Creating Responsive Proposals

Presented by
Lillian Sunwall - GF PTAC Director

Module 1:
The Preliminaries
– Learning the “rules of the road”
Definitions

Commonly Used Words:

- Best Value
- FAR
- Federal Government Fiscal Year
- NAICS
- Past Performance
- SAM
- Small Business Set-Asides
Workshop Overview

Next Four Weeks – 4 Modules

Module 1 - The Preliminaries (Learning the “rules of the road”)
✓ Today, February 23rd

Module 2 – Preparation (Getting Ready to Write a Proposal)
✓ Wednesday, March 2nd

Module 3 – Execution (Organizing a responsive proposal)
✓ Wednesday, March 9th

Module 4 – Follow-up (Building a relationship, win or lose)
✓ Wednesday, March 16th

(Exercises (8 along the way!) Putting what you learn into practice)
As a result of participating in these trainings, you will be able to:

- **Identify** contract opportunities that are realistic for you.
- **Understand** how the government describes what it needs.
- **Prepare** responsive and effective proposals.
- **Improve** your chances at winning government contracts.
Module 1 – The Preliminaries

The Key Difference between Bids and Proposals:

**Bids** are submitted in response to IFBs.
- Awards are made based on price and price-related **factors**.

**Proposals** are submitted in response to RFPs.
- Awards are made based on price and non-price factors. Quality is most frequently considered.

*While there are similarities among bids and proposals, we’re going to focus here on proposals submitted in response*
What influences proposal selections:

- Government’s Requirement Is Clearly Defined
- Risk of Unsuccessful Performance Is Minimal

Clear Requirement + Low Risk = Cost Is Dominant

Cost or Price Plays a Dominant Role in Selection of Contractor

- Government’s Requirement Is Less Well-Defined
- Development Work Is Required
- Performance Risk is Higher

Requirement Is Not Exact + High Risk = Factors Other Than Cost Are Dominant

Technical Factors or Past Performance Play a Dominant Role in Selection of Contractor
The Concepts of Responsiveness and Responsibility:

- Universally practiced in government – at federal, state and local levels – are the concepts of **responsiveness** and **responsibility**.

- A public contract is not awarded unless these two requirements are satisfied.

So, what do these terms mean?
Responsiveness – refers to your offer - your submittal in response to the invitation.

- Following instructions.

Responsibility – refers to you - your qualifications and ability to perform.

- A judgement is made about your company’s capabilities, capacities, proficiencies.
In a **bid, responsiveness** is unforgiving.

- *If you make a mistake, leave something out, or don’t follow the instructions, your bid probably will be rejected.*

In a **proposal, responsiveness*** is still important, but a proposal can be revised to become acceptable if the Government decides to enter into negotiations with you.

*Sometimes the government uses the term “acceptable” rather than “responsive” to describe a proposal that complies with the RFP.*
Examples of **Responsiveness**:  
✓ Offer submitted on time to correct location.  
✓ Pricing information is complete.  
✓ References submitted in accordance with solicitation instructions.  
✓ Offer takes no exceptions to specifications.  
✓ Offer is signed in blue ink.  
✓ Page limitation is obeyed.
A little more about Responsibility ...

✓ Financial resources
✓ Comply with the delivery requirements
✓ Prior satisfactory performance
✓ Record of integrity and business ethics.
✓ Management and technical skills.
✓ Facilities/equipment.
✓ Eligibility
Four words the Government uses …

**Solicitation** — An advertised invitation to submit a bid, a quote, or a proposal to fulfill a requirement of the government. Sometimes referred to as an IFB, RFQ, or RFP. Once issued, communication with vendors ceases.

**Pre-solicitation** — Summary of an upcoming solicitation, not yet ready for a formal response. Usually issued at least 15 days before the Solicitation. During the pre-solicitation period, vendors normally are at liberty to pose questions and offer suggestions and information.
Four words the Government uses ...

Combined Synopsis/Solicitation – A streamlined solicitation for commercial items valued at less than the simplified acquisition threshold (generally $250,000).

