

Request for Qualifications No. 2010-008

Questions and Answers

Posted January 19, 2011

1. Will sign-in sheets from the bidders' conference be available online?
Addendum to response given at Bidders' Conference
The sign-in sheet is now posted online.
2. Will this Power Point presentation be available online for colleagues that are not at this meeting?
Addendum to response given at Bidders' Conference
The PowerPoint presentation is now available online.
3. What kind of work sample should be expected in the proposal; a formal public engagement plan or outreach plan, or do you prefer a package of outreach samples?
Submit whatever you feel best shows how you are qualified.
4. Is staff experienced in doing outreach and facilitating meetings or will they need training?
Some staff has experience facilitating meetings, but not all do. The plan may consider training for staff.
5. What about materials and food for meetings? Would these be separate? Would travel and mileage be a separate line-item?
Major supplies or food for a public meeting in developing the plan does not need to be included in the hourly rates, but can be considered an additional line item in the contract. Mileage does not need to be included in the hourly rate, however, it would also come from the total contract budget.
6. Does the District have an overarching document for outreach strategies? And if so, what is it?
There is currently no overarching document the District uses for outreach strategies. We intend for the Public Engagement Policy and Plan to serve this purpose. Certain Air District rules specify outreach requirements. We currently rely on those, but typically exceed what is required in Air District regulations.
7. Should [bidders] assume the recommendations in the *Language Assessment* document are currently underway? Should those recommendations be interwoven into this document?
Assume work is underway when preparing your Statement of Qualifications. Following the selection process, District staff and the selected bidder will discuss the status of the recommendations, if and how to fold them into the plan.
8. What prompted this [RFQ]? The RFQ refers to a limited English proficiency assessment.
The Assessment was prompted by on-going dialogue with community organizations. As we developed recommendations for engaging LEP individuals, we realized it would be helpful to have an overarching document for engaging other stakeholders as well.
9. Was there a specific precipitating event?
No.
10. Was the LEP document produced by an outside consultant? And if so, can you share who the consultant was?
The Assessment was produced by in-house staff.
Addendum to response given at Bidders' Conference:

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Initially the District issued a Request for Proposals for this project and selected Fischer Communications. Fischer was unable to complete the work and withdrew from the contract. Staff developed the Assessment without utilizing any of the consultant's work.

11. Was the work done by in-house staff?
Yes, the document was done in-house by the staff you see here today.
12. Do you have a target for small, minority or women-owned businesses in the selection process?
No. In this RFQ we are only asking for a statement from the consultant.
13. Is there weight given to evaluation criteria? Is there a point system for evaluation of the SOQ?
We will use square sheets when evaluating the statements of qualifications, but we do not have those available. The evaluation criteria are listed in the RFQ by order of importance.
14. Since you are going to the Board with a maximum amount of \$200,000 and we are not including a cost estimate in our proposals how will you determine what amount to recommend to the Board?
We anticipate that we will go through the consultant selection process, then discuss an appropriate contract amount with the selected bidder.
15. Is that where the beginning of a work plan emerges? When does the work plan get agreed upon?
We recommend a bidder and contract amount to the Board. If the Board approves, we would then have authority to enter into a contract with the selected bidder. This contract would contain a very general scope of work. As the first task in that contract, the selected bidder would develop a project timeline and more detailed work plan.
16. Was there a specific reason for an RFQ versus an RFP?
Yes. If we had developed a request for proposals we would have had to pre-define the scope of work to some detail. We wanted to develop the scope of work or work plan with the consultant.
17. In the October presentation before the Board, does the full Board have to adopt the Plan? Or can you just implement the plan?
Our goal is to have a document adopted by the Board. It is possible that another approach may be taken, but our goal is take the final work product to the Board.
18. After the Plan is put together and implemented by the District what do you hope it accomplishes?
As stated in the RFQ Section 1B, and slide 4, we hope the plan will:
 - *Enable District to include residents and stakeholders public engagement processes*
 - *Provide District guidance to incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas and information*
 - *Help District anticipate stakeholder concerns early in processes*
 - *Help District establish open and transparent process public can access and engage in*
 - *Promote culture of participation*

We want to avoid a situation in which an initiative is underway and a year into the process we discover a key stakeholder has been left out and we end up with a product that is not as effective.

We also want to create practical guidance for public engagement so that there is consistency across the agency.
19. Does the contractor recommendation and the finalized scope of work both have to be approved by the Board?

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The Board of Directors does not have to approve the Scope of Work/Work Plan. The board of directors only has to approve the contract amount and bidder.

20. The project description on page 2 states: the task orders will be based on deliverables or time and materials. Does the Air District or the contractor decide whether it should be time or deliverables?
Ultimately it is up to Air District staff to approve one approach or the other. In making that decision, staff would want to know what is better for the consultant and why the consultant is taking a specific approach.
21. In the RFQ you do not ask for specific information regarding the approach. Are you interested in hearing the approach the bidder would take? If so, where would you like to see that?
While the Air District is interested in hearing about approaches, this process is an RFQ, not an RFP. We will be reviewing your qualifications, not your specific approach. The type of approaches your firm takes will probably be evident in the different elements of your statement of qualifications.
22. The RFQ lists a four-factor analysis, which is a specific EPA way of identifying minority communities and so on, are you open to other models or methodologies?
The summary of anticipated work lists examples. For the four factor analysis we would like to utilize EPA or DOT guidance as we receive federal funds from these agencies. We are not limited to stop at the four-factor analysis. The final plan can encompass a broader range.
23. What is your expectation for local and small business participation?
There is no target or preset expectation, but we would like to know what minority and small-businesses are participating.
24. What is considered a small business?
We will confer with Admin.
Addendum to response given at Bidders' Conference:
For the purposes of this RFQ, a small business is defined as a firm with 100 or fewer employees.
25. Is there a comprehensive list of District programs that the Plan should include during implementation?
The RFQ identifies some District programs. I do not have a comprehensive list. If you browse our website, you could get a sense of other Air District programs.
26. But, in your mind, in October, when you have a great Plan, what programs do you want to include?
We would like to consider that jointly with the selected bidder.
27. In this economic climate, how much is cost a factor in determining who the Board selects?
Cost is one of the criteria in the RFQ but not the leading criteria.
28. About your relationship with the Bay Area Environmental Health Collaborative; do you have standing quarterly meetings? Is there an expectation that other stakeholders will be involved in the process?
We anticipate that BAEHC participate in the development of the plan. Other stakeholders may also be involved.
29. Do you regularly meet with BAEHC or are they used as a resource?
We have an on-going dialogue with BAEHC. We do not have set meetings with BAEHC.

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30. You have an Advisory Council; how would they be involved with the Plan? Would they assist in the endorsement of the Plan by the Directors?

That is a possibility. That can be determined with the selected bidder as the work plan is developed.

Posted January 10, 2011

1. The RFQ involves the preparation of a Public Engagement Plan. Does the BAAQMD intend to implement the plan, or will BAAQMD also seek assistance in implementing the outreach for engaging stakeholders?

Air District staff anticipates that staff will be responsible for implementation of the Plan. An anticipated list of work the successful bidder is expected to undertake while under contract for this project is included in Appendix A of the RFQ. While staff is open to considering strategies that may require outside support for implementation, at this point, the Air District cannot commit financial resources for additional services such as implementation.

2. Section II.G Hourly rates – mentions a “profit allowance”, but does not indicate what the allowance is. Can you please clarify the intent of this section?

The Air District does not have a pre-set profit allowance.