



Sandia National Laboratories

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR A SMALL BUSINESS SET-ASIDE PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE RFQ

Updates to this FAQ:

Answer to Question 1 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 2 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 3 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 4 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 7 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 12 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 23 updated on 01.26.2012

QUESTIONS	SNL ANSWER
1. If our company decides to not participate/respond in this RFQ, how do I appropriately notify SNL of our decision in such a way that we do not jeopardize our ability to work with SNL in other areas or at future times?	If the offeror does not intend to bid on the requirement, the offeror should notify the SCR in writing (via email) of its intent to "no bid" this requirement. A "no bid" response will not jeopardize future opportunities with Sandia.
2. If a current incumbent does not win a follow-on contract, are the successful offeror(s) required to hire that unsuccessful incumbent's technical writers and graphics artists.	No.
3. Will Sandia accept alternate proposals versus the requirements stated in the RFQ?	No.
4. Do all teaming members have to be a small business?	It depends on the teaming arrangement. Under a joint venture teaming arrangement, all members must be small businesses. If a prime contractor/subcontractor teaming arrangement is being used then the prime contractor must be a small business. The subcontractor may be a large business. However, under this type of teaming arrangement the large business subcontractor may not perform more than 50% of the cost of services.
5. Are companies who do not have NAICS code as listed in the RFQ excluded from the bid process? If a company has a different NAICS code can they still team with other services as primary or sub-contractor?	There is no restriction regarding the NAICS codes if it is a subcontract arrangement--if they submit as a joint venture or affiliate then both has to meet the NAICS.
6. With respect to awards of set-asides for small businesses is there a limitation on the participation of large businesses as subcontractors?	Yes, if they choose to participate in a small business set-aside as provided for by the Small Business Administration. The requirement for prime/subcontractor teams with small business as the prime and one or more large businesses as a subcontractor(s) is that at least 50% of the costs of labor

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	must be performed by small business with the remainder being performed by large business.
7. Is preference given to those primes whose team members are comprised of SBA certified diverse small businesses.	Sandia may give consideration to the diversity of a small business team. However, the evaluation will be conducted based on best value to Sandia.
8. Would our proposal be viewed negatively if our team member(s) are large?	Not as long as your team can meet the business size split requirements.
9. Is Sandia interested in monitoring or knowing the percentage of spend with the prime contractor's tier 2 diverse suppliers?	No.
10. Is 8A certification required for participation in this project?	No.
11. Is it a requirement that companies bidding this project be certified to do business for all Sandia work sites?	Companies are required to meet all state and federal requirements for the states in which they are required to perform. Check with the State governments for those states to determine these state's requirements.
12. Is this possible to form a team with one large business and two small businesses? e.g. Large Business 49%, (Small Business A 26% + Small Business B 25% = Total Small Business 51%)	This arrangement would not work. In order to be eligible for a small business set aside, the company leading the team has to be a small Business (e.g. the prime contractor in a contractor/subcontractor relationship) and this company has to be able to perform at least 50% of the cost of labor for the total effort.
13. Is it permissible to add or change teaming partners during contract negotiations prior to award or after the contract has been executed. If so, what limits are imposed.	Not after the proposal due date deadline and before contract award. Changes may be made to teaming partners after contract award subject to Sandia Contracting Representative approval.
14. Will non-profit institutions that are part of a team for the Sandia Staff Augmentation bid be given the same status as small businesses?	Please check with SBA and/or obtain legal advice regarding this issue.
15. If badges are required for on-site meetings, who bears that cost?	Sandia and the U.S. Government.
16. Is prior relevant experience with SNL required to be able to bid on the RFQ?	No.
17. How can teams, other than contractors and subcontractors, organize themselves to meet Sandia's limitations on subcontracting guidelines for percent of contract work?	There may be opportunities to accomplish a variety of different teaming arrangements that comply with SBA requirements. Please check with SBA and/or obtain legal advice regarding this issue.
18. How many incumbents are eligible to re-bid?	All that meet the SBA requirements for 100% small business set-aside are eligible to bid on these requirements including prime/sub relationships.
19. How can small businesses be better educated on small business affiliations to compete with incumbents?	Prospective small business offerors may want to consider approaching business development organizations, the SBA and/or professional legal, accounting or business management firms for this type of assistance.
20. If you team on a contract do you still retain control of your employees?	Questions of this type should be covered in the teaming arrangement.
21. Is there a controlling process to prevent the contractor from subsuming everything from its subcontractors?	The teaming arrangement, which must be compliant with Sandia's requirements regarding the minimum 50% Small Business participation is otherwise not subject to Sandia's control regarding participation in the business.
22. How will SNL provide feedback on resumes?	Sandia will not provide feedback on resumes.
23. In reference to Instruction 19, item #1 on	Sandia will rely on self-certification by the Offerors, but may

