

A TASK ORDER PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

1. The contractor shall submit its Task Order proposals on CD ROM. Its cost proposal must be presented on a CD ROM separate from its Technical Proposal. A total of six (6) CD ROMs containing the offeror's technical proposal and a total of six (6) CD ROMs containing the offeror's price proposal must be provided. Proposals may be sent either in Microsoft Word, Excel, or PDF format.

2. **Technical proposals shall not contain any cost or pricing information.** These two proposals must appear on separate CD ROM attachments.

3. All documents must be received at the address identified on the RFP's SF-33 block 7 and 8 by the time and date prescribed. The Offeror is solely responsible for the timely submission of the proposal materials discussed in the RFP.

B TASK ORDER TECHNICAL PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Offerors shall identify the **authors** of their proposals and **specify** those sections for which the writers had major responsibility. The technical proposal shall consist of the following major sections: (B.1) Introduction, (B.2) Technical Plan, (B.3) Data Collection and Analysis Techniques, (B.4) Qualification of Project Personnel, and (B.5) Similar Experience and Past Performance.

B.1 Introduction

The Introduction shall provide reviewers with an impression of the offeror's understanding of the requirement's objectives, scope of work and intended products.

B.2 Technical Plan (See Section D.3.2.1)

The offeror shall provide a technical plan that includes the offeror's approach to achieving the overall objectives of the Task Order, and its approach to each of the tasks in the statement of work. The plan must address potential issues that may arise during the conduct of the Task Order, and the offeror's strategy for handling any problems. The plan must include the offeror's strategy to ensure that all work is satisfactory to the NHTSA TOM and on schedule, including submission of all deliverables.

B.3 Data Collection and Analysis Techniques (See Section D.3.2.2)

The offeror shall propose data collection techniques including the literature review, concept development, focus group/survey work, usability/laboratory/simulator testing, roadway evaluation, in-vehicle data collection and data reduction. The offeror must describe in detail its approach for obtaining the required data for this project and discuss potential problems that could arise during data collection, and discuss how it will resolve such problems. If necessary, the offeror's proposal must address appropriate qualitative data analyses and to achieve the project's objectives. The offeror's ability to appropriately discuss results and draw appropriate conclusions must be demonstrated.

B.4 Qualification of Project Personnel (See Section D.3.2.3)

As part of the proposal, the offeror shall submit:

- a. The names and labor categories of all proposed staff members, as well as their role in performing the requirement, shall be identified for this Task Order.
- b. Resumes, with dates provided for past positions, shall be included for proposed professional and technical staff, including such staff to be obtained through the use of subcontractor personnel and consultants.
- c. Personnel must have expertise and work-related experience in the skills needed for successful completion of this project. Offeror staff must have experience in the areas of human factors in the driving domain, literature review, conducting focus group or surveys, usability/laboratory/simulator testing, research design, prototype development, vehicle instrumentation, qualitative data collection/analyses and technical report writing. The education, experience, and availability of key project technical personnel must be demonstrated. Subcontractors and/or consultants will be evaluated to the same standards as above.

B.5 Similar Experience and Past Performance (See Section D.3.2.4)

The offeror shall submit projects performed during the last three (3) years consistent with the size, scope and complexity described in the Task Order Statement of Work.

C BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

a. Contract Pricing Proposal

Offerors shall complete and submit the Price Schedules provided in this Task Order. The proposed labor categories and proposed loaded labor rates for this Task Order shall be consistent with what the offeror is proposing for the base award. The offeror should also consider the following:

1. Other Direct Costs. If the offeror anticipates that ODCs will be incurred in performing this Task Order, the offeror shall list those costs as well as explain the reason for including those costs.
2. Subcontracting Costs. If the offeror intends to include subcontracting in performing this Task Order, then additional pricing information will be required regarding subcontracting costs. Specifically, the offeror must describe the subcontracting effort as well as provide an explanation regarding the fairness and reasonableness of those costs.
3. Indirect Costs applicable to Other Direct Costs and Subcontracting Costs. The offeror (in accordance with its established accounting practices) may apply an indirect cost to Other Direct Costs and Subcontracting Costs ***only to the extent that those indirect costs are not recovered also in the loaded labor rate for each Direct Labor category***. If the offeror elects to apply indirect costs to Other Direct Costs, it must: (1) Identify the indirect cost rate applicable to Other Direct Costs in the price table; (2) Show that these indirect cost are not being recovered as part of the Direct Labor's loaded hourly rates; and (3) Show that the application of indirect costs to Other Direct Costs is in accordance with its established accounting practices.
4. Application of fee or profit. Fee or profit may only be applied to the offeror's Direct Labor rates. ***The offeror's fee or profit may not be applied to any Other Direct or Subcontracting Costs***

D. EVALUATION AND AWARD FACTORS

D.1 EVALUATION, NEGOTIATIONS AND AWARD PROCESS:

- A. The evaluation process designed for this procurement will be of a two-phased nature.

