# SECTION IV – EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

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SECTION IV

EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

1.0  52.217-5 EVALUATION OF OPTIONS (Jul 1990)

Except when it is determined in accordance with FAR 17.206(b) not to be in the Government’s best interest, the Government will evaluate offers for award purposes by adding the total price of all options to the total price for the basic requirements. Evaluation of options will not obligate the Government to exercise the options(s).

(End of provision)

2.0  AWARD WITHOUT DISCUSSIONS

As provided for in FAR 52.212-1 “Instructions to Offerors—Commercial Items.” The Government intends to evaluate proposals and award a contract without discussion with Offerors (except clarifications as described in FAR 15.306(a)). Therefore, the Offeror’s initial proposal should contain the Offeror’s best terms from a price and technical standpoint. The Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if the Contracting Officers later determines them to be necessary. If the Contracting Officer determines that the number of proposals that would otherwise be in the competitive range exceeds the number at which an efficient competition can be conducted, the Contracting Officer may limit number of proposals in the competitive range to the greatest number that will permit an efficient competition among the most highly rated proposals (see NFS 1815/306(c)(2)).

(End of provision)

3.0  SOURCE SELECTION AND EVALUATION FACTORS --GENERAL

a) General

The proposals will be evaluated using procedures prescribed by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and the NASA FAR Supplement (NFS).

The attention of Offeror’s is particularly directed to NFS 1815.305, “Proposal evaluation” and to NFS 1815.305-70, “Identification of unacceptable proposals.”

A best value trade-off process, as described at FAR 15.101-1, will be used in making the source selection decision.

b) Source Selection

The proposals will be evaluated by a Source Evaluation Board (SEB) appointed by the Source
Selection Authority (SSA). The SEB will be supported by subject matter experts during the evaluation. The SEB is tasked with conducting a thorough and impartial evaluation of each proposal received and reporting those evaluation findings to the SSA. It is the responsibility of the SSA to make the final source selection decision.

c) **Source Selection Authority**

The SSA for this procurement is the NASA Chief Information Officer.

d) **Source Evaluation Board (SEB) Membership**

The voting members of the SEB are:

Beau Charvet
Lewis Hansen
Vann Jones
Angela Marsh
Stephan Naus
Micheal Nevills
Brian Villalva

(End of provision)

4.0 **52.212-2 EVALUATION—COMMERCIAL ITEMS (OCT 2014)**

(a) The Government will award a contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible offeror whose offer conforming to the solicitation will be most advantageous to the Government, price and other factors considered. The following factors shall be used to evaluate offers:

1) Mission Suitability Factor (Section 5)
2) Past Performance Factor (Section 6)
3) Price Factor (Section 7)

Mission Suitability, when combined with Past Performance, is significantly more important than Price. Of the non-price factors, Mission Suitability is approximately equal in importance to Past Performance.

(b) Options. The Government will evaluate offers for award purposes by adding the total price for all options to the total price for the basic requirement. The Government may determine that an offer is unacceptable if the option prices are significantly unbalanced. Evaluation of options shall not obligate the Government to exercise the option(s).

(c) A written notice of award or acceptance of an offer, mailed or otherwise furnished to the successful offeror within the time for acceptance specified in the offer, shall result in a binding
contract without further action by either party. Before the offer’s specified expiration time, the Government may accept an offer (or part of an offer), whether or not there are negotiations after its receipt, unless a written notice of withdrawal is received before award.

(End of provision)

The Government will interpret failure to provide sufficient detail and rationale, or use of ambiguous terms as a lack of understanding on the part of the Offeror.

Pages submitted in excess of the limitations specified in Section III, Provision 12.0, Proposal Preparation Instructions (General), will not be evaluated by the Government and will be returned to the Offeror.

The Government will evaluate proposals by classifying findings as strengths, weaknesses, significant strengths, significant weaknesses, or deficiencies using the classifications set forth in Table IV-1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Finding</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant Strength (not in FAR/NFS)</td>
<td>A proposal area that greatly enhances the potential for successful performance or contributes significantly toward exceeding the contract requirements in a manner that provides additional value to the Government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength (not in FAR/NFS)</td>
<td>A proposal area that enhances the potential for successful performance or contributes toward exceeding the contract requirements in a manner that provides additional value to the Government (this could be associated with a process, technical approach, materials, facilities, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakness</td>
<td>A flaw in the proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Weakness</td>
<td>A proposal flaw that appreciably increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency</td>
<td>A material failure of a proposal to meet a Government requirement or a combination of significant weaknesses in a proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.0 MISSION SUITABILITY FACTOR

