

1. Chapter 1, Section “1. General Provisions”, subsection “1.1 Introduction” (Page 4 of the RFP) reads “*Any resulting contract(s) shall be written as a performance based contract and as such all submitted proposals shall be written in that structure.*”
 - 1.1. Question: In the context of this RFP and the deliverables requested, would you please specify what you mean by a “performance based contract” and how its status as a performance-based contract should affect pricing proposals?
 - 1.1.1. Answer: Any contract arising from this RFP will be drafted in a format that identifies the outputs, quality and outcomes of service provision and may tie at least a portion of a contractor’s payment as well as any contract extensions to their achievement.
 - 1.2. Question: The contract(s) that result from this RFP would run for a year with the possibility of an extension of up to two years, but deliverables are described only for the first three months.
 - 1.2.1. Answer: The State has identified two reports that shall be due in the early stages of the contract however it is anticipated that as a result of those deliverables the State may require further consultation and direction as associated with the provided assessment.
2. Chapter 1, Section “1. General Provisions”, subsection “1.6.7.2 Proposal Format” reads “*Send two (2) identical copies of each Program Proposal you are submitting ...*” Section “1. General Provisions”, subsection “1.6.8.1 Closing Date & Proposal Packet Delivery” reads “*Send Five (5) copies of your proposal packet to:*”
 - 2.1. Question: Could you please confirm how many proposals should be submitted?
 - 2.1.1. Answer: Please submit 5 hard copies of the proposal packet along with 1 electronic copy on CD
3. Chapter 1, Section 2.1. “Criteria for Scoring: I. INFORMATION FROM THE BIDDER, A. Quality of Bidder’s Experience” (page 9 of the RFP) reads “*Please provide data on the number of individuals served, funds expended and sources of funds for same or similar services to those called for in this RFP.*”
 - 3.1. Question: In researching, designing, enacting, seeking federal approval for and implementing provider taxes, one does not typically think of “number of individuals served”. Also, we are unsure we understand the other data requested here. Could you please specify in the context of this RFP precisely what data you are requesting here from bidders?
 - 3.1.1. Answer: The State is requesting data on the number of clients that you are currently engaged with or have been engaged with in providing consultative services for same or similar services to those called for in this RFP.
 - 3.2. Question: This section asks the bidder to “provide data on the number of individuals served, funds expended, and sources of funds for same or similar services for those called for in the RFP.” Please clarify how the Bidder should respond to this question if the Bidder’s experiences for same or similar services have been components of larger

contracts, rather than contracts only focused on consultation related to health care related taxes.

3.2.1. Answer: The State would be requesting how many clients you have or have been engaged with as part of larger contracts related to healthcare taxes.

4. Chapter 1, Section 2.1 – Criteria for Scoring, section I.B.: Bidder’s Capacity to Perform (page 9) This section instructs the Bidder to provide the required information on the Summary of Funding Form in Appendix B.

4.1. Question: Is a narrative also required? Please also see our Question #9 regarding this information.

4.1.1. Answer: Although a narrative is not required, it will be helpful during the review process.

5. Chapter 1, Section 2.1 – Criteria for Scoring, section 2.A.: Responsiveness to Specifications (page 9)

5.1. Question: Please provide more detail about the type of information you are requesting regarding “*how the bidder will evaluate its performance and quality.*”

5.1.1. Answer: Bidder will be evaluated on its performance and quality of work prior conducted. This assessment will include successful completion of similar work and effective outcomes.

6. Chapter 1, Section 2.1 – Criteria for Scoring, section 2.B.: Program Costs (page 9) – This section requires that the Bidder complete the Schedule A Budget Submittal Form.

6.1. Question: Could you please provide the referenced form and confirm that a table which includes estimated hours and hourly rates by staff member is sufficient?

6.1.1. Answer: Schedule A form has been posted at the following links: <http://dvha.vermont.gov/administration/2011-requests-for-proposal> and <http://www.vermontbusinessregistry.com/BidPreview.aspx?BidID=8485>. Bidders are not required to use this form it is merely a layout example. Any table which identifies assigned staff, hourly rates and estimated hours will satisfy this requirement

7. Chapter 1, Section 2.1 Criteria for Scoring: 2. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL/PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS, B. Program Cost” (page 9 of the RFP) reads “*Schedule A: Summary Program Costs. Use form Schedule A Budget Submittal Form to itemize your program costs. Include the total number of direct service and supervision FTEs funded by this contract.*” Yet later on page 36 of the RFP, under “Schedule A Detail of Expenses” (page 36) the RFP requests “*In narrative form explain how figures for salary, benefits, phone, mileage, buildings and facilities were determined*”.

7.1. Question: Is it possible there is a missing form? Schedule A, B and C on page 36 do not match up with Schedules A, B, C and D on page 9. Could you please illuminate how the schedules A, B, C and D on page 36 and on page 9 of the RFP should match up?

7.1.1. Answer: The RFP has been updated to align the Program cost section on page 9 with the included Appendix B, Schedules A – D. Schedule A form has also be

posted at the following links in PDF & Word formats:

<http://dvha.vermont.gov/administration/2011-requests-for-proposal> and
<http://www.vermontbusinessregistry.com/BidPreview.aspx?BidID=8485>.

7.2. Question: Does a firm need to respond with this level of detail if the firm is proposing a fixed price for the deliverables?

7.2.1. Answer: Yes, responding in this level of detail will assist the State in properly comparing all submitted proposals and assessing expenses for services past the report due dates should that be requested.

