Preparing Successful Bids, and Cost/Price Proposals

Joe Beaulieu
joe.beaulieu@innovate.gatech.edu
www.gtpac.org

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Pre-Solicitation Process

Post-Solicitation Process

*** YOUR BID ***
GTPAC’S 7 STEP PROCESS

- Registration
- Develop a marketing strategy
- Know the “right people”
- Consult a reference library
- Search for opportunities
- Bid
- Perform
7 OBJECTIVES

- Finding opportunities
- Decoding the Solicitation
- Determine Your Potential
- The Technical Proposal
- The Cost Proposal
- Putting it all together
- Unsolicited proposals
OBJECTIVES – Finding opportunities

- **FEDBIZOPS** (www.fbo.gov)
- **SBIR** (www.sbir.gov)
- **Grants.gov** (www.grants.gov)
- **DIBBS** (https://www.dibbs.bsm.dla.mil)
- **Georgia’s Team Market Place** (http://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/PRSapp/PR_index.jsp)
- **Other Local Govt Websites** (www.google.com)
Search more than **29,000** active federal opportunities.

Posted Date: Last 90 Days

Set-Aside Code: Any

Place of Performance: Any State or Territory

Type: Any

Keyword / Solicitation #: Agency:

Search

Additional criteria and multiple selections are available on the advanced search form. *Notices posted within the last 90 days.*

**ATTENTION:** Agency users are responsible for properly uploading controlled, unclassified materials to FBO using the access control procedures for document packages and attachments detailed in the [FBO Buyers Guide](#). Do not upload ANY classified materials to FBO.
### Opportunities

#### Charter Vessel Services for Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Surveys for the Northeast Fisheries Science Center

**EA133F-12-RP-0083**  
F – Natural resources & conservation services

**Agency/Office/Location**  
Department of Commerce  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
Eastern Region Acquisition Division

**Type / Set-aside**  
Solicitation / Total Small Business  
**Posted On**  
May 08, 2012

#### Coloring Books and Material for the USCG Sea Partners Campaign

**HSCGG8-12-Q-MMN103**  
76 – Books, maps & other publications

**Agency/Office/Location**  
Department of Homeland Security  
United States Coast Guard (USCG)  
Commander, USCG Telecommunication & Information Systems Command

**Type / Set-aside**  
Special Notice (Modified) / Total Small Business  
**Posted On**  
May 08, 2012
Must be registered in FedBizOpps
OBJECTIVES

- Finding opportunities
- **Assemble & Decode the Solicitation**
TYPES OF SOL (4)

- **Pre-solicitation**
  - Track, add to watch list

- **Combined Synopsis-Solicitation**

- **Solicitations**
  - Request for Proposal (RFP)
  - Invitation to Bid (IFB)
  - Request for Quote (RFQ)

- **Sources Sought (market survey)**
  - Respond with a capability statement
  - [http://gtpac.org/2010/05/what-is-a-capabilities-statement-and-why-should-i-have-one/](http://gtpac.org/2010/05/what-is-a-capabilities-statement-and-why-should-i-have-one/)
Send your GTPAC counselor an e-mail for a copy of this template.
8 VARIETIES OF CONTRACTS

- Fixed Price
  - Firm Fixed Price (FFP)
  - Fixed Price w/Economic Price Adjustment (FPEPA)
  - Fixed Price w/Award Fee (FPAF)

- Cost Reimbursement
  - Cost Plus Incentive Fee (CPIF)
  - Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF)

- Time & Material (T & M)
- Labor Hour (LH)
- Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ)
Federal model often mimicked by other levels of government

Part I - The Schedule (Sections A - H)

Part II - Contract Clauses (Section I)

Part III - Attachments/Exhibits (Section J)

Part IV – Representations, Selection Criteria, and Instructions (Sections K - M)

FAR Part 15.204
Part I—The Schedule

- Section A--Solicitation/Contract Form
- Section B--Supplies/Prices
- Section C--Descriptions/Specs/SOW
- Section D--Packaging/Marking
- Section E--Inspection & Acceptance
- Section F--Deliveries or Performance
- Section G--Contract Admin. Data
- Section H--Special Contract Provisions
Part II--Contract Clauses
  + Section I--Contract Clauses
Part III--Attachments/Exhibits
  + Section J--List of Attachments
Part IV--Representations & Instructions
  + Section K--Representations & Certifications
  + Section L--Instructions/Notices
  + Section M--Evaluation Criteria
Consult: FAR Part 15.204 - Contract Format
OBJECTIVES