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page 7, what will be the primary basis for SNL to determine if an Offeror meets the NAICS small business size standard? Is it the Offeror's Current Annual Revenue? If a Joint Venture is formed, is the size standard independently determined per team member or collectively as one?	utilize other resources to verify that size standards are within compliance of SBA guidelines for small business eligibility.
24. Regarding Solicitation Instruction for Contract Award Criteria, does the Mandatory Requirements, Item 2 for a minimum of ten years of documented relevant experience have to be with our current organizational entity? Or can it include relevant experience with predecessor companies?	The relevant experience may include predecessor company experience as long as it is verifiable
25. Will Sandia provide a copy of the attendee list for the pre-bidders conference to the prospective offerors?	No.
26. Since Sandia National Laboratories are operated by the Sandia Corporation, a Lockheed Martin business entity, is this contract subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulations?	FAR and FAR supplements requirements apply, but only to the extent stated in the RFQ.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PRIOR TO THE PRE-BIDDER'S CONFERENCE

Updates to this FAQ:

Answer to Question 17 updated on 01.26.2012

Answer to Question 27 updated on 01.26.2012

QUESTIONS	SNL ANSWER
<p>1. (a) Our company is working on writing its proposal in response to RFQ 62233 and I got an email this morning regarding a new opportunity on the Opportunities Website that looks like it is the same opportunity. I wanted to know if this changes any of the dates associated with RFQ 62233 since the posting close date is after the proposal due date.</p> <p>1. (b) Additionally, do I need to respond to this opportunity? Just wanted to make sure we didn't miss anything.</p>	<p>1. (a) An opportunity was posted for this requirement on Sandia's Business opportunity website on 11.19.2010 under ID #871. The requirement was put on hold until a few months ago and it has since been rescoped to be for non-classified technical writing and graphics design only under a small business set-aside which may result in more than one contract. Due to the lengthy passage of time from the original opportunity announcement Sandia decided to repost opportunity and link the announcement to the website for this RFQ. For this and other reasons, the quotation due date has been extended to January 25, 2012 which matches the closing date on the opportunity website announcement for ID #871. Refer also the RFQ Quotation Instruction entitled, "Quotation Submission Instructions" under the subparagraph heading, "Quotation Due Date" to see the extension until January 25 for submission of quotations. Offerors are cautioned that any further extensions are unlikely.</p> <p>1. (b) Companies do not need to submit an expression of interest in this opportunity. They can just submit a quotation in accordance with the RFQ instructions if they believe that they may have a reasonable chance of success given the Statement of Work requirements and the mandatory and desirable criteria specified in the Quotation Instructions.</p>
<p>2. I received the New Sandia Opportunity (id=871) email this morning and saw a button to request the RFQ. Is this the same RFQ you provided on December 22 or is it a new RFQ with updates?</p>	<p>As noted in the preceding Q&A, this announcement is for the same RFQ as was posted on the website. However, please note that the RFQ on the website has been revised to (1) change the attendance for the Pre-Quotation Conference from mandatory to highly recommended, (2) extend the period for asking questions, (3) extend the quotation due date, and (4) revise one of Mandatory Requirement #2 and Evaluation Criterion 1.</p>
<p>3. The announcement states that "A mandatory Pre-Bidder's conference will be held in Albuquerque..." Can this be done via telecon or will it need to be in person?</p>	<p>Participation in this event by prospective offerors may only be done in person. Presentation material from the event will be posted on the website. However, not all communication that is orally stated may be captured. That is just one reason why attendance is highly encouraged especially for a requirement of this magnitude. Other benefits of participation in the conference may be to assess the level of</p>

