**COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

**HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY (HCSA)**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**to
RFP No. HCSA-900421**

**for**

**Mental Health Technical Consulting Services**

**Summary of Q&A Submitted**

**Networking/Bidders Conferences held on March 22 and 23, 2021**

**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>

**Bid/Contract Questions**

**Q1: Will the slides be available for download?**

*A1: Yes, you may download the PowerPoint presentation slides at the GSA Contracting Opportunities website for this RFP, at the following link:* [*https://www.acgov.org/gsa\_app/gsa/purchasing/bid\_content/contractingdetail.jsp?BID\_ID=2347*](https://www.acgov.org/gsa_app/gsa/purchasing/bid_content/contractingdetail.jsp?BID_ID=2347)*. These slides were posted on 3/25/2021.*

**Q2: Are bid responses due by 2PM or at 2PM?**

*A2: Bid responses must be submitted no later than 2 PM* *on the due date specified in the Calendar of Events. As stated in Section IV.R of the RFP, SUBMITTAL OF BIDS, “Any bid received after said time and/or date or at a place other than the stated address cannot be considered and will be returned to the bidder unopened.”*

**Q3: Do the minimum qualifications have to be met by the prime vendor or can they be met through a subcontractor?**

*A3: The minimum qualifications described in Section I.D of the RFP, BIDDER QUALIFICATIONS, must be met by the prime vendor; they cannot be met through the experience of a subcontractor.*

**Q4: Am I correct in understanding that a potential SLEB partner must not only be enrolled as a SLEB Supplier but must be certified as well?  The SLEB Supplier system returns 417 names when querying for NAICS Code 541611.  However, only 88 or 21% are certified.  All of the local businesses are flagged as “Non-Certified LOCAL” and, it appears, ineligible for inclusion in our proposal.  Is this correct?**

*A4: Please refer to the following link for more details about the County’s Small, Local, and Emerging Business (SLEB) Program here:* [*http://acgov.org/auditor/sleb/overview.htm*](http://acgov.org/auditor/sleb/overview.htm)

 *In the event that a prime bidder, who is neither a Certified SLEB nor exempt from the SLEB program requirements, is subcontracting with a SLEB subcontractor in order to fulfil the requirements of the SLEB program, the SLEB subcontractor’s certification status must be active as of the date of the bid submission; a non-certified entity would not meet the requirements. Applicable SLEB subcontractors are* ***not*** *limited to NAICS code 541611. Please also refer to A18.*

**Q5: One of the organizations at the Bidders Conference indicated in the Chat window that they were a SLEB.  I was going to reach out to them but I could not find them in the County’s SLEB Supplier Query web page. Are they not eligible with regard to meeting SLEB requirements in the RFP?  I am also assuming that any Alameda County based consultants we have engaged for similar work in the past would not qualify if they are not certified and on the County SLEB list?**

*A5: To meet the SLEB requirements for this RFP, a subcontracted SLEB entity must be certified with active certification at the time of the bid submission; please refer to A4 above. For the portion of this question concerning external consultants, please refer to A12 and A18.*

**Q6: Can we FedEx bid responses?**

*A6: Yes. Bidders may FedEx bid responses; bidders should ensure that it will be received at the delivery address by 2pm on April 19. Please refer to RFP Section R, Submittal of Bids, pages 21 – 23 for detailed instruction on the submittal of bids.*

**Q7: Must the bids be submitted in 1 original hard copy, 3 copied, plus electronic, or just electronic?**

*A7: For a bid packet to be deemed complete, it must include 1 original hard copy, 3 copies, and an electronic copy in USB or disk. Please refer to RFP Section R, Submittal of Bids, pages 22 – 23 for detailed instructions regarding the submission of bid packets.*

**Q8: How many references are required?**

*A8: At least three references are required. Please refer to page 7 of Exhibit A (c) for detailed instructions on reference requirements.*

**Q9: On page 4 of Exhibit A, there is an item where the bidder indicates its entity/organizational structure.  As a non-profit corporation, do we select Corporation or Non-Profit/Church?**

*A9: You may select Non-Profit if your organization holds a 501(c)3 status.*

**Scope of Work Questions**

**Q10: Must a substantial percentage of them [the external consultants] be SLEBs to meet the SLEB requirements?**

*A10: There will be no need for bidders to recommend expert consultants, unless requested by HCSA; HCSA is not obligated to accept a requested recommendation. ACBH also has knowledge of consultants that are qualified to provide expertise that meets the ACBH’s needs or requirements. The external consultants are not required to be SLEB’s. The County will determine the external consultants to be utilized and will identify these external consultants to the awarded bidder. The County will communicate the terms of each engagement with the external consultants to the awarded bidder.*

**Q11: Is there an incumbent providing any of these services currently?**

*A11: No, there is no organization currently providing the required scope of work described in this RFP. However, the County is engaged in an agreement containing a similar scope of work with California Institute of Behavioral Health Solutions.*

**Q12: Does HCSA already have the expert consultants they want in mind, or should the bidders propose them?**

*A12: Please refer to A10.*

**Q13: Is there any guidance around how much of the work should be performed directly by the contractor versus the “external consultants” that are discussed?**