Sources Sought – A published synopsis to determine interest in a given acquisition. It requests interested parties to submit their capabilities to determine their ability to perform. (Often used to determine whether a set-aside to small businesses can be justified.)
Summary/Review

The “Rules of the Road” set the stage for proposal preparation.

You just learned:

✓ The difference between a bid and a proposal.

✓ Contract awards based on proposals are made on the basis of price and other factors that may be more important than price.

✓ The importance of following instructions in an RFP (responsiveness/acceptability).

✓ The importance of being able to meet the responsibility standards set forth in an RFP.

✓ The meaning of various words the government uses.
Exercise #1

Pre-solicitation

for Grounds Maintenance Service

Department of the Air Force
Grounds Maintenance Service

Solicitation Number: F3Q2AD729A001
Agency: Department of the Air Force
Office: Air Force Materiel Command

XYZ Air Force Base is seeking Grounds Maintenance Service. This solicitation F3Q2AD729A001 will be 100% set aside for HUBZONE. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code is 561730 and the small business size standard is $7.5M. This effort will be awarded using FAR Part 15, Source Selection Procedures with Past Performance Tradeoff. All firms or individuals responding must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM). Additionally, prime contractors must be U.S. owned entities.

The Grounds Maintenance Service contract will be an Indefinite-Delivery Indefinite-Quantity (IDIQ) with a base year and four (4) option years and a 6-month service extension not to exceed $9,947,000.00. The contractor shall provide non-personal services, to include all personnel, equipment, tools, supervision, and other items and services necessary to ensure that grounds maintenance is performed at XYZ Air Force Base (AFB) in a manner that will promote the growth of healthy grass, trees, shrubs, and plants and present a clean, neat, and professional appearance.
Exercise #1

All responsive offerors will be considered by the agency. The entire solicitation will be made available on the Federal Business Opportunities Web Site at http://www.fedbizopps.gov on or about 3 January 2019. Paper copies will not be available. You may download the solicitation and email your quote in. It is incumbent upon the interested parties to review this site frequently for any updates/amendments to any and all documents. All questions concerning this synopsis and subsequent solicitation must be directed to MSgt Tracy Sowelski at (XXX) 926-9503 or tracie.sowelski@us.af.mil.

Primary Point of Contact:
Tracy Sowelski
tracie.sowelski@us.af.mil
Phone: (XXX) 926-9503

Secondary Point of Contact:
Angela (Angie) Whitle
angie.whitle@us.af.mil
Phone: (XXX) 926-7989
Pre-solicitation for Grounds Maintenance Service

1. What does this notice present the opportunity to do? Are there any restrictions?

2. What research should an interested vendor conduct?

3. Can you contact the government’s POC to ask a question or make a suggestion?

4. What should a vendor anticipate about this assignment?
Exercise #2

Sources Sought

Canine Tactical Equipment for
U.S. Special Operations Command
Multi-Purpose Canine Tactical Equipment

Solicitation Number: H92230-19-T-RDPE
Agency: Other Defense Agencies
Office: U.S. Special Operations Command Location: USASOC

Regimental Dog Program (RDP)
Multi-Purpose Canine (MPC) Tactical Equipment
Sources Sought H92230-19-T-RDPE

THIS IS NOT A NOTICE OF SOLICITATION ISSUANCE, BUT RATHER a REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) (Reference number H92230-19-T-RDPE) that will allow the Government to identify interested sources capable of meeting this requirement. The information sought herein is for planning purposes only and shall not be construed as a request for quote (RFQ), request for proposal (RFP), invitation for bid (IFB), or as an obligation or commitment on the part of the Government to acquire any product or service. There shall be no basis for claims against the Government as a result of information submitted in response to the RFI. The Government does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this notice, or otherwise pay for any information submitted by respondents to this request. This notice is for market research purposes only and is not indicative of a full requirement. Should a requirement arise, the full requirement will be detailed in the solicitation.