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	interest in the opportunity by potential competitors and potential networking opportunities.
<p>4. It is clear that there are incumbent contractors for the services being sought. Can you please share the names of those incumbents and whether or not the existing services are provided by a single contractor or multiple contractors?</p>	<p>There are currently three incumbents who hold these contracts and they all reside in Albuquerque. However the scope of work and the terms and conditions of those contracts have variations which differ from the follow-on contract being competed under RFQ 62233.</p> <p>The current incumbents who have held these contracts since 1998 include:</p> <p>LJ Lubin Inc, Dba Technically Write, a small business (POC Leslie Lubin) – primarily technical writing with a component of graphics arts including web design.</p> <p>Raytheon-Ktech, a large business (POC Mary Rice) – primarily technical writing with a significant component of graphics arts including web design.</p> <p>Aibus Subia, a small business (POC George Subia) – primarily graphics design.</p>
<p>5. Is the response date 13-Jan 2012 as listed on RFQ, or 25-Jan 2012 as listed in the opportunity announcement #871 on Sandia's Business Opportunities website?</p>	<p>The quotation due date has been extended until 1.25.2012 to match the close date for announcement #871.</p>
<p>6. Has the Web Design portion of the RFQ, as advertised on the original announcement for opportunity ID #871, been removed from the current RFQ? If so, will this be a future SB opportunity?</p>	<p>Yes it has been removed and will not be sought under this RFQ. It is possible that this type of work may be sought as a small business set-aside under a different contract arrangement. However, it will not be sought as a JIT requirement because there is not a sufficient volume of off-site graphics design work to justify inclusion in a JIT contract.</p>
<p>7. In your email of November 15, 2010, you noted that a list of bidders would be available on the RFQ website. The information would include company name of prospective offerors; point of contact with phone number, email address, mailing address; and company website if one is available. Do you still plan to post that information? If so, when do you expect to post it?</p>	<p>We have decided not to post the prospective bidders' list on the website. The original intent of posting the bidders list was to facilitate/support teaming opportunities for prospective offerors who were so inclined. As it turned out, there were a number of non-incumbent prospective offerors who indicated that they did not want to be identified on the website. Based on this we decided to err on the side of caution so as not to inadvertently disclose a prospective non-incumbent offeror who did not want to be identified. Additionally, we assume that the companies that are in engaged in this type of industry have the resources to identify potential teaming partners if they are so inclined.</p>
<p>8. Would Sandia Labs allow the use of Skype to include my California subcontractors in the Livermore area to participate in meetings and help keep travel costs down?</p>	<p>No. Due to security restrictions Sandia does not allow the use of Skype video conferencing.</p>
<p>9. When do you plan to post the questions and answers bidders have submitted for this RFQ?</p>	<p>There will be periodic updates to the website to answer questions as they are received in order to provide as timely of information as possible. Some questions require more research than others, thus responses to those type of questions will take a bit longer. Every effort will be made to expedite providing responses due to the compressed</p>

