US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

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Evaluation documentation must clearly summarize and justify evaluation results. Ensure that the documentation can lead to a logical best value decision. Including a cost/price factor is a requirement of FAR 15.304. If using a trade-off process, describe the evaluation factors and their relationship to the goals of the procurement.

Section 1: Evaluation Methodology

Methods used to evaluate proposals will be Adjectival Rating System, Performance Confidence Assessment and Quote/Proposal Metrics.

Section 2: Evaluation Factors

The three factors being used in this evaluation are Technical Factors, Past Performance, and Cost. These are all of equal importance.

1.1 Factor 1 Technical Factors

Technical Evaluation Factors:

a. Management
b. Qualifications, Certifications, Capabilities
c. Recruiting and Staffing

Evaluation Criteria/Methodology:
The need for adequate, qualified staffing to serve all 24 centers across the Continental United States, is just as important as the other factors. The reviewing panel will use the adjectival rating system listed below.

1.2 Factor 2: Past Performance

1.2.1 Past Performance

Submission Requirements:
Past entries from CPARS will be used for this factor.

Evaluation Criteria/Methodology:
Evaluation factors will include timeliness of providing services and timeliness of requested reports. The reviewing panel will use the Performance Confidence Assessment method listed below.

1.3 Factor 3: Cost/Price

1.3.1 Contract Cost/Price

Submission Requirements:
Proposal will include price list for each position listed in the PWS. This should include all overhead, fringe benefits, G&A, and profit breakdown and showing the fully burdened hourly rate.

Evaluation Criteria/Methodology:
The reviewing panel will use the Quote/Proposal Metrics listed below.

Section 3: Definitions

2.1 Go/No Go Ratings

The term “Pass/Fail” will not be utilized in any rating; instead “Go/No Go” will be utilized. When Go/No Go ratings are utilized the following sentence shall appear in the request “Specifically, for a vendor to be considered for an award, the proposed solution must meet the minimum technical criteria listed.”

2.2 Adjectival Ratings

Adjectival Rating	Definition
Exceptional	Quote/Offer contains no deficiencies and fully addresses all aspects of the criteria and demonstrates an excellent approach/solution and understanding of the requirements. Many strengths exist, far outweighing any weaknesses. The highest quality of contract performance is anticipated with very low risk.
Very Good	Quote/Offer contains no deficiencies; fully addresses all aspects of the criteria and demonstrates a very effective approach/solution and understanding of the requirements. Some weaknesses may exist; however, the weaknesses, if any, are outweighed by strengths. A high quality of contract performance is anticipated with low risk.
Satisfactory	Quote/Offer contains no deficiencies; addresses all aspects of the criteria and demonstrates an adequate approach/solution and understanding of the requirements. Strengths and weaknesses are offsetting or will have little or no impact on contract performance. A quality contract performance is anticipated with an acceptable amount of risk.
Marginal	Quote/Offer may contain deficiencies; fails to address all of the criteria and does not demonstrate an adequate approach/solution or understanding of the requirements. One or more weaknesses exist which are not offset by strengths. Contract performance is anticipated with high risk.
Unsatisfactory	Quote/Offer contains many deficiencies and does not address all aspects of the criteria and/or does not present evidence demonstrating an adequate approach/solution and understanding of the requirements. Many weaknesses and/or omissions exist creating an unacceptable risk.

2.3 Technical Confidence Rating

Confidence Rating	Definition
High Confidence (Low Risk)	The Government has ***high confidence*** the vendor understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performing the contract with ***little or no*** Government intervention.
Some Confidence (Moderate Risk)	The Government has ***some confidence*** the vendor understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performing the contract with ***some*** Government intervention.
Low Confidence (High Risk)	The Government has ***low confidence*** the vendor understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, or will be successful in performing the contract ***even with*** Government intervention.

2.4 Past Performance Confidence

Rating	Description
Relevant	Past/present performance effort involved much of the similarity, magnitude of effort and complexities this solicitation requires.
Somewhat Relevant	Past/present performance effort involved some of the similarity, magnitude of effort and complexities this solicitation requires.
Not Relevant	Past/present performance effort did not involve any of the similarity, magnitude of effort and complexities this solicitation required.

2.5 Performance Confidence Assessment

Rating	Description
Substantial Confidence	Based on the offeror's performance record, the government has a high expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
Satisfactory Confidence	Based on the offeror's performance record, the government has an expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
Limited Confidence	Based on the offeror's performance record, the government has a low expectation that the offeror will successfully perform the required effort.
No Confidence	Based on the offeror's performance record, the government has no expectation that the offeror will be able to successfully perform the required effort.
Unknown Confidence	No performance record is identifiable, or the offeror's performance record is so sparse that no confidence assessment rating can be reasonably assigned.

2.6 Quote/Proposal Metrics

When identifying the merits of a quote/proposal the following three terms shall be utilized along with the definitions.

Narrative Element	Definition
Strength	A significant, outstanding, or exceptionally positive aspect of a Quote/Offer.
Weakness	Any aspect of a Quote/Offer increasing the potential for problems and issues with regard to contract performance. The Quote/Offer provides a minimally acceptable response to the Government's requirements. The response leaves the evaluator with uncertainty as to the understanding of the work, capability to successfully perform the work, or capability to effectively manage the work effort.
Deficiency	A material failure of a Quote/Offer to meet a Government requirement or a combination of significant weaknesses in a Quote/Offer increasing the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level.