

RFQ 710-17-1000 DHS Consultants Updated 12/9/16

Question#	Question	Response
1	Initially reading the RFQ it seems that a potential vendor must has capabilities in all areas in order to submit a proposal. Although, after re-reading section 2.1 it seems that potential vendors can "select" the areas where minimum requirements have been met. Can you confirm I am understanding this correctly?	Yes, you can select which areas you would like to be listed under, but you must present separate qualifications for each listing as per the RFQ.
2	In section 1.1 the wording suggest that “any of the following selected areas” but in 2.1 the verbiage is different. Can you please clarify? My agency is skilled in the area of Public Relations but not in any other of the areas...would we still be considered?	Yes, your agency would submit your qualifications and select the area of your specialty in section E.2 on the Information for Evaluation form located in the Response Packet.
3	Should references be IT related or program (i.e. Medicaid) related?	References should be related to the area that you are selecting to be considered for. If you wish to be considered for multiple areas, you will need to submit separate references for each area.
4	For the 11 categories listed in Section 1.1 for which the Department is soliciting vendors, are there definitions or descriptions of the kinds of projects that would be contemplated in each area? Alternately, or in addition, can the Department provide a list of the kinds of projects (and dollar amounts) by these areas that have been funded in the last several years?	No, there are no definitions or descriptions for each area and we cannot provide specific project information at this time. These areas have been identified as areas of potential need or projects for the future and do not specifically indicate current use within a contract.

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5	<p>Section 2.1.D requires “three (3) letters of recommendation from three different sources per selected area of expertise”. Can bidders use a single reference letter that identifies multiple projects to count toward the requirement for multiple areas of expertise? We are anxious to limit the number of requests to our clients given their busy schedules if a single letter that identifies multiple areas of expertise can suffice.</p>	<p>Letters of recommendation should reflect expertise in each selected area. It is acceptable to receive one letter from a vendor attesting to multiple areas, however, that letter will need to be submitted for each area you wish to be considered. For example, if one letter attests to your work in both actuarial work and data analytics, you would need to submit one copy to be considered as part of your actuarial work response, and another copy of the same letter as part of your data analytics work.</p>
6	<p>At the beginning of Section 2, the solicitation states “Do not provide responses to items in this section unless specifically and expressly required.”.</p> <p>Question: Will the state please confirm that a response to Section 2 items A-D is required as part of this submission? Or does the State want offerors to respond by only completing the forms within the Response Packet? If the State requires a response to Section 2 items A-D, would the State please confirm Vendors should include it’s response to Section 2 A-D at the end of the “Information for Evaluation” section of the response packet?</p>	<p>Section 2 outlines the items that should be submitted in your response packet. Those items that are listed as “shall provide” are considered “expressly required”. As per Section 3, responses that do not meet the requirements in Section 2 will be disqualified and will not be included on the listing. See Addendum 1 and the Updated Technical Response Packet.</p>
7	<p>2.1 C states: “Vendor shall list three (3) key personnel and their direct relevant functional experience over the last five (5) years per selected area, or give an explanation as to why three (3) are not submitted. Direct relevant experience can include both contract and direct employment. The vendor should provide: • Evidence of the qualifications and credentials of the respondent’s key personnel.”</p> <p>Question: Would DHS please confirm that the requirement for Key Personnel evidence is only to confirm the quality of Vendor’s experience in applicable areas and that commitment of Key Personnel to a particular project will be defined within individual SOW responses?</p>	<p>Yes, the listing of Key Personnel is to confirm the quality of the Vendor’s experience in each applicable area they wish to be considered. Commitment of Key Personnel to actual projects may be required when individual Scopes of Work are issued.</p>

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8	<p>We understand that the specific requirements related to the areas of expertise outlined in the RFP are not available at this time; however, would it be possible to get some detail on the general types of activities or projects that may fall under these three areas of expertise?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o State Administration and Reporting for the Medicaid Program o Medicaid, National Health and Federal Child Welfare Law, Policy Development and Program Implementation o Data Analytics 	See Question 4.
9	<p>If selected from the Qualified Vendor Listing for a specific project, is possible for vendors to use subcontractors if the subcontractor is not on the Qualified Vendor Listing? Do subcontracts need to be named in this response? Not knowing the details of the specific areas of expertise makes it difficult to identify possible subcontractors at this time.</p>	Yes, you will have the ability to present subcontractors for specific projects if selected. You do not have to name subcontractor in the response.
10	<p>In Section 2.1, it asks the vendor to provide detailed responses to A – D. Where should these responses be included in the “Organization of Response Documents”? (Section 1.9 B). Would it fall as an addendum to the <i>Information for Evaluation</i> section of the <i>Response Packet</i>?</p>	Information for evaluation should be submitted as part of the Response Packet. The information For Evaluation page is the “cover” to your response packet which should include the items listed in Section 2.1 A-D per selected area. See Addendum 1 and the Updated Technical Response Packet.
11	<p>Will the state provide additional detail/description on the area “State Administration and Reporting for the Medicaid Program”?</p>	See Question 4.

