



Business Development Consultant to Support DSEI Germany Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Title	Business Development Consultant to Support DSEI Germany
Issuing Agency	Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)
Division/Program	International Affairs and Trade
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RFP Overview

The Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), International Affairs and Trade is seeking proposals from qualified organizations to provide services related to provide business-to-business matchmaking and market entry support for up to six California exporters participating in the California delegation to DSEI Germany 2027, referred to as “the event” in the following RFP. These California companies manufacture products or provide services that align with the categories of the event.

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a contractor with the expertise, capacity, and experience necessary to successfully deliver the services outlined in this solicitation.

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment by GO-Biz to award a contract.

Key Dates

Milestone	Date
RFP Release	Wednesday, August 12, 2026
Deadline for Written Questions	Friday, August 28, 2026, 8:00 AM PST
Questions and Answers Posted	Friday, September 4, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	Friday, September 18, 2026, 8:00 AM PST
Tentative Award Notice (posted to Cal eProcure)	Friday, October 2, 2026
Contract Start Date	October 16, 2026 – March 26, 2027

Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing via email with the subject line **“Business Development Consultant to Support DSEI Germany: Questions - [Applicant Name]”** to the Point of Contact listed on the cover page.

Questions must be received by the deadline identified in the Key Dates section.

Responses to questions will be compiled and posted publicly via Cal eProcure.

Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically via email with the subject line **“Business Development Consultant to Support DSEI Germany: Proposal Submission - [Applicant**

Name]” to the Point of Contact listed on the cover page. No mailed/hard copy submittals will be accepted.

Proposals must be received by the deadline stated in the Key Dates section. Late submissions will not be accepted.

If files exceed email limits, proposers may provide a secure file-sharing link, provided that all documents are accessible by the deadline.

Respondents are solely responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of their proposal by the stated deadline.

It is recommended that applicants submit your proposal at least two business days in advance of the final deadline to receive confirmation of receipt and avoid potential delays due to technical difficulties.

Background

GO-Biz is seeking a consulting company to provide business-to-business matchmaking and market entry support for up to six California exporters participating in the California delegation to DSEI Germany 2027, referred to as “the event” in the following RFP. These California companies manufacture products or provide services that align with the categories of the event.

Scope of Work

The selected contractor will perform the services described below.

The consulting company will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Pre-Event Preparation:

- **Marketing Webinar:** Hosting a marketing webinar on the European defense sector, with specific focus on Germany
- **Market Fit Evaluations:** Conduct market fit calls with potential delegates to ensure selected companies are well suited for the event
- **Intake Calls:** Conduct intake calls with each participating California company to understand their products/services, target markets, and objectives for the event.
- **Market Analysis:** Provide a high-level market analysis of the European Union's defense sector, customized for each participating company to reflect its specific defense subsector.

- **Business to Business Matchmaking**
 - Identify potential customers and partners for each company based on their offerings and market analysis.
 - Evaluate potential customers and partners with each company to prioritize targets.
 - Schedule at least four meetings with potential buyers and partners. Meetings should be scheduled at the event, however, virtual and in-market (outside the event) meetings may be scheduled with California company approval.
 - Collect relevant feedback on the California companies from potential buyers and partners during matchmaking outreach and share it with the California companies.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Identify relevant networking opportunities surrounding the event for the delegation.
- **Know Before You Go Webinar:** Co-host, with GO-Biz, a "Know Before You Go" call for all delegates to provide essential information about the event, regional market insights, and logistical details.
- **Logistics:** Provide a draft meeting schedule for each company at least one week before the event to the relevant company and GO-Biz.

2. During Event:

- **Logistics:** Provide a printed meeting schedule to each participating company the morning of the first day of the event.
- **Matchmaking Support:** Provide on-site support during the event, including managing schedules and facilitating meetings.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Identify additional networking events and activities surrounding the event that may be beneficial for California delegates.

3. Event Aftercare

- **Debrief:** Within two weeks of the event, the consulting company will schedule a debrief with each company and GO-Biz to discuss the quality of meetings, share market feedback and intelligence collected during the event, and recommend follow-up strategies for leads.

Deliverables:

1. Market analysis for each participating company that will include, at a minimum, a high-level market overview of the defense sector in the Europe Union and a brief analysis of the California company's market potential (i.e., top competitors, typical sales channels, ideal partners, size of the market for their product, etc.).
2. Prioritized lists of potential customers and partners with contact details.
3. Schedule at least four meetings for each participating company.
4. Meeting schedule for each participating company that includes the time, location, contact information, and brief synopsis of the companies and/or organizations they will be meeting with.
5. Post-event debrief reports with market feedback and actionable insights.
6. Recommendations for follow-up actions and support.

