracts from the previous RFP for these services, was \$5,470,000.

6. Q: Are there any pain points or issues with the current vendor(s)?

A: No.

7. Q: Please confirm the anticipated number of awards.

A: One or more consultants may be selected. We cannot determine the number of proposals for this project we will receive, and therefore cannot determine the number of on-call contracts that will be awarded. Similarly, we cannot provide specifics at this time about the most common IT job categories, job descriptions, the number of hours required, start dates, or work locations. This project is for on-call services, and specifics will be issued as needed.

8. Q: For this RFP it seems like this may be asking for named resources on an on-call basis. Does this mean you are requiring the same person to be on-call throughout the term [of] this contract? We are a very successful IT Staffing and Consulting company and can find the right resources for each role where a need arises. But it would be a different person each time most likely. Does this exclude us from bidding on this RFP?

A: We do not require the same resource to be on-call throughout the term of the contract. Any qualified firm may submit a proposal.

9. Q: We are looking for an LBE to sub [for] us. Could you please provide us with a list of LBEs that may be eligible to participate? Additionally, please provide the list of SBEs in the LA area as well.

A: Prospective proposers must use RAMP (www.rampla.org) to search for potential certified subconsultants. The search criteria can be defined by certification, location, NAICS code, company name, etc.

Please refer to Amendment 1, which clarifies that Prime consultants will not receive additional preference points for the utilization of LBE subconsultants.

10. Q: Is this a staffing opportunity or a full IT project for the vendors?

A: Opportunities will vary depending on the needs of the Harbor Department. Specific requirements will be provided when services are needed.

11. Q: Can we bid for some IT positions [and] not all?

A: Yes.

12. Q: Can you share job descriptions and level of experience of IT positions, so we can provide accurate hourly rates?

A: Because this RFP is for on-call as-needed services, the full range of capabilities for each job title may be required, therefore specific requirements will be provided when a service is needed.

13. Q: What is the tentative start of this engagement?

A: The tentative start date will vary depending on the needs of the Harbor Department. Specific requirements will be provided when a service is needed.

14. Q: What is the work location of the proposed candidates?

A: The location will be based on the actual services that will be needed, when they are needed. Refer to Section 2.2 of the RFP, "Project Scope of Work".

15. Q: Are the incumbents eligible to submit [a] proposal again?

A: The incumbent consultants may submit a proposal in response to this RFP.

16. Q: Is subcontracting mandatory? If yes, can we replace a subcontractor after award?

No, subcontracting is not mandatory.

Please note that if an SBE is utilized as a subconsultant in order to meet this requirement, Exhibit B of the RFP states, "The selected Consultant shall not substitute a SBE firm without obtaining prior approval from the City. A request for substitution must be demonstrated based on demonstrated good cause. If substitution is permitted, Consultant shall endeavor to make an in-kind substitution for the substituted SBE."

17. Q: How many positions were used in the previous contract?

A: The number of individuals fluctuates based on the need of the Harbor Department. Currently, the Harbor Department is using the services of eleven (11) resources. However, this should not be used as an expectation of services going forward, because the usage varies depending on the needs of the Harbor Department.

18. Q: If the proposed candidates are not available at the time of award, will [the Harbor Department] allow us to provide replacement personnel with similar or more skill sets?

A: Yes. Please also refer to Question 16.

19. Q: Can we provide hourly rate ranges for the given positions?

A: No. Costs provided for each job title in Attachment 1 must be the maximum hourly rate for your employees and the maximum percentage over cost for your subcontractors.

20. Q: [Do] the services need to be delivered onsite or is there a possibility for remote operations and performance?

A: Most services are expected to be performed onsite. Some services may be performed remotely, which will be determined as the specific need is identified.

21. Q: Do we need to submit the actual resumes for the proposed candidates, or can we submit the sample resumes?

A: A minimum of one actual (not sample) resume for each of the 17 key positions listed in Section 3.5.3 of the RFP is required. Resumes are not required for the remaining positions in Attachment 1.