INITIALLY - The offeror's technical proposal will be evaluated for technical merit according to the criteria set forth in this section D.2, EVALUATION FACTORS.

SECONDLY - The offeror's proposed prices will be considered. The review of the offeror's cost estimates will be made independently of the technical review. Prices of **technically unacceptable** proposals will not be evaluated.

- B. Discussions may be conducted with those offerors whose responsive and technically acceptable technical proposals, combined with their price proposals, place them in the competitive range. Discussions will be conducted to the extent deemed necessary by the Government. **HOWEVER, OFFERORS ARE CAUTIONED TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS ON THE MOST FAVORABLE BASIS SINCE THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE AN AWARD WITHOUT DISCUSSION.**
- C. The Evaluation Factors set forth in D.2 will be used in evaluating **technical proposals**. Technical considerations are primary. Costs will not be accorded any specific numerical rating. If there are no significant technical proposal differences, cost may be the determining factor for source selection. An offeror whose price is high(er) may be accepted if technical considerations make the offer most advantageous to the Government.
- D. Any Task Order award resulting from this request will be awarded to that responsible offeror whose offer, conforming to this request, will be most advantageous to the Government, price and other factors considered

D.2 EVALUATION FACTORS:

- (a) Evaluation of all offers will be made in accordance with the criteria outlined in this section. The proposals will be evaluated against the following five (5) factors.:

| | |
|----------|---|
| Factor 1 | Qualification of Project Personnel |
| Factor 2 | Technical Approach and Ability |
| Factor 3 | Capabilities, Facilities, Management and Scheduling |
| Factor 4 | Similar Experience and Past Performance |
| Factor 5 | Cost |

Factors 1 through 4 are referred to as the Technical Factors. Factor 5 is a Cost factor that will be evaluated separately and applied in the determination of best value.

The rated technical evaluation criteria are more important than price. As relative technical advantages and disadvantages become less distinct, differences in price between proposals are of increased importance in determining the most advantageous proposal. Conversely, as differences in price become less distinct, differences in relative technical advantages and disadvantages between proposals are of increased importance to the determination.

- (b) The technical evaluation will be attained through a determination and an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and risks of each proposal. Technical risks will be included in the final evaluation of each factor and will not be evaluated as a separate factor. In the assessment of technical risk, the Government evaluators will consider all available information.

D.3 TECHNICAL EVALUATION

D.3.1 Relative Order of Importance of Technical Factors

Technical Proposals will be evaluated and the prospective Contractor will be selected based principally on the following criteria listed in order of descending importance. The weights are as follows:

| <u>Factor</u> | <u>Weight</u> |
|---|----------------------|
| Understanding of Technical Material | 30 |
| Data Collection and Analysis Techniques | 25 |
| Qualification of Project Personnel | 25 |

D.3.2 Description of Technical Factors

Detailed descriptions of the evaluation factors are provided below

D.3.2.1 Understanding of the Technical Material (see B.2)

The offeror will be evaluated on:

Its thorough understanding of the key technical issues involved in this project and the logistical requirements to successfully conduct the project, and the offeror's strategy for meeting all project milestones. The offeror's approach must be clear, complete, reasonable, and feasible. Proposals must include the offeror's approach to achieving the overall objectives of the project, and its approach to each of the tasks in the statement of work. The offeror's understanding of the issues must be evidenced both in a Background section of their proposal, and then also in a task-by-task description of its proposed approach for completing the study described in the statement of work. The approach must address potential issues that may arise during the conduct of the project, and the offeror's strategy for handling any problems. Proposals must include the offeror's strategy to ensure that all work is satisfactory to the NHTSA TOM and on schedule, including submission of all deliverables.

Proposed subcontractor and consultant personnel will also be evaluated as discussed above.

D.3.2.2 Data Collection and Analysis Techniques (see B.3)

The offeror will be evaluated on:

How it demonstrated a strategy for data collection including the literature review, concept development, focus group/survey work, usability/laboratory/simulator testing, roadway evaluation, in-vehicle data collection and data reduction. The offeror must describe in detail its approach for obtaining the required data for this project and discuss potential problems that could arise during data collection, and discuss how it will resolve such problems. If necessary, the offeror's proposal must address appropriate qualitative data analyses and to achieve the project's objectives. The offeror's ability to appropriately discuss results and draw appropriate conclusions must be demonstrated.