The Mission Suitability Factor is the only one of the three factors which will receive both a numerical score (maximum of 1,000 points) and an adjectival rating (see Table IV-2 for adjective ratings). This factor is used to evaluate an Offeror’s ability to successfully perform the
requirements of the performance work statement in a manner that meets established timelines and schedules, maximizes value for each dollar spent, and minimizes overall program risk. Under the Mission Suitability Factor, there are three subfactors which will be used by the Government to evaluate an Offeror’s overall mission suitability. These subfactors and their corresponding weights are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subfactor</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical Approach</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Approach</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Business Utilization</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1,000

The adjectival rating definitions and percentile ranges delineated in Table IV-2 are found in the NASA FAR Supplement at NFS 1815.305(a)(3)(A). The maximum points available for a subfactor are multiplied by the SEB’s evaluated percentage for that subfactor to derive a numerical score. For example, if a subfactor worth 200 points receives a percentage rating of 80% from the SEB, the numerical score for that subfactor would be 160 points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective Rating</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>91% – 100%</td>
<td>A comprehensive and thorough proposal of exceptional merit with one or more significant strengths. No deficiency or significant weakness exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>71% – 90%</td>
<td>A proposal having no deficiency and which demonstrates overall competence. One or more significant strengths have been found, and strengths outbalance any weaknesses that exist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>51% – 70%</td>
<td>A proposal having no deficiency and which shows a reasonably sound response. There may be strengths or weaknesses, or both. As a whole, weaknesses not off-set by strengths do not significantly detract from the Offeror’s response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>31% – 50%</td>
<td>A proposal having no deficiency and which has one or more weaknesses. Weaknesses outbalance any strengths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0% – 30%</td>
<td>A proposal that has one or more deficiencies or significant weaknesses that demonstrate a lack of overall competence or would require a major proposal revision to correct.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MS-1: TECHNICAL APPROACH SUBFACTOR:** This evaluation subfactor will be used to evaluate the Offeror’s overall technical approach as it relates to all requirements defined in Attachment I-1, *PWS*.

1. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s overall understanding and approach to, along with proposed techniques and procedures for executing each of the PWS elements as demonstrated by the completeness, overall efficiency and consistency of all parts of the proposal. The Government will evaluate Offeror’s technical approach for thoroughness and effectiveness that ensures that NEST services, goals, objectives, and their characteristics of success are realized.

2. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s most significant technical risks and the approach managing those risks, its assessment of the risk posture and the approach to mitigating those risk factors. Proposals will be evaluated on how the Offeror assessed the probability of the risks it identified and the probability results by the Offeror (based on the Government’s provided risk likelihood and consequence definitions as defined in NPR 8000.4B Agency Risk Management Procedural Requirements).

3. The technical merit of any new or innovative methods, techniques or technologies, formal continuous service improvement methodologies, and/or process improvements which are proposed will be evaluated for how those new or innovative methods will impact the completion of the functional requirements presented in Attachment I-1, *Performance Work Statement (PWS)* including efficiencies and risks.

**MS-2: MANAGEMENT APPROACH SUBFACTOR – PROGRAM MANAGEMENT:** This evaluation subfactor will be used to evaluate the Offeror’s approach for managing this effort to ensure the goals, objectives, and characteristics of success of the NEST contract are achieved.

1. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s Management Approach, risk assessment, organizational structure and the degree to which the proposed organizational structure contributes to effective and efficient service delivery, contributes to positive end-user experience and ensures Agency and NEST goals, objectives are realized.

2. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s approach for innovation infusion and transformation of the NEST goals and objectives into services. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s approach for adopting evolving business practices, industry standards, IT best practices, and performance standards.

3. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s staffing plan for reasonableness and thoroughness. Consolidations, improvements, and other changes will be evaluated for effectiveness. The Offeror description on how it intends to staff this effort and how the approach will allow the Offeror to meet the requirements of this contract will be evaluated for effectiveness. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s comprehensive
hiring plan for reasonableness and effectiveness. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s plan to recruit and retain staff not currently employed by the company for reasonableness and effectiveness. The Government will evaluate the Offeror’s backup plan to its primary staffing approach for completeness and effectiveness.

