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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES # 1
RFP NO. 001B0600234
Department of General Services
Audit Services for Maryland State Agencies
February 27, 2020

Ladies/Gentlemen:

This List of Questions and Responses #1, questions #1 through #13, is being issued to clarify certain information contained in the above named RFP.

In most instances, the submitted questions and the Department of General Services' ("Department") responses merely serve to clarify the existing requirements of the RFP. Sometimes, however, in submitting questions, potential Offerors may make statements or express interpretations of contract requirements that may be inconsistent with the Department's intent. To the extent that the Department recognizes such an incorrect interpretation, the provided answer will note that the interpretation is erroneous and either state that the question is moot once the correct interpretation is explained or provide the answer based upon the correct interpretation.

No provided answer to a question may in and of itself change any requirement of the RFP. If it is determined that any portion of the RFP should be changed based upon a submitted question, the actual change may only be implemented via a formal amendment to the RFP. In this situation, the answer provided will reference the amendment containing the RFP change.

1) Do we need to identify/commit to specific Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)/Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprises (VSBEs) for the master contract? Since the task order scopes of work may vary greatly and the subcontractors utilized will depend on the nature of the audit work being procured, we would like to commit to the use of MBEs/VSBEs, but provide specific details in the TORFPs.
(5.3.2.M, Subcontractors)

Response

By Amendment #2 issued concurrently with this document, Section 5.3.2 is amended to clarify this section and answer this question.

2) In Section 5.4 (Volume II- Financial Proposal), it is stated that "Offerors shall provide prices for Contract years one through five for all nine (9) labor Categories." Are the Offerors also to provide rates for the five years of the one renewal option?



Response

By Amendment #2 issued concurrently with this document, Section 5.4 is amended to clarify this section and answer this question. In addition, as stated in Section 5.4, “The Offeror shall complete the Financial Proposal Form only as provided in the Financial Proposal Instructions and the Financial Proposal Form itself.” The Financial Proposal Instructions & Forum (Attachment B-1) states “**If option years are included, Offerors must submit pricing for each option year. When completing the Financial Proposal Form, Offerors must complete and provide rates for the five option years.**”

3) How are labor rates evaluated? For example, if an Offeror’s technical evaluation is adequate, but their rates are significantly higher than others, would that result in not being awarded the master contract?
(6.4, Financial Proposal Evaluation Criteria)

Response

Labor Category Rates are not evaluated at the Master Contract level. Master Contractors provide maximum Labor Category Rates at the Master Contract level and cannot exceed them at the secondary competition level.

4) Can you please provide a link to MBE Form D-1 Master and VSBE Form E-1 Master?
(7, RFP Attachments and Appendix)

Response

Copies of the MBE Form D-1 Master and VSBE Form E-1 Master forms are provided in the RFP as Attachments D and E.

5) Section 5.3.2 F. of the RFP asks the Offerors to respond to the RFP requirements and to provide a Proposed Work Plan. Specifically, section 5.3.2.F.1 asks the Offerors to address each RFP requirement in its technical proposal, including how its proposed goods and services will meet or exceed the requirement(s). How do we provide a Proposed Work Plan including such a description when there are no specific audits (or tasks) required at the master contract level?

Response

The Offeror must at least acknowledge each RFP requirement in its technical proposal. While there are no tasks to respond to at this point, the Offeror should provide an explanation of how it will comply with, for example, the Meeting, Reports, and Invoices requirements in Section 2.5 of the RFP and should provide a general description of capabilities as described in section 5.3.2.F.2.

6) Regarding page 48 of the RFP, Section 5.3.2 K, Financial Capabilities, CPA firms do not have audited financial statements.

Response

Section 5.3.2 K, requires that the Offeror include a commonly accepted method to prove its financial capability. **If available**, the Offeror shall include Financial Statements, audited or not. The requirement is for the Offeror to submit what it believes shows its financial capability. If the State needs more information, it will ask as part of the cure process.

7) What is the Cure process? Is it in the RFP?

Response

The Cure process, which occurs during the evaluation of proposals, is an internal State procedure and is not described in the RFP.

8) If we include exceptions in our proposal, will we be eliminated if the State disagrees with them?

Response

All exceptions requested will be reviewed by the procurement officer and a determination will be made whether to accept them or not. If an exception is not accepted, the Offeror will be given the opportunity to remove it before being found not susceptible for award. Exceptions will be addressed as part of the Cure process. Please note that exceptions to terms and conditions, including requirements, may result in having the Proposal deemed unacceptable or classified as not reasonable susceptible of being selected for award.

9) Can I take exception to the Indemnity clause (Section 10 of Attachment M- Contract)?

Response

As stated in Section 5.3.2.D, the Offeror shall identify any exceptions taken to the requirements of the RFP, the Contract (Attachment M), or any other exhibits or attachments. The Indemnity clause is part of Attachment M. The acceptance or rejection of exceptions is within the sole discretion of the State. Any exceptions noted in an Offeror's technical proposal will be addressed as explained in the answer to question #8.

10) If I have concerns regarding RFP or contract requirements, should I submit them as questions before proposals are due or as exceptions with my proposal?

Response

Each Offeror should make this determination.. The State suggests , especially if something may result in an Offeror being deemed not susceptible for award, that you submit it as a question before submitting as an exception.

11) Section 2.7 of the RFP requires each master contractor to assign a Master Contractor's Representative (MCR). Can a master contractor have more than one MCR?

Response

The State requires that each Master Contractor designate one person as their representative for the Master Contract with authority to act on behalf of the Master Contractor. However, Master Contractors can provide additional contact people who will receive correspondence from the State.

12) You said that the State will eventually conduct the secondary competition through eMMA. When will this happen?

Response

Since the State is still implementing eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA), we do not know when the secondary competition functionality will be available. All Master Contractors will be updated through their MCRs of the progress toward this and when it will go into effect.

13) Can we take exception to Section 5.1 of the Contract (Attachment M)? Audit work papers are considered the firm's property, which is required by audit standards.

Response

By Amendment #2 issued concurrently with this document, Section 5.1 is amended to clarify this section and answer this question.