22. Q: Could you please provide the list of holidays?

A: All City of Los Angeles offices are closed in observance of the following 13 holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, César Chávez Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous People's Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

23. Q: Is there any preference for [a] local vendor?

A: Yes, the Local Business Preference Program is applicable for this opportunity. Prime firms who qualify as a Local Business Enterprise (see Exhibit B) will receive an 8% preference on their proposal score. Please also refer to Amendment 1 of the RFP; there will not be preference points awarded for the utilization of LBE subconsultants.

24. Q: What will be the contract staffing process? The requirement will be sent to all the awardees at the same time, or vendors will be chosen randomly to send the requirement [to]?

A: Please refer to Section 2.2 of the RFP, "Project Scope of Work". After consultants are awarded the contract and resources are needed, a scope of work for services needed will be issued to all of the selected consultants at the same time. Consultants will typically be given two to three weeks to respond to a request. Consultants may submit proposals to fulfill said request. The Information Technology Division will then select from the pool of received proposals based on the requirements of the services needed. Interviews may be conducted.

25. Q: What are the overtime terms and orientation process required for any role?

A: The maximum hourly rate in Attachment 1 must include all costs (including overtime, holidays, shift differential, travel, etc.). The orientation process will be described in detail when services are needed.

26. Q: What is the conversion price for any temporary staff moving to a permanent role?

A: There is no conversion price for temporary staff moving into a permanent role.

27. Q: Please share the type of background check and drug test required.

A: Specific requirements will be provided when a service is needed.

28. Q: What are the invoicing terms and the point of contact for invoicing?

A: It is City of Los Angeles policy to pay vendors (consultants) within 30 days of invoice receipt. Additional details regarding invoicing terms will be provided once a contract is awarded and a Project Directive has been issued.

29. Q: Will there be a kick-off meeting once the contract is awarded?

A: Yes.

30. Q: Are we allowed to reach out to the different points of contact and departments once the contract is awarded?

A: No. Please refer to Section 2.2 of the RFP, “Project Scope of Work”, and Question 24, which describe how engagements will be initiated by the Harbor Department.

31. Q: On page 7 it is stated “Submissions shall not be password protected or saved with restrictions that prevent copying, saving, highlighting, or reprinting the contents. Harbor Department staff will not click on any link to outside file storage sites – such as Google Drive, Dropbox, WeTransfer or ShareFile—in order to download your proposal”. Would you please specify the precise size for this RFP? And what other options should we have for sharing the submission proposal if our proposal exceeds the size limit?

A: There is not a page limit for the proposal submission. However, as a default for all users, a maximum file size of 40 GB can be sent to the Harbor Department’s Outlook e-mail accounts.

The instructions in the RFP state that the proposal should be submitted as one single PDF file (with the exception of Attachment 1, which can be submitted as a separate Excel file, if you wish). If your e-mail size exceeds 40 GB, your proposal can be separated into several PDF documents, and e-mailed separately. The e-mail subject line should have clear labeling, such as “Proposal Submission – 1 of 3”.

32. Q: Could you please provide details on the systems and/or network(s) currently utilized for ACAMS (Access Control and Alarm Monitoring System) and CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television)?

A: These contracts will not be utilized to provide maintenance and support services for the ACAMS and CCTV systems at the Harbor Department.

33. Q: If consulting services are required for these systems specific requirements will be provided when services are needed. Since this is “on call”, it can come any moment. If we get called, what options do we have if we cannot make the day and time needed?

A: Consultants will typically be given two to three weeks to respond to requests. If the consultant is not available during the engagement period of a specific request, they may choose not to respond to that specific request.

34. Q: How does the Port currently execute organizing on-call support for “urgent, unplanned or necessary work”?

A: Requests are based on the needs of required services. However, urgently needed work may be requested within days.

35. Q: Does the Port require the selected vendor to have a bench of available staff?

A: No.

36. Q: What is the average duration of a project directive?

A: The duration of the project directive will vary depending on the needs of the Harbor Department. Specific requirements will be provided when a service is needed.