4. The Quality Assurance approach and proposed service level agreements/performance metrics will be evaluated on the approach to ensuring quality products and services and the effectiveness of the approach to provide quality, quantity, and timely services. The Government will evaluate how the Offeror will use the data to improve services, as well as, the transparency of data on each service. Specifically, the Offeror will be evaluated on their approach to continually monitoring, identifying, tracking, and correcting deficiencies; continual process improvement and the compliance with contract requirements. The Offeror's approach for adherence to NASA technical standards will be evaluated; and the demonstrated knowledge appropriate to those tasks (e.g. certification of personnel to appropriate industry standards).

5. The Offeror’s service transition approach, including Phase-in and Technology Refresh Plans, will be evaluated for effective and efficient service transition that ensures service continuity, minimizes service disruption, ensures timely Contractor’s personnel on-boarding processes, mitigates risks, and are in alignment with Technical and Management approaches.

**MS-3: SMALL BUSINESS UTILIZATION SUBFACTOR.** The evaluation of Small Business Subcontracting and Commitment to the Small Business Program applies to all Offerors, except that Small Businesses are not required to submit a Small Business Subcontracting Plan. The evaluation of SDB participation applies to all Offerors.

The Offeror’s Small Business Subcontracting Plan will be evaluated in terms of the Offeror’s proposed subcontracting goals (overall subcontracting goals and individual subcontracting goals by small business category) in comparison to the Contracting Officers assessment of the appropriate subcontracting goals for this procurement. The Offeror shall meet the requirements of FAR 19.704, Subcontracting Plan Requirements. The evaluation of the Small Business Subcontracting Plan will be on the basis of total contract value.

Small businesses are not required to submit subcontracting plans. NASA will only evaluate the amount of work proposed to be performed by the small business prime and any small business at the first-tier subcontract level. The proposed amount of work to be done by the prime small business and first tier small business subcontractors will be evaluated against the Contracting Officer’s assessment of the overall subcontracting goal for this procurement. Individual subcontracting goals by small business categories will not be evaluated for small business primes and their first tier subcontractors.

Additionally, the Government will evaluate the extent to which:
• Any work performed by a small business subcontractor(s) is identified as “high technology.” NASA also will evaluate the extent of commitment to use the subcontractor(s) (enforceable vs. non-enforceable commitments).
• The identity of the small business subcontractor is specified in the proposal as well as the extent of the commitment to use small businesses. (For small business Offerors, NASA will evaluate this only if subcontracting opportunities exist.)
• The Offeror’s established or planned procedures and organizational structure for small business outreach, assistance, participation in the Mentor Protégé program, counseling, market research and small business identification, and relevant purchasing procedures. (For large businesses Offerors, this information should conform to its submitted Small Business Subcontracting Plan. For small business Offerors, NASA will evaluate this only if subcontracting opportunities exist.)

The Government will evaluate the reasonableness of the proposed SDB participation along with supporting rationale against total contract value. Specific identification of SDB contractors and associated work will be evaluated for feasibility.

6.0 **PAST PERFORMANCE FACTOR**

Past performance indicates how an Offeror performed on recent work, and can be a significant indicator of how that firm can be expected to perform the work at hand. Relevant experience is defined as the accomplishment of work that is comparable in content, complexity, and size to the work required under this procurement.

This evaluation factor will be used to evaluate an Offeror’s Past Performance, including its relevant experience that shall be within 5 years of the RFP release date. Past Performance is not numerically weighted or scored, but will receive an adjectival rating per Table IV-3 below. The Government’s evaluation will be based on information provided by Offerors in their proposals, responses received on the Past Performance Questionnaire, GAO and/or IG report findings, as well as any other information obtained independently by the Government.

As described in FAR 15.305(a)(2)(iv), an Offeror without a record of relevant past performance or for whom information on past performance is not available will receive a neutral rating on past performance.