- Finding opportunities
- Decoding the Solicitation
- *Determine Your Potential*
Grade yourself against the Criteria

- Work performed of similar size and scope
- References
- Evidence of financial capacity
- Resumes of principals
- Qualifications of team member
- Vendor registration
- Certifications and pre-approvals
For a copy of this Go/No-Go template, send your GTPAC counselor an e-mail
Assign responsibilities / Update schedule

**Blue Team**

- Make sure everyone knows their role, who’s in charge, and what the deadlines are
- Update proposal development schedule daily
- Establish back-up plans
- Don’t forget to allow time for delivery
- Make a GANTT Chart
## Proposal Preparation - SOL # A-07-12345

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<th>End Date</th>
<th>TASK</th>
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<td>11/5/07</td>
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<td>11/30/07</td>
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OBJECTIVES

- Finding opportunities
- Decoding the Solicitation
- Determine Your Potential
- *The Technical Proposal*
Follow Instructions “to the letter”
Complete & Submit

- Attention to detail is paramount
- Look for proposal-writing instructions in the RFP (section L in federal RFPs)
- Your proposal now will be viewed as your work later
- If you are asked to answer 10 questions, answer 10: not 9 - nor 11
- You cannot be late!
Abide by communication rules

- Early in solicitation process, two-way communication is common
- After Q&A period, communication with officials may be curtailed, even prohibited
- Post-proposal submittal, communication may be limited
- Familiarize yourself with exact rules
Theme Development

- Backbone of your proposal
  - Your Strength
  - What separates you from the pack
  - How you will provide more “bang for their buck”
  - Prove that all indicators “point” to you
- Why should the government buy from you?
  - Value
  - Quality
  - Experience
  - Advanced methods
- Consistent in Technical and Cost proposals
- Must answer – What is special about you?
Keys to Proposal Success

- The purpose of a proposal is to sell &
  - Introduce yourself (company) in writing
  - Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge your customer
  - and his/her problems and requirements
  - Present a solution
  - Highlight your company and credentials

- more ...
Keys to Proposal Success

- Winning proposals...
- Convinces the evaluators that you understand requirements
- Convinces the evaluators that you can solve their problem(s)
- Convinces the evaluators that you can provide value
- Convinces the evaluators that you can do the job (facts, figures, references, insights, and resumes)

more ...
Keys to Proposal Success

- Winning proposals distinguish themselves from the competition
  - Convince the evaluators that you are better
  - Convince the evaluators that your solution is clearly superior due to price, risk, technical merit, value added
  - Convince the evaluators that your firm will cause the least amount of problems
Pleasing proposal readers

- Highlight important ideas
- Make certain those ideas stand out
- Back up ideas with facts/evidence
- Help make evaluators’ job easier
- Make it easy for the evaluator to find specific answers in your proposal
Elements of Successful Proposals

- Executive summary
- Responsiveness/compliance matrix
- Indexes
- Bullets
- Transmittal letter
- Table of contents
- Graphics
- Headers and footers
The Executive Summary

- Executive Summary should be written by the “Proposal Manager”
- Style and language must be convincing
- Write Exec Summary *first*
  - Influences train of thought
  - Guides rest of proposal
  - Difficult if done last
  - Adjust as necessary as you write other parts
  - May use some graphics
  - Limit to one/two pages

“...you had me at hello...”
Why Proposals Lose Points

- Failure to follow instructions
- Questionable understanding of requirements
- Incomplete responses—no specifics
- Noncompliance with specification
- Insufficient resources or insufficient information about resources
- Technical/price imbalance
- Poor proposal organization – not logical
- Wordiness
Why Proposals Lose Points

- Failure to show relevance of past performance
- Unsubstantiated rationale for approaches
- Restating requirements without explaining how they will be performed
- Unprofessional appearance, typos, unnumbered pages, smudges, poor grammar, white out, etc.
The Technical Proposal

✖ May be required to address
  + management past performance
  + personnel
  + technical
  + safety
  + facilities
  + past performance
  + quality assurance
  + environmental concerns
  + security