Timeline:

1. The consultant will commence work immediately upon contract execution, with pre-event activities starting no later than 3 months before the event.
2. The consultant's on-site support will span the duration of the event, with post-event activities concluding within one month after the event.

Minimum Qualifications

Proposers must meet the following requirements to be considered responsive.

Organizational Qualifications

- An established trade promotion/consulting practice office in Europe, preferably Germany.
- Must not be presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in public procurement or contracting by State of California agency.

Organizational Capacity

- Demonstrated ability to manage projects of comparable scale and complexity
- Adequate staffing and operational capacity to effectively track and manage the workload required to actively support and successfully execute the required deliverables for up to nine companies.

- The consulting company will provide at least one dedicated staff to support the California delegation at the event.
- Maintain open and regular communication with the IAT team, providing updates and addressing any issues or concerns in a timely manner.
- If a consultant and/or front-facing support staff will be unavailable for an extended period of more than 72 hours during the work week, an alternative point of contact at the consulting company must be provided.

Professional Experience

- The lead consultant will have a minimum of 10 years of successful experience providing trade promotion services for goods and services.
 - Any assisting consultants will have a minimum of 2 years of successful experience providing trade promotion services for goods and services.
- Lead consultant must have at least a bachelor's degree. Master's degree preferred.
 - Preferred courses of study: international relations, economics, trade, business, marketing, or European studies
- Demonstrate experience assisting US corporations in exporting to European countries, especially within the defense sector.
- In-depth knowledge of European business practices including import, distribution, legal, and financial systems.
- Fluency in speaking, writing, and reading in English required, German preferred

Budget Provisions

GO-Biz will pay for services rendered on a per-company basis. If GO-Biz does not fully recruit for the California Pavilion, the agency will only pay for the number of companies that participate in the delegation.

Twenty-five (25%) percent of the contract will be upon 3 weeks of the contract execution, the final seventy-five percent (75%) will be paid after project completion.

Payment Terms

Payment from GO-Biz will follow state of California processing requirements. Payments will be issued via a physical check in U.S. dollars. Electronic delivery is not available at this time.

Payment terms, including invoicing requirements and payment schedules, will be finalized during the contract negotiation state with the selected proposer.

Proposers located outside of the United States must include a statement in their proposal acknowledging that they understand and accept the payment terms, and that they are responsible for ensuring they have the ability to receive, process, and deposit such payments.

Failure to include this acknowledgement may result in the proposal being considered non-responsive.

Proposal Content

Proposals must include the following sections.

Exhibit A - Cover Letter

- Legal organization name
- Business address
- Website
- Year established
- Number of employees
- Proposal Contacts – include name, title, email, and phone number
 - Primary Contact (Authorized Representative)
 - Secondary Contact

Exhibit B - Key Personnel

Provide a table identifying staff responsible for project execution, include subcontractors. Must include the name, title, and role in the project. For consulting contracts, hourly rates and estimated hours are required.

Identify the designated Project Manager that will lead and coordinate efforts.

Exhibit C - Resumes

Provide resumes for all key personnel listed. Each resume should include a summary of relevant experience, highlighting past projects similar in scope to the work outlined in this RFP.

Exhibit D – Technical Proposal

A. Organizational Experience

Describe relevant experience delivering similar projects.

B. Implementation Plan

Describe how the proposer will complete the scope of work.

C. Implementation Timeline

Provide an overview of the timeline for the items identified in the Scope of Work.

D. Sample Work

Provide examples of similar work for similar types of contracts that were successfully concluded.

Exhibit E – Cost Proposal

Proposers must provide the total cost of the project, with a detailed breakdown showing how the costs were determined. GO-Biz may negotiate scope, pricing, or deliverables prior to final contract execution.

The budget should be provided as either Excel sheet or Word document that includes the following cost categories:

- Personnel
 - Must include all key personnel, percentage of time on the project and the total cost.
 - For consulting contracts, provide the hourly rates and estimated rates.
- Travel
 - Provide the purpose, destination, travelers (name or position), and duration of each trip. Include detail on airfare, lodging and mileage expenses if applicable.
- Materials, Supplies, & Equipment
 - Itemize in separate categories. Including justification of the project's need for these items.
- Subcontractors
 - Provide the subcontractor organization name, point of contact email address, CA Certification (MB, SB, DVBE or None) Include link to Certification # if applicable, overview of work performed on the contract, and the total cost for each.
- Other Direct Costs

Exhibit G – References

Provide at least three references for comparable work.