37. Q: Does a firm need to qualify as a prime or subcontractor in EVERY category listed in Attachment 1; in other words is it all or nothing?

A: No. It is encouraged to have a substantial number of resources either as a Prime or as a subconsultant.

38. Q: Do we create the job descriptions for the LCATS?

A: Job descriptions will be sent to consultants when a scope of work issued for specific services.

39. Q: Do we have to provide resumes for positions mentioned in Attachment 1?

A: Please refer to the instructions in Section 3.5.3, which state, "Provide complete resumes for only the services listed below (emphasis added), as part of an appendix to the proposal."

40. Q: Can we use the same client references for multiple project roles described in Attachment 1?

A: Yes.

41. Q: Can we use commercial experience and references?

A: Yes.

42. Q: What is the process for requesting an extension given the tight turn around from answers to due date?

A: Please refer to Amendment 2 of the RFP. The due date for proposals was extended to May 16, 2024. The 3:00 p.m. deadline remains the same.

43. Q: You have one NTE rate. Should that include after-hours, and can we submit multiple pricing sheets—one for standard hours and one for after-hours?

A: No, do not submit multiple pricing sheets. Rates should be all inclusive maximum rate.

44. Q: Just to be clear, if you are bidding as a Prime and have an SBE as a subcontractor, do you need to provide 3 references from the subcontractor as well? Or will 3 references from just the Prime be okay (some SBE companies may not yet have 3+ strong references)?

A: Please refer to Amendment 3, which revises the language in Section 3.5.2 of the RFP regarding references.

45. Q: Do you require your vendor to be [an] approved SBE? If so, we are [an] SBE - Proprietary with LA Metro. Does that meet the requirement for this RFP?

A: Please refer to Question 2. Primes who are not certified SBEs on RAMP must use subconsultants to meet the mandatory participation requirement. Proposers are responsible for checking their RAMP profiles to ensure that their SBE (Proprietary) and VSBE (Harbor) certifications are reflected as "Verified" before the proposal due date. Refer to the "Certifications on RAMP" user manual in the [Support section](#) of the RAMP website.

46. Q: We are not a small business firm; can we still go ahead and submit the response?

A: Any qualified firm may submit a proposal.

47. Q: There is a requirement for the following resources: Maritime tech. consultant, Police tech. consultant, and Police security consultant . We might not be able to fulfill these 3 requirements. Can we still go ahead and submit?

A: Yes.

48. Q: If a proposed staff member qualifies for multiple categories in Attachment 1, can their resume be listed for each applicable category?

A: Yes.

49. Q: What exactly do you require us to provide within the % over cost for subcontractors within the Attachment 1?

A: Proposers need to determine what their percentage over cost is for subcontractors and enter that number for each job category marked. For example, if you determine a two percent markup, then enter the number "2" in the applicable job category field (box).

50. Q: For the rate card can we submit two rate cards one for onshore and one for offshore?

A: No. Maximum rates are to be provided in Attachment 1, inclusive of all costs.

51. Q: How many contracts does the port have currently?

A: Three.

52. Q: For "Maximum Hourly Rate (For Employees)" within Attachment 1, would that be the pay rates or the bill rates?

A: Bill Rate.

53. Q: Systems Analyst - Does the port currently use any specific technologies? Or [is] the port looking for a specific technology to be used (e.g., Salesforce, Oracle, SAP)?

A: Because the RFP is for on-call services, the full range of capabilities within each job title will be provided when a service is needed.

54. Q: Should Attachment 1 be included in both Section 2 and Section 4? Do subconsultants performing \$100,000+ of work need to fill out CEC Form 50? Consultant Description Form asks for "Award Total", but the contract value is not given in the RFP. What should be put on this line?

A: Attachment 1 should be completed and only submitted once in the proposal.

Subconsultants must not complete CEC Form 50 or any of the administrative forms in the RFP. Administrative forms must only be completed by the Prime.