✖ Look for guidance in SOW, proposal prep instructions, and evaluation criteria
OBJECTIVES

- Finding opportunities
- Decoding the Solicitation
- Determine Your Potential
- The Technical Proposal
- The Cost Proposal
The Cost Proposal

- Make best offer first time
- BAFO request may come into play, but don’t count on it
- Double-check numbers
- Make it easy to read
- Separate task developing cost proposals
  - Not in business to lose money
  - Recover costs & ROI
  - Need good indirect rates
3 types of costs

**Allow-able**
- Allowable costs are defined in the FAR as costs that are reasonable and chargeable to the contract.
  - *(See FAR 31.201–2)*

**Alloc-able**
A cost can be allocated to a government contract if it:
- (a) is incurred specifically for the contract;
- (b) benefits both the contract and other work, and can be distributed to them in reasonable proportion to the benefits received;
- (c) is necessary to the overall operation of the business, although a direct relationship to any particular cost objective cannot be shown.

**Reason-able**
- A fair and reasonable price is the price point for a good or service that is fair to both parties involved in the transaction.
- This amount is based upon the agreed-upon conditions, promised quality and timeliness of contract performance.
- In government contracting, a fair and reasonable price is subject to both statutory and regulatory limitations.
EXCELLENT RESOURCES

+ FAR Part 31 - Contract Cost Principles and Procedures

+ https://www.acquisition.gov/far/
Direct Materials

Direct Labor

Overheads

Total Production Cost

Plus

General and Administrative Expenses

Equals

Contract Price

Total Cost of your Production/Service

Plus

Minus

Profit

40
More References

- Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)
  - Subpart 15.4 – Contract Pricing
  - Table 15-2
  - Part 31 – Contract Cost Principles & Procedures
- Cost and Accounting Standards (CAS) from CFR
- DCAA Contract Audit Manual (CAM)
  - Information for Contractors
  - NASA cost estimating handbook
  - SBA pricing your products or services guide
1. PURPOSE. This manual supersedes DCAA Pamphlet 7641.90, *Information for Contractors*, dated January 2005. The manual is designed to assist contractors in understanding applicable requirements and to help ease the contract audit process. It describes what contractors should expect when doing business with the U.S. Government and interacting with DCAA auditors.
OBJECTIVES

- Finding opportunities
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- Determine Your Potential
- The Technical Proposal
- The Cost Proposal
- Putting it all together
- Blue Team - Red Team
- Submission
  - You cannot be late!
Assign responsibilities / Update schedule

Blue Team

- Make sure everyone knows their role, who’s in charge, and what the deadlines are
- Update proposal development schedule daily
- Establish back-up plans
- Don’t forget to allow time for delivery
- Make a GANTT Chart
- Writes the proposal or bid
YOUR **RED TEAM** SUPPORT

- GTPAC can be your **red** team
- Schedule as far in advance as possible
- Send the **RED TEAM**…
  - Copy of the Govt’s solicitation
    - Marked up with your all questions
    - Reference by a website or a URL is OK
  - Your first draft/best effort at a bid
    - Digital documents via e-mail attachments
    - Your best effort is mandatory
    - **RED TEAM** cannot “write” your bid for you
- Incorporate **red line** comments & suggestions
ALWAYS be on-time
ALWAYS be responsive
ALWAYS be responsible
ALWAYS pay attention to the details
CONGRATULATIONS.
YOU JUST WON THE CONTRACT.
NOW WHAT?
“IT’S SHOWTIME & YOU GOTTA PERFORM”
Contract Administration (Roles)

- At a minimum, your company must....
  - Read the contract, and read it again and again and again...
  - Go over the contract with the customer
  - Understand all the key clauses, especially change clauses, the termination process, and the payment clauses
  - Attend all meetings
  - Produce the deliverables IAW the contract
  - Submit invoices
  - Resolve issues

- At a minimum, the govt must....
  - Measure your progress against the project plan.
  - Conduct inspections and audits of your work.
  - Evaluate your compliance of legal & contractual requirements
  - Process your invoice submittals
This is what GTPAC’s bid “war room” looked like during our last bid & proposal process
Thanks for your attention...
Good Hunting...
Press on...

Questions?