Vendor Forms

- STD 204 – Payee Data Record*
 - U.S.–based vendors or vendors accepting payment to a U.S. based address must complete and submit the STD 204 form
 - International or foreign vendors who possess a U.S. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) are also required to complete and submit the STD 204 form
 - *Instructions to Foreign Vendors Without a U.S. TIN If the Respondent is an international or foreign vendor without a U.S. TIN, they must submit the appropriate IRS Form W-8 instead of the STD 204. The correct type of form will depend on the nature of your business and entity type
 - W8BEN form for individuals
 - W8BEN-E form for entities
- STD 21 – Drug-Free Workplace Certification
- CCC – Contractor Certification Clauses
- Darfur Contracting Act Certification
- Bidder Declaration

Payment Terms Acknowledgement

Proposers located outside of the United States must include a statement in their proposal acknowledging that they understand and accept that payment will be issued only by **physical check in U.S. dollars** mailed through standard postal services, and that they are responsible for ensuring they have the ability to receive, process, and deposit such payments.

Payment Terms Acknowledgement Statement (for proposers located outside of the United States):

“The proposer acknowledges and accepts that payments under any resulting agreement with the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) will be issued by physical check in U.S. dollars and delivered by mail in accordance with State of California payment procedures. The proposer confirms that it has the ability to receive and process such payments.”

GenAI Disclosure

The State of California seeks to realize the potential benefits of GenAI, through the development and deployment of GenAI tools, while balancing the risks of these new technologies.

Applicant must notify the State in writing if it: (1) intends to provide GenAI as a deliverable to the State; or (2), intends to utilize GenAI, including GenAI from third parties, to complete all or a portion of any deliverable that materially impacts: (i) functionality of a State system, (ii) risk to the

State, or (iii) Contract performance. For avoidance of doubt, the term “materially impacts” shall have the meaning set forth in State Administrative Manual (SAM) § 4986.2 Definitions for GenAI.

Failure to report GenAI to the State may result in disqualification. The State reserves the right to seek any and all relief to which it may be entitled to as a result of such non-disclosure.

Upon notification by an applicant of GenAI as required, the State reserves the right to incorporate GenAI Special Provisions into the final contract or reject bids/offers that present an unacceptable level of risk to the State.

Government Code 11549.64 defines “Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)” as an artificial intelligence system that can generate derived synthetic content, including text, images, video, and audio that emulates the structure and characteristics of the system’s training data.

Small Business and DVBE Incentive Program

Small Business Incentive Program

Current law encourages state departments to first consider a California-certified small business (SB) and microbusiness (MB) for contracting opportunities. The State of California is committed to supporting SB and MB participation in state contracting and seeks to use certified SBs and MBs whenever possible.

In accordance with GC Section 14835, et seq., certified small businesses and microbusinesses are encouraged to apply and can claim a five percent (5%) preference when submitting a bid on a state contract. A non-small business may receive a preference of five percent (5%) if the business commits to subcontracting at least twenty-five percent (25%) of its net bid price with one or more small businesses or microbusinesses and the subcontractor preference does not remove the award from a certified small business.

- B) The SB preference provides certified SBs and MBs a calculation preference in the amount of five percent (5%) of the highest scored, responsible, and responsive proposal submitted by a proposing firm who is not a certified small business.
- B) The five percent (5%) preference is used only for computation purposes, to determine the winning bidder and does not alter the amounts of the resulting contract. A contract awarded on the basis of the five percent (5%) preference is awarded to the small business or non-small business for the actual amount of its bid.

A complete copy of the firm’s current Small Business certification with the Department of General Services (DGS) **must** also accompany the response.

Helpful resources pertaining to the small business program may be found here:
<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS?search=small%20business>

Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise (DVBE) Incentive Program

Prime contractors, with the exception of a certified Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise (DVBE), who subcontract work to DVBEs a minimum of five percent (5%) of its net bid price to meet the DVBE participation goal will receive a five percent (5%) preference during the evaluation. The preference is in addition to any small business preference that may apply.

In accordance with section 999.5(a) of the Military and Veterans Code, an incentive will be given to bidders who meet or exceed the DVBE program requirement. For evaluation purposes only, the State shall apply an incentive to bids that propose California-certified DVBE participation as identified on the Bidder Declaration and confirmed by the State. A five percent (5%) preference will be given. A contract awarded on the basis of the five percent (5%) preference is awarded to the DVBE for the actual amount of its bid.

