**COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

**HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY (HCSA)**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**to
RFQ No. HCSA-900720**

**for**

**Subject Matter Expert (SME) Pool**

**Summary of Q&A Submitted**

**Virtual Networking/Bidders Conferences held on October 20 and 21, 2020**

**Notice to Bidders**

This County of Alameda, HCSA Questions & Answers (Q&A) Document has been electronically issued to potential bidders via e-mail based on the bidders conference sign-in sheets or from other sources. This Q&A Document will also be posted on the General Services Agency (GSA) Contracting Opportunities website located at <https://www.acgov.org/gsa_app/gsa/purchasing/bid_content/contractopportunities.jsp>

**Scope Questions**

**Q1: What necessitated this process given that you already have a pool?**

*A1: After nearly one year, the program wanted to reopen the pool through this RFQ and add new vendors to the pool. The County has enough Whole Person Care carry over funding to continue until June 2021. Issuing this procurement allows the County to have diverse expertise in the pool. The County will hear from the State regarding the renewal in 2021 and wants to prepare for receipt of additional funding, as well as respond swiftly to emerging programmatic needs.*

**Q2: Is it your preference to add SMEs to the pool who can provide services in multiple areas or is that not a factor?**

*A2: No, this is not a factor. There is no preference for a vendor who covers a broad range of listed subjects versus specialized vendors.*

**Q3: Our company performed directly related health operations, procedures, and systems analysis and consulting for HCSA in 2016 and 2017 that included Whole Person Care Proposal assistance as described below. Partial Scope of Work (SOW) previously completed for HCSA included how stakeholder needs could combined, integrated and developed into an Health Information Exchange/Electronic Health Recors as appropriate; and assistance with HCSA Statement Qualifications and Interest for the California Whole Person Care RFQ. The question is how many of HCSA’s SME categories does this work match? Possibilities are:**

1. **Integrated Services Design (Likely);**
2. **Medi-B. MCal and Medi-Cal B. Managed Care**
3. **Design Thinking**
4. **Other Areas of Expertise/ support services that aid in care and coordination and systems improvement efforts?**

*A3: Bidders should review the RFQ in its entirety and use their discretion to determine if and how they meet the qualifications as specified in the RFQ.*

**Q4: I did not see anything specifically related to my existing consulting contract with the County in the RFQ.  How can I tell if my specific consulting role is in the RFQ?**

*A4: Bidders should review the RFQ in its entirety and use their discretion to determine if they meet the qualifications as specified in the RFQ. The County encourages qualified vendors to submit a response regarding their specific area(s) of experience and expertise for potential inclusion in the pool.*

**Q5: The January 12th contract start date is just the inclusion to the vendor list correct?**

*A5: Yes, this projected contract start date will be for inclusion in the vendor pool, whereby both existing and newly qualified vendors are required to sign a Services-as-Needed contract. Awarded scopes of work may begin immediately thereafter and will be negotiated specifically with the SME.*

**Bid Response Questions**

**Q6: Is this RFQ something I should respond to in order to potentially keep a current contract I have assisting an existing county taskforce in 2021?**

*A6: This RFQ is a standalone contracting opportunity and, apart from the SME Vendor Pool assembled in November 2019, does not relate to any existing opportunity/contract a contractor may already have with the County. Interested SMEs are encouraged to submit a response for this new opportunity, for possible inclusion in the pool.*

**Q7: If you wanted to be proactive about applying for a bid, would it make sense to do the admin piece**

**ahead of time? Or do they need to be done sequentially? What I mean is if we aren't ready to complete bidder forms, but we want to do the next cycle would it make sense to finish the paperwork ahead of time?**

*A7: The County concluded a procurement for an SME Vendor Pool in November 2019. The intention is to release additional procurement opportunities to add new vendors into the pool. There is no timeframe yet for any future bid opportunity. Once the opportunity becomes available, another round of outreach will be conducted to qualify new vendors. Vendors may want to prepare their response at that time, given the RFQ specifications released at any future date.*

**Q8: What terms and conditions are we to address in the description of proposed services?**

*A8: Please refer to page 7 & 8 of Exhibit A of the RFQ, Item 5, “Description of Proposed Services” which describes the information Bidders are required to provide. Bidders shall describe any terms or conditions of services that the County should consider in evaluating their bid response.*

**Q9: What activities/deliverables are we to give response times for in the description of proposed services?**

*A9: Please refer to Ans 8 above.*

**Q10: Is there a format for the required bi-weekly reports that vendors can follow?**

*A10: The structure or format of reports are agreed upon during negotiation of any Scope of Work for any awarded engagement. Different projects have different reporting needs, and may vary.*

**Q11: Are we obliged to list specific county personnel in the description of proposed services?**

*A11: Bidders must list prospective consultant staff who may perform services under contract in their bid response.*

**Q12: Are there any page limitations?**

*A12: There are no specified page limitations for Items 1-5 on pages 6-8 of Exhibit A, Required Documentation and Submittals.*

**Q13: Page 5 of the Exhibit A has a bid form.  Can you go over the bid form, as it is different from previous RFQ bid/budget forms? Is there a fillable budget/bid form?**