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12	Section 1.9 States the preferred order of our Response, but does not include the required information under Section 2.1 Vendor Qualifications. Please confirm that our response to Section 2.1 should follow <i>Information for Evaluation</i> in the Response Packet.	See Question 10.
13	Can DHS provide examples of the types of work/projects for each area listed? We want to be sure we are providing information on a category in the same manner that DHS is thinking of that category.	See Question 4.
14	Can DHS please provide more definition around the Federal Cost Allocation Plan category?	See Question 4
15	Would Cost Allocation Plans prepared by the State and submitted to the Federal agencies qualify as Federal experience?	Yes

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16	Would DHS accept representative resumes for each selected area? Since we are not responding to a specific scope of work at this time, it is not feasible to state which of our personnel would be available for an area.	Yes
17	May the same letter of recommendation from an agency or organization be used across multiple selected areas, if we are referencing the same project across multiple areas?	See Questions 3 and 5.
18	<p>What information is the State looking for in a response for staff months required?</p> <p>If we respond with a time period of 1/1/13 – 12/31/15, would you expect a 24 month response? Would we multiply this by the number of staff on the project?</p>	We are looking for Full Time Equivalent (FTE)s on project. If your project was over a 24 month period, with 16 people at .5FTEs, that would be the equivalent of 8 FTEs on the project over the entire 24 month period.
19	As vendors may be responding to all 11 areas of expertise which would require 33 separate letters of recommendation, can the State extend the deadline to enable vendors to acquire these letters?	See Addendum 1

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20	How many vendors will be awarded under this contract?	See Section 1.3, Placement on the Qualified Vendor Listing does not guarantee that the vendor will be contracted to perform any services but only serves notice as a desire to be considered. Also, see Section 3, B. Vendors whose responses meet all Requirements, shall be included on the Qualified Vendor Listing.
21	Will DHS select only one vendor out of the list of qualified vendors for a project under this contract or will more than one vendor be chosen to bid for the work? If more than one, what is the minimum number of vendors that would need to be considered?	That will be depended on the number of Qualified Vendors on the listing, and the Scope of Work for each selected project.
22	Can electronic response copies be provided in PDF?	Yes
23	Please provide a brief description of each of the 'Areas' listed in Section 2.1 so that we can provide the most meaningful and relevant performance examples and letters of recommendation?	See Question 4.

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24	Will the State accept past performance examples from within 5 years instead of 3 years?	No
25	Can a key personnel resume be used across multiple areas of expertise or must there be 3 separate and unique key personnel for each area of expertise?	Resumes may be used across multiple areas if they reflect expertise in each separate area. A full set of qualifications must be presented for each area you wish to be selected.
26	If a key personnel has direct relevant experience from a previous employer in the past 5 years, will the State accept that experience?	Yes
27	Can a letter of recommendation be used across multiple areas of expertise or must there be 3 separate and unique letters of recommendation for each area of expertise?	See Question 1

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28	Are letters of recommendations from subcontractors acceptable?	No
29	Should vendor responses to Section 2.1 – Parts A-D be included in response to the “Information for Evaluation” section or in a different section of the response packet?	See Question 10.
30	<p>The RFQ mentions 11 bulleted “Areas” in Section 2.1 Vendor Qualifications.</p> <p>Is the following area considered one function or should it be separated out:</p> <p>Medicaid, National Health and Federal Child Welfare Law, Policy Development and Program Implementation?</p> <p>If to be separated, how does DHS break these up?</p> <p>Do we need to provide 3 projects of experience relevant to the above area or do we provide one project experience for each part of this “area”?</p>	<p>No, we will not be separating them out. Another way you may consider the area is as:</p> <p>Law, Policy Development, and Program Development in either, Medicaid, National Health or Federal Child Welfare. To be considered for the area, you would need to submit 3 project showing experience in the aforementioned.</p>
31	<p>The RFQ states: “For each referenced project, the vendor shall provide: [...] Project amount.”</p> <p>What is referred to as the “amount?” Is this how much we were paid to do the work? How much we estimated to do the work?</p>	Project amount refers to the total spend on the project. Estimates are not required but may be given.