A complete copy of the firm's current DVBE certification with the Department of General Services (DGS) **must** also accompany the response.

Helpful resources pertaining to the DVBE program may be found here:
<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS?search=small%20business>

Insurance Requirements

Insurance requirements may apply when the total contract value exceeds \$100,000. Contractors may be required to maintain Commercial General Liability, Workers Compensation, and Professional Liability (applicable to contracts over \$1,000,000).

Evaluation and Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated by individuals in a committee. The committee will evaluate each proposal and score each proposal individually using the Evaluation Criteria Score Sheet. Proposals will be considered based on their merits in accordance with the Scope of Work.

Bidders must score enough technical points (non-budget/cost) to advance in the evaluation phase and be eligible for invitation to any applicable interview or presentation

phase. Technical scores are subject to change after interviews.

Evaluation Score Sheet		Maximum Possible Score
1.	Relevant Experience Score 0–7: Firm demonstrates little or no relevant experience, with limited comparable projects, insufficient qualifications, and minimal evidence of successful outcomes. Score 8–15: Firm demonstrates some relevant experience, though prior work shows moderate alignment with the scope and limited evidence of measurable results. Score 16–23: Firm demonstrates strong relevant experience with qualified personnel and successful delivery of projects similar in scope and complexity. Score 24–30: Firm demonstrates extensive, highly relevant experience with exceptionally qualified personnel and a consistent record of delivering successful outcomes on comparable projects.	30
2.	Technical Approach Score 0–7: Proposal shows limited understanding of the project objectives and presents an unclear or incomplete technical approach. Score 8–15: Proposal demonstrates a basic understanding of the project with a feasible but moderately detailed technical approach and work plan. Score 16–23: Proposal demonstrates a strong understanding of the project with a clear, logical, and well-structured technical approach. Score 24–30: Proposal demonstrates exceptional understanding with a comprehensive, strategic, and highly effective approach to executing the project.	30
3.	Cost Proposal Score 0–7: Cost proposal is unclear, poorly justified, or misaligned with the scope of work. Score 8–15: Cost proposal is generally reasonable but lacks full transparency, detail, or clear justification. Score 16–23: Cost proposal is clear, well-structured, and appropriately aligned with the proposed scope of work. Score 24–30: Cost proposal is highly detailed, transparent, and demonstrates strong value and cost-effectiveness. <i>When scoring a proposal, cost/value effectiveness and cost adequacy may be judged, evaluated and awarded points as part of the technical score, but this must be in addition to cost points. GO-Biz will use the suggested formula in SCM Vol 1, 5.25, B to calculate points for cost.</i>	30
4.	References Score 0–2: References are missing, weak, or indicate limited verification of relevant performance. Score 3–5: References confirm satisfactory performance but demonstrate limited distinction or project relevance.	10

	Score 6–8: References confirm strong performance and reliability on projects similar in scope and complexity. Score 9–10: References consistently confirm exceptional performance, professionalism, and successful project delivery.	
TOTAL		100

Administration

RFP Response Requirements

This RFP and the Proposer’s response to this document will be made part of GO-Biz’s proposer’s file.

Plagiarism, including but not limited to taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own, and failure to cite someone else’s work or ideas, is prohibited and is grounds for disqualification. Using Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools to complete any portion of an application, without citation, may be considered plagiarism and may also be grounds for disqualification.

Reservation of Rights and RFP Amendments

GO-Biz reserves the following rights, which may be exercised at its sole discretion and without liability to any Applicant:

- 1. Right to Amend, Supplement, or Cancel the RFP**

GO-Biz reserves the right to amend, supplement, clarify, revise, delay, or cancel this Request for Proposals (RFP), in whole or in part, at any time prior to the proposal submission deadline or prior to execution of a final agreement. Amendments may include, but are not limited to, changes to the scope of work, key dates, funding availability, evaluation criteria, or submission requirements. Issuance of this RFP does not obligate GO-Biz to make an award or to enter into any agreement.

- 2. Notice of Amendments**

All official amendments, addenda, and clarifications to this RFP will be posted on the GO-Biz website at: [Cal eProcure](#)

It is the sole responsibility of each Applicant to monitor the website for updates, amendments, or additional information related to this RFP. GO-Biz is not responsible for failure of an Applicant to receive notice of an amendment. Failure to acknowledge or respond to an amendment may result in disqualification. **The Notice of**

Intent to Award will post to Cal eProcure and remain posted for five (5) business days.