*A13: A fillable bid form is not being provided to bidders; SMEs can submit their own form that provides the required information. For the purpose of this RFQ, the County is seeking hourly rates for each SME staff as well as a proportion of the 740 hours available to perform services in 1 month. If multiple staff members bill at different rates, the average rate would be use as an estimate. Bidders are asked to bid on 1 full month of the 4,400 available hours (i.e. 740 hours), though the underlying assumption is that no one bidder will be awarded all of those hours in a given month.*

**Q14: In today's bidder's conference, it was stated that the vendor/applicants must submit a budget for the total 4,400 hours. Yet the bid form shows a total for 1 month cost.  Should the applicant show a total cost budget based on the estimated monthly hours of 740 hours per month (4,400 hrs / 6 months) as if the applicant would be providing all of the service hours during the 6 month period?**

**Essentially, it sounds like we need to back into the total number of hours so evaluators can compare apples to apples**.

*A14: Yes, bidders are asked to bid on 1 full month of the available 4,400 hours (i.e. 740 hours) to demonstrate the total cost for 1 month. Also refer to Ans 13 above.*

**Q15: Is the 4,400 hour limit based on a set hourly rate or its approximation?**

*A15: This is based on an approximation.*

**Q16: How many of the 4,400 hours are left for the current contract?**

*A16: These are additional hours the County is adding to extend and expand the existing pool.*

**Existing Pool Questions**

**Q17: Are those currently in the pool also required to participate in this bid process?**

*A17: Since qualified SME vendors are already in the pool, they are not required to resubmit a bid response.*

**Q18: Page 4 of the RPQ, mentions that pool hours will consist of previously accepted providers and new providers.  Who are the previously accepted providers/how many are they?**

*A18: Please refer to Ans 20 below.*

**Q19. Can you share a list of vendors already in the pool.**

*A19: Please refer to Ans 20 below.*

**Q20: Do you have a breakdown of the utilization per expertise for the last pool? If not, how would we know the potential utilization for our respective area of expertise?**

*A20: Please refer to the end of the table below for list of qualified vendors in the pool and their utilization.*

*Part of the purpose of the pool is to have a ready set of potential consultants for emerging projects, we can’t forecast what those will be.*

*List of qualified Vendors in the existing SME Pool with committed contract amount, as of October 2020.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Vendor Name*** | ***Location*** | ***Amount Committed***  |
| *Bright Research Group* | *Oakland, California* | *$30,000* |
| *Felton Institute* | *Alameda, California* | *N/A* |
| *Health Leads, Inc.*  | *Boston* | *N/A* |
| *Health Management Associates, Inc.*  | *Lansing* | *N/A* |
| *Hanserd Health Care Solutions* | *Oakland, California* | *$69,300* |
| *Public Consulting Group, Inc.*  | *Boston* | *$89,000* |
| *Rachel Metz Consulting* | *Berkeley, California* | *$180,000* |
| *Resource Development Associates, Inc.*  | *Oakland, California* | *$262,345* |

**Attendee List and SLEB Questions**

**Q21: Can you share with me the list of attendees from yesterday and also the ones who are already in the preferred list?**

*A21: Virtual Bidders Conferences Attendees List was published on the GSA website on October 23, 2020 at the following link:* [*https://www.acgov.org/gsa\_app/gsa/purchasing/bid\_content/contractingdetail.jsp?BID\_ID=2307*](https://www.acgov.org/gsa_app/gsa/purchasing/bid_content/contractingdetail.jsp?BID_ID=2307) *Please refer to Ans.20 above for the list of vendors in the existing pool.*

**Q22: Where could we access the list of certified SLEBs?**

*A22: The attendees list, published on October 23, 2020 on the GSA website, included the contact information and status of certified SLEBs in attendance. Prime Bidders may also locate a SLEB partner at the following the link:* [*https://acgov.org/sleb\_query\_app/gsa/sleb/query/slebmenu.jsp*](https://acgov.org/sleb_query_app/gsa/sleb/query/slebmenu.jsp)*. Bidders may use the NAICS codes provided on page 14 of the RFQ, (Section M. Award, Item 3) to search for a potential SLEB partner.*

**Q23: I am requesting clarification on the SLEB requirement for RFQ No HCSA-900720. I see some organizations can be exempt from the SLEB requirement, which I have included below. We are a non-profit organization headquartered in Oakland, CA, but we are not a religious organization as stated in the bullet point below. Would we be eligible for the exemption or would we have to partner with a SLEB? The following entities are exempt from the Small and Emerging Local Business (SLEB) requirements as described above and are not required to subcontract with a SLEB:**

* **non-profit community based organizations (CBO) that are providing services on behalf of the County directly to County clients/residents;**
* **non-profit churches or non-profit religious organizations (NPO);**
* **public schools; and universities; and**
* **government agencies.**

*A23: Entities listed above are exempt from the SLEB requirements. Nonprofits with a 501 (c)3 status are exempt from the SLEB requirement, and are not required to subcontract with a SLEB. If applicable, please state “exempt” on the submitted SLEB Partnering Information Sheet.*