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32	<p>The RFQ states: "Vendor shall list three (3) key personnel and their direct relevant functional experience over the last five (5) years per selected area, or give an explanation as to why three (3) are not submitted."</p> <p>Can we provide more than 3 key personnel? And, may we use the same personnel for multiple areas?</p>	<p>Yes, you may provide more than 3 key personnel and you may use the same personnel for multiple projects if their experience and related to those areas. You must submit copies for each area you are selecting.</p>
33	<p>Does direct employment count as experience in 2.1?</p>	<p>A vendor may use the combined experience of its owners or senior executive staff to satisfy this requirement or the combined experience of the key personnel of the vendor that will be responsible for satisfying the requirements of the contract to be procured.</p>
34	<p>Can any of the LORs come from direct employment in 2.1.D?</p>	<p>Per Section 2.1 D, Letters of Recommendation shall be limited to the organization submitting their qualifications and not the individual or personal recommendations. Therefore Letters of Recommendation concerning direct employment may be not representative of your organization's work.</p>
35	<p>Will all qualified vendors on the list be able to respond to each SOW? If not, could DHS provide additional details regarding the process and criteria it will use to determine which vendors will be able to respond to a particular SOW?</p>	<p>See Question 21 of the Posted Answers. See also Section 1.3, Process for Option 1, DHS retains the right to utilize enhanced qualifications specific to each SOW with the intent to produce a targeted sub-set of vendors.</p>

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36	Does DHS anticipate individual SOWs could cut across multiple areas of experience? If so will these SOWs be restricted to only those vendors that are qualified for all of the areas of experience pertinent to the SOW? Alternately, would DHS allow vendors who are not qualified for all areas experience covered by an SOW to supplement their experience through the use of teaming partners/subcontractors at the time the SOW issued?	No, individual scopes of work should not cross multiple areas.
37	We frequently use subcontractors to round out our experience for our clients. For purposes of this RFP, will DHS consider the combined experience of a proposed team for meeting the three-year requirement?	See Question 33
38	Can past performance examples from proposed subcontractors be used to fulfil the requirement that vendors provide at least three past performance examples per area or do all examples need to come from the “prime” vendor?	They must come the “prime” vendor.
39	Can key personnel from proposed subcontractors be used to fulfill the requirement that vendors list three key personnel per area?	No

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40	Are subcontractors included in vendor proposals restricted from also submitting their own separate proposals as a prime?	No
41	As a regulated national public accounting firm, our Firm is required by the regulatory bodies to be structured as a private partnership and as such, is not required to keep records in compliance with GAAP. Our firm's financial statements are prepared primarily utilizing the accrual method of accounting. Does this satisfy the RFQ's requirements as described in Section 4.5?	<p>Section 4.5 refers to the retention of contract documents. In accordance with Arkansas Law and DHS Policy:</p> <p>Contractors must retain financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, and all other records pertinent to the agreement for a minimum of five years following the termination of the contract (or six years for records containing protected healthcare information, as identified in the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act [HIPAA]), except when:</p> <p>A. An audit required by either a state or federal agency is in progress, or B. Notification has been received that a state or federal agency is requiring further audit action</p> <p>In either event, the contractor must retain all records pertaining to the contract until the contractor is notified in writing of the final resolution of the audit.</p>
42	Page 5 of the Terms and Conditions states that "Contractor shall comply with the Department audit requirements as outlined in "Arkansas Department of Human Services Audit Guidelines..." Could you provide a copy of these guidelines?	<p>Here is a location of the current Audit Guidelines:</p> <p>http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/oqa/Documents/DAG%2012-15-98.pdf</p>

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43	<p>In the vendor Q&A that has been posted regarding the above-referenced RFQ, Question 28 asked “Are letters of recommendation from subcontractors acceptable?” and the answer was “No.” We wish to clarify our understanding. If our firm wishes to respond as prime with another firm as subcontractor, will you accept a letter of recommendation from a client of the subcontractor as part of our submission? In other words, in a given area, can our firm and our subcontractor combine our qualifications and together offer a total of at least three letters in order to qualify, or must a single firm qualify in a given area by itself?</p>	<p>No, we will not consider letters of recommendations from a subcontractor’s client as an attestation of the work of the prime. A single firm must qualify on its own.</p>
44	<p>Can offerors submit CPARS in lieu of a letter of recommendation? CPARS is the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System and is a web-enabled system issued by the Federal Government with electronic workflow that reports and rates Contractor performance. All received performances are provided electronically directly from the Federal Government.</p>	<p>Yes. See Addendum 2.</p>