**Act 129 Statewide Evaluator Request for Proposal**

**Questions and Answers from Potential Bidders**

**Q. The RFP states, in regards to conflicts of interest, the following: In order to ensure an impartial review of the EDCs’ Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programs, other than in performance of duties under this Contract, the Contractor or any of its subcontractors, or any parent or related entities to the Contractor or any of its subcontractors, or any of the Contractor’s or any of its subcontractors’ employees, may not provide evaluation or energy efficiency or conservation services to any of the Pennsylvania-based EDCs during the Contract term.**

**We are considering adding a firm to our team that currently provides program tracking and analytics platform software for an EDC.  Their services do not include implementation support, such as processing applications, managing trade allies, processing rebate payments or assisting with marketing or outreach.**

**My question then is this: is this firm conflicted out of serving on the SWE team because they supply program tracking software to an EDC?**

1. It is difficult to provide a definitive answer with the general information provided, however, if the software vendor is a member of the SWE team and the software described is used to track, measure, verify or evaluate energy savings obtained by EDCs, than it is likely to create a conflict as the SWE would be evaluating and auditing the validity of such tracking, measuring, verifying and evaluation.

If the software vendor is not related to the SWE team in any way, then there does not appear to be a conflict.

**Q. Section I-15 of the RFP specifies that the prime contractor of the selected Offeror must perform at least 50% of the total contract value. Are direct costs, such as travel costs, considered part of a prime contractor’s share of the total contract value? For example, if the total contract value is $1,000 and the prime contractor has $550 of labor costs and $50 of travel costs, is the prime contractor share considered to be 55% of the total contract value (labor only) or 60% (labor plus direct costs)?**

A. The answer is prime contractor share would be labor plus direct costs, so in the example, 60%.  This is a DGS rule that comes into play regarding Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion & Small Business Opportunities scoring.

**Q. Part IV of the RFP provides instructions for the Cost Submittal, which asks for the total price not-to-exceed cost for the entire contract and for each year. Should the costs be broken out by the tasks detailed in Part III (Technical Submittal)? And should the baseline studies and market potential studies costs be reported separately or instead included as part of the total and yearly costs?**

A. The added detail would be preferred by staff but is not required.  In addition, staff would prefer to see costs associated with major tasks such as the MPS reports itemized/broken out.

**Q. The Proposal Format (section I-11.B) specifies that the Technical Submittal should respond to Part III. Should the Technical Submittal include responses to sections of Part III that do not specify an “Offeror Response”, such as section “III-3. Requirements”? Or should it be limited to those sections that specify an “Offeror Response”?**

A. The Technical Submittal should be responsive to all sections of the RFP as is necessary to provide a clear and comprehensive description of the services the bidder intends to provide. Section III-3 does not require a direct response.

**Q. The Evaluation Criteria (section II-4) specify Prior Experience and Personnel Qualifications as components of the Technical score. Should Prior Experience and Personnel Qualifications be included as appendices to the Technical Proposal, since they are not specified in Part III (Technical Submittal)?**

A. Providing Prior Experience and Personnel Qualifications as an attachment or appendix to the Technical Proposal is acceptable.

**Q. In Section I-11, the Offeror is asked to submit three submittals (technical, cost, and SDB/SB participation). Can you clarify where completed Appendices A (proposal cover sheet) and D (trade secrets/confidential info) should be placed within these submittals?**

A. Appendices A and D should be placed with the Technical Proposal.

**Q. In Section IV-1, the Offeror is asked to “List all other costs related to work on this project, indicating their costs for each of the six-year periods.”  Can you specify what “all other costs” is expected to include, and whether bidders are expected to provide those costs (a) as one annual lump sum for each year, or (b) broken out into more detailed sub-categories within each year?**

A. “All other costs” refers to costs not directly attributable to specific tasks in the Scope of Work. Bids should contain one annual sum for each year but also provide some explanation or basic description of what work/tasks the “other costs” are referencing.

**Q. Section IV-1 states “Offerors should not include any assumptions in their cost submittals.”  Can you clarify what is meant by “assumptions”?**

A. Assumptions means treating work as if it may be added or taken away from the work indicated in the proposal.  For example, it would be making an assumption if the bidder provided alternative cost levels for different levels of work.  In other words, bidders should not give alternate costs if the PUC picks "option A" or "option B".  Bidders should provide one set of costs for the way they will provide a solution to the work indicated in the proposal.

**Q. In the previous round of bidding five years ago, Offerors were expected to provide significantly more numerous and more detailed information, such as costs and hours by task and year, time estimates, travel costs, travel practices, and company financials. Can you confirm that that level of detail is not expected in this current round?**

A. Staff would prefer as much detail as possible in the bid proposals. For each task listed in the proposal, bidders should give the total cost for each task for each of the six-year periods.  In addition, bidders should provide an hourly wage fee list for all employees, which can vary for each of the six-year periods, that will be charged for work performed by the employee.  Bidders should also include a standard rate sheet for travel costs (which can also vary for each of the six-year periods).  The costs for all tasks each year should equal the total cost bid for each year.  This will allow for budgeting and tracking of work for each task each year, and will provide the per-hour charges for employees that will be used to bill for services in completing the tasks.