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	schedule for this source selection.
10. The RFQ a conflicting delivery deadline for submittal of quotations. Specifically the RFQ 5pm and the main body of the website has 6pm. Can you clarify the actual deadline?	As previously stated above, the due date for submittal of quotations is 1.25.2012. The closing time on this date is 5 PM. The website has been revised to correct this discrepancy.
11. Are you requiring bidders for you requirement to maintain a GSA schedule contract?	No.
12. For Mandatory Requirements - It states that we need to provide documentation clearly demonstrating that each organizational member has at least ten years documented relevant experience in providing technical writing and graphics work for government agencies and/or government contractors. What kind of documentation are you looking for? Does it have to be experience for government agencies/contractors only? Can it be some of our commercial clients?	Mandatory Requirement #2 has been modified to allow 10 years of documented relevant experience with non-government organizations. However, please note that preference will be given to offerors who have ten years of relevant documented experience with government agencies and/or government contractors. We have heard from prospective offerors both incumbent and non-incumbent who have this type of experience. Keep this in mind as to your prospective competition because we recognize the time and effort involved in quoting on a contract requirement. As for the documentation required to demonstrate your company or team's experience it is clearly stated in Criterion 2 of the RFQ.
13. How many resumes per labor category are you looking for?	Please refer to Criterion 1, paragraph A as revised.
14. It states in the RFQ, that pricing submitted for this RFQ will be obtained via an Online Reverse Auction. Would you please clarify, Whether we have to submit the pricing along with RFQ response?	Do not submit pricing with the RFQ response. Please refer to the second paragraph of the Quotation Instruction entitled, "Reverse Auction – JIT".
15. Section I: Terms and Conditions: A. Solicitation Instructions: 5. Reverse Auction: Price Evaluation: How is the timeline for award affected if the reverse auction is cancelled and sealed bids are accepted?	If this scenario were to occur, it is possible that the schedule might have to be shifted to extend the timeline for award. Having said that, there is a relatively low chance that the reverse auction would be cancelled in lieu of sealed bids.
16. Section I: Terms and Conditions: A. Solicitation Instructions: 23. Contract Award Criteria: Criterion 1: What proportion of the work is expected to be performed for Sandia New Mexico and Sandia California?	Sandia does not track hard metrics in terms of JIT spend for creative services between the two sites, but a 90%/9% ratio is realistic with the higher percentage occurring for Sandia New Mexico. The remaining 1% would be for other Sandia site locations which may utilize these services.
17. Section I: Terms and Conditions: A. Solicitation Instructions: 23. Contract Award Criteria: Criterion 1: How do resumes figure in the page count for Part III of the proposal (maximum of 30 pages) stipulated on page 11?	Resumes do not count against the 30 page limit. However resumes are limited to pages each.
18. Section I: Terms and Conditions: A. Solicitation Instructions: 31. Contract Award by Best-value Determination: Does Sandia have a preferred format for the quote to be provided in this proposal?	No.
19. Section I: Terms and Conditions: B. Section I Clauses: 6. Key Personnel: Should expected Key Personnel be listed as part of the proposal?	Yes. Please refer to the Quotation Instruction entitled, "Contract Award Criteria" under the subparagraph heading entitled, "Criterion 3 – Customer Service Coordinator".