The Government may contact organizations for which an Offeror and major subcontractors have previously performed work to obtain performance appraisals. The Government may also use data from the Government-wide Past Performance Database.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective Rating</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High Level of Confidence</td>
<td>The Offeror’s relevant past performance is of exceptional merit and is very highly pertinent to this acquisition; indicating exemplary performance in a timely, efficient, and economical manner; very minor (if any) problems with no adverse effect on overall performance. Based on the Offeror’s performance record, there is a very high level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort. One or more significant strengths exist. No significant weaknesses exist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level of Confidence</td>
<td>The Offeror’s relevant past performance is highly pertinent to this acquisition, demonstrating very effective performance that would be fully responsive to contract requirements with contract requirements accomplished in a timely, efficient, and economical manner for the most part with only minor problems with little identifiable effect on overall performance. Based on the Offeror’s performance record, there is a high level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort. One or more significant strengths exist. Strengths outbalance any weakness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Level of Confidence</td>
<td>The Offeror’s relevant past performance is pertinent to this acquisition, and it demonstrates effective performance; fully responsive to contract requirements; reportable problems, but with little identifiable effect on overall performance. Based on the Offeror’s performance record, there is a moderate level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort. There may be strengths or weaknesses, or both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Level of Confidence</td>
<td>The Offeror’s relevant past performance is at least somewhat pertinent to this acquisition and it meets or slightly exceeds minimum acceptable standards; adequate results; reportable problems with identifiable, but not substantial, effects on overall performance. Based on the Offeror’s performance record, there is a low level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort. Changes to the Offeror’s existing processes may be necessary in order to achieve contract requirements. One or more weaknesses exist. Weaknesses outbalance strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low Level of Confidence</td>
<td>The Offeror’s relevant past performance does not meet minimum acceptable standards in one or more areas; remedial action required in one or more areas; problems in one or more areas which adversely affect overall performance. Based on the Offeror’s performance record, there is a very low level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort. One or more deficiencies or significant weaknesses exist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.0 PRICE FACTOR.

The Government will evaluate Offeror's price proposal by considering the following:

(a) The Government will perform a price analysis of each Offeror’s proposal in accordance with FAR 15.305 and 15.404-1 (b) and (g) to determine price reasonableness and whether unbalanced pricing exist among the option prices and the Phase-In price. The following terms and explanations apply to the evaluation of price.

TOTAL PRICE is the sum of the prices for the Contract Line Item Numbers (CLINS) of the solicitation, plus the Phase-in price and option prices.

REASONABLE PRICE represents a price to the Government that a prudent person would pay when consideration is given to prices in the competitive market.

UNBALANCED PRICING exists when, despite an acceptable total evaluated price, the price of one or more contract line items is significantly over or understated as indicated by the application of price analysis techniques. The Government will evaluate the offer for award purposes by adding the total price for all options to the total price for the basic requirement, plus the Phase-In price. The Government may determine that an offer is unacceptable if the option prices are significantly unbalanced. Evaluation of options shall not obligate the Government to exercise the option(s).

(b) Phase-In Services. The price of the Phase-in will be evaluated by applying price analysis techniques prescribed at FAR 15.404-1 (b) and (g). The Phase-In price is part of the Total Price for evaluation purposes.

(c) Government-Calculated IDIQ Value (for evaluation purposes only):

1. The Government will calculate, for evaluation purposes only, a total IDIQ cost for each Offeror utilizing the labor categories and labor hours specified in Attachment I-10, Pricing Template, tab P-2G. This template will be populated with the Offeror’s proposed fully burdened labor rates from Attachment I-10, Pricing Template – tab P-2I. The IDIQ rates proposed for the MSFC location will be used to calculate this cost for evaluation purposes. The Government will review the Offeror’s cost volume for explanations of any difference between the MSFC location Fully Burdened Labor Rates and the rates for other locations. Note that the hours and labor mix in template P-2G are based on NASA’s best estimate of future requirements. The labor hours in template P-2G will be used for the purpose of creating a realistic evaluation of each offeror’s proposed IDIQ rates. The actual labor mix and hours ordered by NASA will vary from the estimate in template P-
2G; therefore, Offeror should not assume that the hours and labor mix will reflect what the Government may actually order. These estimates do not constitute any binding agreements on behalf of the Government.

2. A Government-calculated IDIQ value will be determined for each contract year (for a total of ten (ten) years) using the Offeror’s proposed fully burdened labor rate for contract year one and the proposed escalation rates for contract years two through ten.

(d) PWS Labor Costs embedded in CLINs (for evaluation purposes only):

1. The Government will evaluate the cost for each PWS sections utilizing the labor categories and labor hours specified in attachment I-10, Pricing Template, tabs P-2J thru P-2T for reasonableness and unbalanced pricing in relation to the CLINs associated with the given PWS. This template will be populated with the Offeror’s proposed fully burdened labor rates from Attachment I-10, Pricing Template – tab P-2I. The IDIQ rates proposed for the MSFC location will be used to calculate this cost for evaluation purposes. The Government will review the Offeror’s cost volume for explanations of any difference between the MSFC location Fully Burdened Labor Rates and the rates for other locations. Note that the hours and labor mix in templates P-2J thru P-2T will be used for the purpose of creating a realistic evaluation of each offeror’s proposed CLIN rates. These estimates do not constitute any binding agreements on behalf of the Government.

[End of section]