D.3.2.3 Qualifications of Project Personnel (see B.5)

The offeror will be evaluated on:

Its expertise and work-related experience in the skills needed for successful completion of this Task Order. Offeror staff must have experience in the areas of human factors in the driving domain, literature review, conducting focus group or surveys, usability/laboratory/simulator testing, research design, prototype development, vehicle instrumentation, qualitative data collection/analyses and technical report writing. The education, experience, and availability of key project technical personnel must be demonstrated.

Subcontractors and/or consultants will be evaluated to the same standards as above

D.3.2.4 Similar Experience and Past Performance. (See B.5)

In this factor, the sub-factors Similar Experience and Past Experience are of equal importance.

A. Similar Experience

- a). This subfactor will be evaluated on the basis of the offeror's relevant experience during the last three (3) years. The Government will determine whether the offeror's experience, including the planning and implementation, on contracts is similar in size, scope, and complexity to this Task Order. Similar experience from current or previous contracts will be compared with the scope of work for this Task Order as outlined in the Statement of Work.

- b). The information presented in the offeror's proposal, together with information from any other sources available to the Government, will provide the primary input for evaluation of this factor. The Government reserves the right to verify the specifics of current or previous contracts described in the offeror's proposal.

B. Past Performance

- a) Evaluation of past performance will allow the Government to determine whether the offeror consistently delivered quality services in a timely manner. Past performance will be evaluated for contracts performed by the offeror during the last three (3) years consistent with the size, scope and complexity of this Task Order. The Government may contact references provided by the offeror as well as other relevant individuals. The Government may obtain additional information on past performance from other sources such as government past performance databases, Inspector General reports, and Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports.

- b) In general, past performance will be evaluated on the extent of client satisfaction with previous performance of the offeror; the offeror's effectiveness in managing

and directing resources (human, material, financial); the offeror's demonstration of reasonable and cooperative behavior in dealing with clients; the offeror's quality performed services; the offeror's ability to manage contract activities; and the offeror's effectiveness in meeting schedules in providing services and products.

- c) If the Government receives, from a given offeror, no Past Performance references or irrelevant contract information, the offeror will receive a neutral Past Performance evaluation rating. If, on the other hand, the offeror does have a history of past performance, and that record is poor, then the offeror will receive an overall poor grade for this Factor.

D.4 COST EVALUATION

D.4.1 General

The cost evaluation will include price completeness and accuracy, price realism, price reasonableness, price risk, and total cost to the Government. Evaluation of the option years will not obligate the Government to exercise the options.

D.4.2 Cost Evaluation Factors

- (a) The Government will review the price schedules for completeness and accuracy. A determination will be made as to whether the Offerors have properly understood the cost proposal instructions and properly completed the price schedules. Changes to the evaluation quantities, blanks or zeros in the pricing columns, and/or mathematical mistakes are subject to clarification for confirmation of the Offerors' intent. The Offerors' proposals will be checked for mathematical correctness to include the following:
 - (1) Checking arithmetic in the price table computations;
 - (2) Making sure that all prices/costs are summarized correctly; and
 - (3) Comparing electronic submittals with hard copies.
- (b) A determination will be made regarding whether the price appears unbalanced either for the total price of the proposal or separately priced line items. An analysis will be made by item, resource, quantity, and year to identify any irregular or unusual pricing patterns. An unbalanced proposal is one that incorporates prices that are less than cost for some items and/or prices that are overstated for other items.

D.4.2.2 Price Realism

The Offerors are placed on notice that any proposals that are unrealistic in terms of

technical commitment or unrealistically low in cost(s) and/or price will be deemed reflective of an inherent lack of technical competence or indicative of failure to comprehend the complexity and risk of contract requirements, and may be grounds for rejection of the proposal.

D.4.2.3 Price Reasonableness

The Offerors are expected to establish a reasonable price relationship between all price/cost elements listed in price table. An evaluation of the Offerors' cost proposals will be made to determine if they are realistic for the work to be performed, reflect a clear understanding of the requirements, and are consistent with the technical proposal. Reasonableness determinations will be made by determining if competition exists, by comparing bid prices with established commercial or GSA price schedules, by evaluating labor rates, and/or by comparing bid prices with the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE).

D.4.2.4 Cost Risk

Cost risk refers to any aspect of the Offerors' proposals that could have significant negative cost consequences for the Government. Proposals will be assessed to identify potential cost