*A13: Almost 100% of the work will be provided by external consultants identified by ACBH executive leadership. However, the winning bidder must have access to an existing network of experts that are qualified and can meet the needs of ACBH, upon short notice. ACBH has the option of choosing the qualified external consultants that will be utilized. The primary role of the awarded bidder/contractor will be to provide technical assistance, administrative services, professional consultation, and/or payment to external consultants in support of the external consultants’ work, which will be assigned by ACBH executive leadership, communicated the awarded bidder, and governed by separate agreements.*

**Q14: Can you please clarify what is meant by “Eighty-five (85) percent of the total contract award shall be for payment to external consultants” and “Fifteen (15) percent of the total contract award shall be for administrative fees for the awarded contractor managing the services provided by external consultants” on Page 5 of Exhibit A?**

*A14: 15% of the total contract award will be utilized to pay the awarded bidder for technical assistance, administrative services, professional consultation, and/or payment to external consultants (in an amount not to exceed $447,750); the awarded bidder will manage the remaining 85% of the total contract award in a fiduciary capacity in order to pay external consultants (in an amount not to exceed $2,537,250), as described in Exhibit A of the RFP, page 5, Bid Form(s).*

**Q15: How does the 15%/85% aspect of the contract award impact the amount that a SLEB subcontractor would receive?**

*A15: The SLEB subcontracting requirement applies only to the 15% of the contract award reserved for the prime bidder, as described in Answer 14 of this Q&A document. In the event that the prime bidder is subcontracting 20% of their portion of the contract award to a SLEB organization in order to comply with the requirements of the SLEB Program, 12% of the total contract award (an amount not to exceed $358,200) would be utilized to pay the awarded bidder for administrative, consulting, and fiduciary services and 3% of the total contract award (in an amount not to exceed $89,550) would be utilized to pay the SLEB subcontractor for the services provided in assisting the prime bidder with the scope of work described in this RFP. Please also refer to A18 regarding potential exemptions from certain requirements.*

**Q16: Section I.C.4 of the RFP indicates that the "Bidder shall have the ability to carry out fiduciary responsibilities as a fiscal agent or sponsor." Likewise, Section I.D.1 states that "At the request of HCSA, the awarded contractor shall provide technical assistance, administrative services, professional consultation, and/or payment to external consultants" (emphasis mine). Can you please describe in more detail what fiduciary responsibilities will be expected of the contractor?**

*A16: The prime bidder will act in a fiduciary capacity by managing funding designated for external consultants on behalf of the County. The prime bidder will set up an individual purchase order with a maximum amount for each external consultant, pay the external consultant upon written approval from ACBH, and send a Form 1099 to each external consultant. The County will coordinate with the prime bidder regarding the scopes of work of external consultants and terms for payment to these entities. The prime bidder will* ***not*** *be expected to identify the external consultants on behalf of the County unless explicitly requested by ACBH executive leadership.*

**Q17: Given the on-demand nature of the work requested the RFP Scope of Work is, of necessity, quite  broad.  Page 6 of the RFP (Section I. D, Specific Requirements) states that,**

 **“1. At the request of HCSA, the awarded contractor shall provide technical assistance, administrative services, professional consultation, and/or payment to external consultants; and
2.   As these external consultants are not known at this time. . . “**

 **The range of potential subject matter expertise required is very broad.   A SLEB consultant we may identify in the proposal may or may not have a skill set consistent with the needs of the County as they emerge over the life of the contract.  How can we thoughtfully engage the services of an Alameda County SLEB consulting firm or individual consultant when the specific service needs of the County are not known at the time of proposal development?**

*A17: The SLEB subcontractor will not be performing the work of the external consultants. A SLEB subcontractor would assist the Prime Bidder in meeting their obligations of providing technical assistance, administrative services, professional consultation, and/or payment to external consultants. The external consultants will be identified by the County, not the awarded bidder. Prime bidders that require a subcontracting relationship with a SLEB entity in order to fulfil the requirements of the SLEB Program are encouraged to thoughtfully incorporate their subcontractor into their plans for providing technical assistance, administrative services, professional consultation, and/or payment to external consultants. Please refer to A10, A13, and A18 for related answers.*

**Q18: If a Bidder cannot locate or submit a subcontractor on this RFP or otherwise meet the SLEB requirement, can the Bidder request a SLEB waiver?**

*A18. To take any exception to the County provisions in the RFP, such as the SLEB requirements, Bidder must use the Exceptions, Clarifications, Amendments form on Exhibit A of the RFP, page 12. The Bidder must cite each particular instance in the RFP which the Bidder takes exception to and provide a description of the nature of the exception requested (e.g., an exception to the SLEB subcontract requirement or amount).*

 *The County is under no obligations to accept any exceptions and such exceptions may be a basis for bid disqualification. Nonetheless, due to the depth of scope of work and the deliverables and expertise expected by County, it is acknowledged by HCSA that exceptions to this requirement may be necessary.*

 *If Bidders are having difficulties finding a SLEB subcontractor or meeting the SLEB requirement, the County suggests contacting Auditor-Controller Agency, Office of Contract Compliance & Reporting (OCCR) for assistance. Contact information can be found at the following link:* [*https://acgov.org/auditor/sleb/contactus.htm*](https://acgov.org/auditor/sleb/contactus.htm)