Since the award totals are unknown for on-call contracts, leave the “Award Total” field blank for the section being completed for the Prime contractor. However, if subconsultants are being used to meet the mandatory SBE and VSBE participation requirement, the Consultant Description Form must indicate a **percentage** of the subcontract award for each subconsultant, in that “Award Total” field. The percentage amount reflected on the Consultant Description Form will be reviewed by the Harbor Department to determine whether or not the 25% SBE and 5% VSBE participation requirement has been met.

55. Q: Does a prime bidder need to be SBE in CA, or do you accept other states MBE/SBE certifications?

A: The Prime does not have to be an SBE. Please refer to Question 2, and the “Roadmap for Applicants” section of Exhibit C. The Roadmap has a listing of certifications from other agencies that are accepted by the City of Los Angeles.

Proposers are also encouraged to visit the [City’s Bureau of Contract Administration’s Office of Contract Compliance website](#), which has an inter-agency certification recognition chart, certification application website links, and contact information for certification questions.

56. Q: Are other state registered MBE/WBE allowed to be Prime Bidders?

A: Yes, but proposers must ensure that the mandatory **SBE** and **VSBE** participation requirements are met, or the proposal will be deemed non-responsive. Minority Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise certifications are not equivalent to SBE or VSBE certifications and are not accepted in lieu.

57. Q: Can a single person satisfy for resumes for multiple positions?

A: Yes.

58. Q: Are copies of Key Personnel licenses and certifications required for the proposal, or will license and certification numbers provided on resumes suffice?

A: License and certification number provided on resumes are acceptable. Copies do not need to be provided.

59. Q: Does the Port have any visa constraints for resources submitted? Is a resource on H1B acceptable?

A: Onshore resources must be permitted to work within the USA.

60. Q: Can the Port define what is included under “all Other Business Enterprises” (OBE)? Is DBE acceptable for the SBE requirement under this RFP?

A: Please refer to the Affidavit of Company Status form in Exhibit B of the RFP, which defines what an OBE is.

Through inter-agency certification, a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise may qualify for recognition as a SBE (Proprietary) on RAMP. However, you must request to add the SBE (Proprietary) certification to your RAMP profile if it is

not currently reflected. **Firms will not receive credit for SBE (or VSBE) participation if the certification is not reflected on their company's RAMP profile at the time the proposal is due.** Refer to the "Certifications on RAMP" user manual in the [Support section](#) of the RAMP website.

61. Q: Will the expectation be that all work is to be done in regular hours for the Port?

A: Specific requirements will be provided when a service is needed.

62. Q: On the cost proposal excel file, can we list a range for max rate?

A: No. Please list your maximum hourly rate.

63. Q: Will part of the evaluation criteria be awarded to lowest bidders?

A: Please refer to Exhibit F, which is the RFP "Selection Evaluation Form". One of the weighted evaluation criteria is "Cost and Budget Control"; cost is one of the factors that is taken into consideration, but it will not be the sole determining factor for award.

64. Q: Do we have to provide 24x7 support?

A: It depends on the requirements of the needed services.

65. Q: When the current contract awardees are provided in the Q&A, can the Port also include the Sub-Primes?

A: The current subconsultant for Satwic Intelligent Solutions is 3S Global Business Solutions, Inc. Sierra Cybernetics Inc., and Birdi Systems Inc. do not utilize subconsultants.

66. Q: Can key resources be substituted after award in the event that the key resources proposed are not available?

A: Please refer to Question 18.

67. Q: We are verified as DBE, WBE and MBE on our RAMP profile. We plan to add an SBE/VSBE subcontractor for performance of this contract. Are we eligible to submit [a] proposal?

A: Any qualified firms may submit a proposal. Through inter-agency recognition, as a DBE your firm may qualify to receive recognition as a SBE (Proprietary) on RAMP. Please also refer to Question 60.

68. Q: Can you provide an example of a few projects that have been completed as a part of the existing on-call?

A: Resources provided through these on-call contracts are used for staff augmentation, project management, and administrative/ technical support.