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20. Section I: Terms and Conditions: B. Section I Clauses: 2. Statement of Work: Introduction: Please describe the structure of the current on-site staff augmentation.	Staff Augmentation at Sandia consists of on-site work under close Sandia direction by contractor personnel who primarily work full-time with a small component who work part time. The technical writing work under RFQ 62233 will be for on-call as needed off-site work.
21. Section I: Terms and Conditions: B. Section I Clauses: 2. Statement of Work: Introduction: How much interaction will the Offeror have with the Sandia Creative Group? Will the Sandia Creative Group have oversight over the Offeror, or will they both be independent? Will the Offeror's work flow through the Sandia Creative Group? Will the Offeror communicate directly to customers or will it have to communicate through the Sandia Creative Group?	The Sandia Creative Group is an internal resource for the Laboratory to use for their writing, graphics, photography, and exhibit needs. There may be occasions when the Creative Group and the Offeror will work together in order to support the customer's need. The Creative Group and the Offeror are independent of each other where neither party will have oversight of the other's work as it relates to the capabilities offered.
22. Section I: Terms and Conditions: B. Section I Clauses: 2. Statement of Work: Objective: Is there any requirement or provision for Offeror personnel to be cleared?	No. However, Sandia reserves the right to change security requirements at any time after award. Additionally the contract does contain provisions pertaining to operational security. Please refer to the Quotation Instruction entitled "Employment Eligibility Verification" and the Section I clause entitled, "Homeland Security", the latter which pertains to escorted access to Sandia facilities for occasional on-site meetings.
23. Section I Agreement: May orders be issued by any Sandia Contracting Representative (SCR) or only the SCR for the Ordering Agreement?	The orders will be initiated by Sandia end-users/customers. The successful offeror or offerors normally enter the orders for the customer. In some instances a Sandia contract administrator may enter the order. Training will be provided to the successful offeror or offerors on how to enter orders.
24. Section I: Terms and Conditions: B. Section I Clauses: 2. Statement of Work: General Information: Notes: May orders be issued by any Sandia employee or only by SCRs? (This information seems to be in conflict with the information presented in B. Section I Clauses: 1. Ordering Agreement on page 18).	See the response to question 23 directly above.
25. Are all the pages in the resumes included in Part III's 30-page maximum?	No. However, resumes are limited to two pages per candidate.
26. In the response to the evaluation criteria, does the 30 pages include Sandia's RFQ text? Does this include or exclude the page counts for responses to clauses?	The only Sandia text that should be included are cross references to Solicitation Instruction titles, mandatory requirements, evaluation criteria and if applicable, Section I contract clause titles. Additionally, paragraph cross references are helpful.
27. In item #20, I called the NM Taxation and Revenue Department and they haven't heard of an NMGR Limited Agency Agreement and don't have any forms. What are you looking for here? Is this a Sandia form? If so, how would I get one?	<p>The Solicitation Instruction explains the elements of whether a limited agency relationship exists between the offeror and subcontractors. If the offeror determines that such a relationship exists, they need to provide the following verbiage with their quotation:</p> <p><i>Pursuant to the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department rulings: 452-96-2, 452-96-3, 452-96-4, and 452-96-5 _____ is the Prime Contractor</i></p>

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	<p><i>acting as a limited agent for _____ pursuant to the above rulings, please issue a type 5 NTTC (non-taxable transaction certificate) directly to _____ (Prime Contractor Name).</i></p> <p>_____</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Signature</td><td>Signature</td></tr> <tr> <td>Contact Name, Title</td><td>Contact Name, Title</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prime (Company Name)</td><td>Sub (Company Name)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Address 1</td><td>Address 1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Address 2, if applicable</td><td>Address 2, if applicable</td></tr> <tr> <td>Phone #</td><td>Phone #</td></tr> <tr> <td>*NM CRS#</td><td>* NM CRS#</td></tr> <tr> <td>Federal ID #</td><td>Federal ID#</td></tr> </table> <p>*New Mexico Combined Reporting System</p>	Signature	Signature	Contact Name, Title	Contact Name, Title	Prime (Company Name)	Sub (Company Name)	Address 1	Address 1	Address 2, if applicable	Address 2, if applicable	Phone #	Phone #	*NM CRS#	* NM CRS#	Federal ID #	Federal ID#
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<p>28. Regarding section 23 item 2 "The Offeror or leader for a team shall provide documentation clearly demonstrating that each organizational member has at least ten years documented relevant experience in providing technical writing and graphics work for government agencies and/or government contractors."</p> <p>What form of documented experience would be required and how would the documentation be verified?</p>	<p>That information is included in Criterion 2. Namely contract numbers customer names, addresses, customer points of contact, etc. The verifications will be through reference check. Please read the RFQ more carefully.</p>																
<p>29. Also, if the team leader does not have the ten years of documented experience, would that disallow the Offeror from being considered for award?</p>	<p>Mandatory Requirement #2 has been revised to allow offerors who do not have ten years of management experience but do have a cadre of technical writers and graphic artists with ten years of relevant documented experience to have their proposals scored.</p>																



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY



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