3. Right to Reject Proposals

GO-Biz reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive minor irregularities or technical defects in proposals received, and to request clarification of information submitted.

4. Right to Award in Whole or in Part

GO-Biz reserves the right to:

- a. Award funding in whole or in part;
- b. Award less than the total amount requested;
- c. Make multiple awards under this RFP;
- d. Not award all available funds; or
- e. Issue additional solicitations for similar services.
- f. Selected Applicants may be required to negotiate scope or budget adjustments consistent with available funding.

5. Right to Negotiate and Request Additional Information

GO-Biz may request additional information, conduct interviews, seek clarifications, or enter into negotiations with one or more Applicants prior to final award. Failure to respond timely to such requests may result in disqualification.

6. Proposal Preparation Costs

All costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal are the sole responsibility of the Applicant. GO-Biz shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with this RFP, including in the event of amendment or cancellation.

Award and Protest

- a) A contract award may not be made until GO-Biz posts a notice of the proposed contract award in a place accessible by the general public, including any Internet site identified in the RFP for at least five working days prior to awarding the contract. (PCC § 10345(b).)
- A. Inspection of bids is required as follows:
 1. All proposals and all evaluation and scoring sheets shall be available for public inspection at the conclusion of the committee scoring process. (PCC § 10344(c)(2).)
- B. There are time limits in which to file a protest. A protest must be filed with GO-Biz GO-Biz.BSU@gobiz.ca.gov and DGS OLSProtests@dgs.ca.gov after notice of intent

to award the contract, if notice was required, but before the actual award. (PCC § 10345.)

- C. Once a protest is filed, the contract may not be awarded until the protest is withdrawn or DGS has rendered a decision. (PCC §§ 10345(a)(2), 10345(b)(1).)
- D. After filing a protest, the protestant has five (5) calendar days to file a detailed written statement of the protest grounds if the original protest did not contain the complete grounds for the protest. (PCC §§ 10345(a)3), 10345(b)(2).)
- E. Upon receipt of a protest, DGS/OLS:
 - 1. Sends the protestant an acknowledgment letter which includes copies of the protest statutes and regulations and informs the protestant that it must submit a full and complete statement specifying grounds of protest within five calendar days of filing of the notice of protest.
 - 2. Requests information on a designated form from GO-Biz regarding the agency contact person and other administrative details. GO-Biz will complete and return the form to DGS/OLS within 24 hours. In addition, if GO-Biz is aware of any reason that the protest should not go forward, this would be communicated to DGS/OLS at this time. (See SCM 1, section 6.03).
 - 3. Reviews the protest to determine whether DGS has jurisdiction. If DGS does not have jurisdiction, DGS/OLS issues a written notice of dismissal.
 - 4. Assigns a Hearing Officer to the protest if DGS has jurisdiction. The Hearing Officer determines whether the protest will be resolved by written submission or public oral hearing.

Proposal Disclosure and Confidentiality Procedures

Proposers are advised that all proposals submitted pursuant to this RFP are subject to Public Contract Code section 10344, subdivision (c)(2), under which proposals, evaluations, and scoring materials become public records available for inspection at the conclusion of committee scoring. If a Proposer seeks to protect confidential, trade-secret, or proprietary information in its proposal, the Proposer must clearly identify specific proposal portions as confidential at the time of submission. Note that blanket, whole-document, or untethered (such as unclear or not page/provision specific) confidentiality designations will not be honored, and the submission will be treated as entirely public.

If a Proposer seeks to protect confidential information in its proposal, it shall flag or highlight such information in its proposal either in-text or via a separate page or attachment identifying the confidential information, submitted along with the proposal. Any separate confidentiality explanation document or attachment shall not count toward the maximum proposal page limit.

For purposes of any claimed confidentiality, confidential information is limited to material or information that falls under an exemption to the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 7920.000 et seq.), and the Proposer should identify which exemption applies to the confidential information flagged or highlighted in its proposal.

GO-Biz retains sole discretion to determine whether any portion of a proposal is exempt from disclosure, though it will take into consideration the specific confidential information identified by the Proposer when making that determination.

Standard Contract Terms

All agreements entered into with the State of California will include reference to General Terms and Conditions that may be viewed and downloaded here: [Standard Contract Language](#).

Authority

Assembly Bill 2832 Chapter 577 exempts from any contracting requirement applicable only to state contracts, including but not limited to Section 10295 of the Public Contract Code.