69. Q: If I heard correctly, you want 3 references for 17 positions. That is 51 references in total. Do we have to provide only 3 overall references to show firm's experience?

A: Please refer to Amendment 3 of the RFP.

70. Q: If we are [a] SBE registered in Texas do we still have to go with SBE?

A: Please refer to Question 55. Firms must be certified on RAMP as a verified “SBE (Proprietary)” in order to receive credit towards the SBE participation requirement. Please also refer to Question 2.

71. Q: Will SBE certification from another local city be acceptable?

A: Please refer to Question 55.

72. Q: Please confirm what you stated earlier [during the pre-proposal meeting] regarding the (3) incumbent firms being awarded contracts in the amount of \$1,500,000 covering the 3-year period, and that only (1) firm received an amendment increasing their contract amount by \$1,000,000.

A: Correct.

73. Q: Can we e-mail the filled Administrative documents to you before the deadline? Can you verify in response to the email that forms are correctly filled?

A: Yes. As a courtesy, the Contract Administrator can review your draft administrative documents, but that request must be made well in advance (at least 1-2 weeks before the proposal’s due date). The subject line of the e-mail should say “Request for Admin Review”. The proposer will be advised of any default in their documents that must be corrected in order for them to be found responsive.

Do not submit your entire proposal; only the administrative documents can receive a courtesy review (Affidavit of Company Status, Consultant Description Form, insurance verification letter, CEC forms 50 and 55, Iran Contracting Act form, and the Standard Contract Provisions/ED 35 acceptance letter).

Due to the large number of proposals expected, proposers should not rely on being able to receive a courtesy review. It is the responsibility of all proposers to carefully review documents posted on RAMP (including the RFP, amendments, the “Tips for a Successful Proposal Submission”, and the Q&As) to ensure their proposals are complete and responsive.

74. Q: As an LBE, SBE, VSBE seeking to subcontract on this project, can you confirm that we will only be able to fulfill the SBE and VSBE requirements?

A: Correct. As stated in Amendment 1 of the RFP, because this is an on-call opportunity, Primes will not receive any preference points for the utilization of subconsultants who are Local Business Enterprises.

75. Q: Given written answers to the many critical technical questions are scheduled to be posted April 30 with an RFP due date of May 9. To maximize participation, strongly recommend extending the due date by at least 14 days.

A: The deadline to submit proposals was extended to May 16, 2024. Please refer to Amendment 2.

76. Q: If the prime contractor doesn't have any SBE certification, what should we put in the 'Business RAMP ID#:' field on the Consultant Description Form?

A: The Business RAMP ID number requested on the Consultant Description Form is unrelated to SBE certification.

Primes (and subconsultants, if listed) should put the number of their RAMP company profile into that field. **Do not put the RAMP ID number of this contracting opportunity, 213257, in any field requesting the Business RAMP ID number.** The Business RAMP ID number will be used by the Contract Administrator to verify if the company is a certified SBE and/or VSBE on RAMP.

77. Q: Where and how should we acknowledge the 'Letter of Acceptance' for the Standard Contract Provisions and Executive Directive 35?

A: The letter of acceptance must be submitted with your proposal. Refer to the instructions in Section 3.5.5E, which state what the contents of the letter should be.

78. Q: Please confirm if the nature of the contract will be a traditional staff augmentation model, a project outcome-based model, or a combination of the two.

A: A combination of the two, and other services may also be required. Please refer to Question 68.

79. Q: Which are the most common IT categories the vendor can anticipate the [requirements for] this year?

A: Because this is for on-call services, job categories vary based on services requested.

80. Q: Under the section "Find Opportunity Forms" on portal there is a form named as "Bid Bond". Please confirm if we need to submit it with our proposal.

A: Proposers should **only** submit documents that are requested in the RFP. Any documents submitted in the proposal that were not specifically requested in the RFP will be disregarded. Refer to Section 3.6 of the RFP, "Checklist for RFP Submittal Requirements".