7.3. Question: These sections noted above seem to imply the state wishes pricing bids to be in the form of fixed fees for deliverables, and not some other method, including an hourly rate. Is that correct? If so, what guidance could you give vendors given that the contract could be for up to three years but the deliverables are specified only for the first three months.

7.3.1. Answer: The State would entertain a fixed price for deliverables and an option for an hourly rate.

7.4. Question: Does the state have a preferred form of pricing on this RFP for the bids it receives?

7.4.1. Answer: See above.

8. Appendix A, Required General Forms (Page 30 – 35) and Summary of Funds (Page 35).

8.1. Question: Would it be possible to obtain Word versions of the Required General Forms?

8.1.1. Answer: Yes all forms have been posted at the following links in PDF & Word formats: <http://dvha.vermont.gov/administration/2011-requests-for-proposal> and <http://www.vermontbusinessregistry.com/BidPreview.aspx?BidID=8485>.

8.2. Question: We are concerned about the confidentiality of the information required for the Summary of Funds form. Could you please tell us who would have access to the information we provide?

Answer: As outline in Chapter 1, Section 1.9. all bid proposals and submitted information connected to this RFP may be subject to disclosure under the State's access to public records law. Once the contract is finalized, material associated with its negotiation is a matter of public record except for those materials that are specifically exempted under the law. One such exemption is material that constitutes trade secret, proprietary, or confidential information. If the response includes material that is considered by the bidder to be proprietary and confidential under 1 V.S.A., Ch. 5 Sec. 317, the bidder shall clearly designate the material as such prior to bid submission. The bidder must identify each page or section of the response that it believes is proprietary and confidential and provide a written explanation relating to each marked portion to justify the denial of a public record request should the State receive such a request. The letter must address the proprietary or confidential nature of each marked section, provide the legal authority relied on, and explain the harm that would occur should the material be disclosed.

Upon receipt of a public records request, information about the competitive procurement may be subject to disclosure. DVHA will review the submitted bids and related materials and consider whether those portions specifically marked by a bidder as falling within one of the exceptions of 1 V.S.A., Ch. 5 Sec. 317 are legally exempt. If in DVHA's judgment pages or sections marked as proprietary or confidential are not proprietary or confidential, DVHA will contact the bidder to provide the bidder with an opportunity to prevent the disclosure of those marked portions of its bid.

9. Chapter 1, Section 3.1 – Contract Term (page 10) – This section identifies the contract ending on October 31, 2012.
 - 9.1. Question: In a later section (Chapter 3, Section 1, page 28) the due dates for the contract deliverables are identified as December 31, 2011 and January 15, 2012. What are the expectations of the contractor for the period between January 15 and October 31, 2012?
 - 9.1.1. Answer: The State may request adhoc consultative services during this time period.
10. Chapter 3, Section 1. – Attachment A Specification of Work to be Performed (pages 27 and 28) Number of expected deliverables vs. expected reports.
 - 10.1. Question: This section indicates there are two deliverables; however, there is only one report that is initially due to DVHA on December 31, 2011. Is it expected that both deliverables will be contained in the one report?
 - 10.1.1. Answer: The State is requesting two separate deliverables one on December 31, 2011 and one on January 15, 2012.
 - 10.2. Question: If there are two reports expected, please specify the due date for each report.
 - 10.2.1. Answer: See Above
 - 10.3. Question: If there are two reports expected, please clarify the difference between “an assessment of... additional data collection necessary to implement an expanded provider tax” in the description of the first deliverable and “proposal ...including mechanisms used to collect ... new classes recommended for assessment...”in the description of the second deliverable. (i.e., is the second deliverable intended to represent an implementation plan?)
 - 10.3.1. Answer: Yes
 - 10.4. Question: Please explain the expectation that the first deliverable include an “assessment of what revenues could be obtained” if the Contractor finds that no such information is available without devising and implementing a new data source to obtain the necessary information to develop this assessment.
 - 10.4.1. Answer: subject to:“...including an assessment of what revenues could be obtained, existing data sources available to be used for the assessment if any, and additional data collection necessary to implement an expanded provider tax .” Bidder will identify, if able, any revenue assessment methodology and outcomes that may support a more effective implementation of the provider tax.
11. Chapter 3, Section 1.1. – Technical Proposal (page 28)

11.1. Question: Please provide more information about how the items I. through IX. listed in this section relate to the items in the Section 2.A. Responsiveness to Specifications in the Scoring Chart on page 9 of the RFP. Also, can the Bidder respond to the questions in the order they are presented in the Chart (as section 1.6.7.4, page 6, indicates) or does the response need to follow the order presented on page 28?

11.1.1. Answer: Items I through IX are examples provided to the bidder of areas that may be addressed in responding to Section 2.A. Bidders are not required to concentrate on all items individually as long as Section 2.A. is properly addressed under the Technical Proposal section. Bidders are advised to focus on the order outlined in the scoring chart.

12. Chapter 3, Section 2.1. – Program Costs (page 28)

12.1. Question: This section indicates that proposals will be evaluated on Program Costs based on “...the narrative describing your company’s experience fiscally managing contracts of comparable scale, scope and complexity” and refers back to the Scoring Chart on page 9 of the RFP. However, this content is contained in the Scoring Chart section titled “Quality of Bidder’s Experience” and assigned 5 points of the 25 for that section. Please clarify in which section this information should be provided and where it will be scored. Also, please see our Question #3 regarding this information.

12.1.1. Answer: Chapter 3, Section 2.1 will be scored based on Program Costs associated with the fiscal management of contracts administered by the bidder. The Quality of Bidder’s Experience will be scored based on the bidder’s overall contract experience, not solely fiscal management of contracts.