The United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) is seeking to identify all responsible sources capable of providing CANINE TACTICAL EQUIPMENT in support of the 75TH Ranger Regiment’s Regimental Dog Program (RDP), Regimental Special Troops Battalion (RTSB) in accordance with the attached DRAFT Statement of Work. (SOW).
Exercise #2

The Contractor shall provide the required items in support of the MPC's in accordance with mission specific requirements identified in the SOW. The vendor will be responsible for all travel and lodging for contracted personnel traveling to the Fort as stated in the SOW. The contractor shall perform in accordance with (IAW) the terms and conditions of the contract and consistently with the established requirements in the Draft SOW. The Contractor shall be able to provide the following:

1. Tactical Vests which shall facilitate the insertion and employment of MPCs in support of Ranger Operations
2. MPC Camera System which shall provide real-time video to the MPC handler during Ranger Operations
3. MPC Sensor System which shall provide increased capabilities to the RDT during Ranger Operations
4. Custom sizing and fabrication of vests to MPCs during the Regimental Advance Handler Course
5. Awareness of current tactics, techniques and procedures

The DRAFT SOW provides a complete list of objectives for the Contractor. All work in support of this requirement shall be accomplished at the Fort. Interested sources capable of fulfilling this requirement shall submit documentation addressing all elements listed herein: providing only a reference to a website is unacceptable for purposes of this announcement and will not be considered or reviewed. All proprietary or corporate data received shall be clearly identified and shall be protected from release to sources outside the Government. Please do not submit classified material. Contractors interested in providing this service should be registered in the System for Award management at (www.sam.gov) Sources should submit a thorough narrative that clearly demonstrates their corporate capabilities and ability to perform the tasks as listed in support of the Regimental Dog Program MPC Tactical Equipment requirement and a summary of relevant experience of providing this equipment. The narrative should also include current and/or recent past performance references that identify the contract number, customer, contract value, type of contract, period of performance and a brief description of the services. Interested parties are requested to submit a capabilities statement of no more than five (5) pages that demonstrates the respondent's ability to meet the requirements as specified herein.
Contractors responding to this RFI are requested to provide: 1) No more than five (5) pages that demonstrate the respondent’s ability to meet the requirements as specified herein 2) Company's full name of the firm, address POC, phone/fax number and email address. 3) Cage code, DUNS number 4) Applicable North American Industry Classification Standards (NAICS) and business size (whether they are large, small, small-disadvantaged, 8(a), HUBZone, woman-owned, Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business, Historically Black College or University (HBCU) and or a minority service institute). Respondents should advise the Government of pending changes in the business size status.

RESPONSES ARE DUE: Responses shall be submitted electronically via email to Ms. Val Bradley, bradleyv@socom.mil and Ms. Jenn Paynter at Jennifer.paynter@socom.mil. Due to the intermittent nature of electronic communication, it is the vendor's responsibility to ensure receipt of all e-mail correspondence. Respondents are cautioned that due to file size limitations and e-mail security protocols, there is a risk that not all correspondence will be received by this office.

All responses shall be submitted by 10:00 a.m. EST, 19 January 2019 and shall include reference number H92230-19-T-RDPE in the subject line and submission documents. Failure to respond to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future associated request for quotations that may be issued. Respondents will NOT be notified of the results.

Contracting Office Address:
ATTN:E-2929 Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28310

Place of Performance:
HQ USASOC FT BRAGG, North Carolina 28304 United States
Sources Sought - Canine Tactical Equipment for U.S. Special Operations Command

1. Why should small businesses respond to this?
2. By responding, are you in contention for a contract?
3. Sending in a copy of your company brochure is an adequate response, correct?
4. Of the 4 response points listed, which one is most important?
GF PTAC Contacts

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(406) 750-1253

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SClancy@GrowGreatFalls.org
(406) 590-1184

Great Falls PTAC Office - GFDA
The Portage Building at West Bank Landing
405 3rd Street NW, Ste 406
Great Falls, MT 59401
Upcoming Workshops

Next Three Weeks – 3 Modules

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✓ Wednesday, March 2nd

**Module 3** – Execution (Organizing a responsive proposal)
✓ Wednesday, March 9th

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*(Exercises (8 along the way!) Putting what you learn into practice)*
Thank You!