Request for Information

Overview
The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Environmental Satellites, Data, And Information Service (NESDIS), Office of Satellite Ground Services (OSGS) is seeking information to assess industry capabilities to provide products and services for the next generation of the Comprehensive Large Array-data Stewardship System (CLASS) program. NOAA is responsible for collecting, archiving, and disseminating environmental data collected by a variety of in-situ and remote sensing observing systems operated by NOAA. In addition, CLASS also consists of a high level access portal, volume ingest and archive, and metadata repository capability.

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued to conduct market research and determine the availability and technical capability of all sources to assess the required products and/or services for the sustainment and evolution of CLASS. This RFI allows potential contractors to submit a non-binding statement of interest, description of relevant capabilities, and suggestions that will allow the Government to refine its potential course of action. The RFI is intended to assess industry service capabilities and solicit feedback for acquisition planning purposes. The types of services to support the system include, but are not limited to: information technology (IT) solutions development, software development, system operations and maintenance, technology refresh, test and integration, IT security, cloud migration services, and technical baseline sustainment.

Respondents are advised that NOAA is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received, or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted under this RFI.

Intent
This RFI is issued solely for informational planning purposes only—it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP), or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. The RFI does not commit the Government to contract for any supply or service. At this time, the Government is not seeking proposals and is not accepting unsolicited proposals. The Government will bear no cost associated with the interested party’s preparation to this RFI. Any information submitted to this RFI is strictly voluntary. Interested parties are responsible to monitor Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) website for any information pertaining to this proposed requirement.

Solicitation documents, should any be issued, will be available online at http://www.fbo.gov. To be eligible for contract award, a firm must be registered in the System Award Management (SAM). Register via the SAM website at http://www.sam.gov.

Should the Government elect to issue an RFP, the planned release date is approximately 1st quarter of FY17. The Government is considering a planned period of performance of 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018, with four one-year option periods, through 30 September 2022.
Submission Details
All RFI responses must be submitted via email to Jason Zick, Contract Specialist - contractor at jason.zick@noaa.gov, with a carbon copy to Sarah McKim, Contracting Officer, at sarah.mckim@noaa.gov by 12:00 PM Eastern Time, on Wednesday, February 17, 2016. Please limit your RFI response to no more than 10 pages for Section 2, and 10 pages for Section 3. Questions regarding this RFI shall be submitted in writing to the email addresses provided no later than Wednesday, February 3. Questions will be answered by posting answers to FBO.gov.

Responses must contain unclassified information only. Proprietary information is discouraged. Should responses contain any proprietary information, it must be clearly marked. To aid the Government, please segregate proprietary information.

RFI responses should be formatted into three sections: (1) Administrative Information, (2) Corporate Capabilities, and (3) Corporate Experience.

RFI Response Section 1- Administrative Information (no page limit)
Responses are requested to include, but are not limited to, the following information:

a. Contact Information. Please provide your company name, mailing address, phone number, fax number, company website, CAGE code, DUNS number, and contact information for designated points of contact.

b. Business Type. To assist NOAA in making a determination regarding level of participation by small business in any subsequent procurement that may result from this RFI, please identify your business type and any socioeconomic categories such as Small Businesses, Small Disadvantaged Businesses, Service Disabled-Veteran Owned Small Business, Woman-owned Small Business, HUB Zone Small Business, and 8(a) companies. Respondents should also provide information regarding any plans to use joint venture (JV) or partnering to meet each of the requirements areas contained herein. Please provide information on the responder’s firm’s areas of expertise and those of any proposed JV/partner would be combined to meet the specific requirements contained in this announcement.

c. Prime or Subcontractor. Please provide a determination whether the intent is to respond as a prime contractor or subcontractor.

d. Capabilities Statement. Identify the RFI objective(s) that responder can and cannot fulfill and provide an explanation mitigation strategy.

e. Recommended NAICS code. The anticipated North American Industry Classification System Code (NAICS) for this is 541513 Computer Facilities Management Services, with the corresponding small business size standard of $27.5 million. The RFI is requesting responses to the following criteria only from all sources that can provide the required services under the NAICS code. The government accepts recommendation for alternative NAICS code. If recommendation is provided, please provide rationale for any code applicable to the planned acquisition other than the NISCS code identified above.
f. **Recommended acquisition strategy.** Please provide any recommended acquisition strategy for this proposed requirement. Please also include a recommendation for contract types (e.g., FFP, T&M, CPFF; CPIF, CPAF, hybrid).

g. **Transition.** Please provide a notional plan for transition of this type of service, including a high-level schedule, as well as any relevant experience with contract transitions for services or similar size and scope.

h. **Conflict of Interest.** Please detail the extent to which the responder is aware of any potential organizational conflict of interest issues or any immitigable conflict of interest issues related to any current work at NOAA.

**RFI Response Section 2 – Corporate Capabilities (10 page limit)**

Interested parties are requested to address all of the services and categories below for the sustainment and evolution of the CLASS system. Responses should include relevant information regarding specific labor, trades, skills, experience, and any needed hardware or software that responder currently possesses to fulfill CLASS objectives.

a. **Project management.** Describe approaches, tools, and methods that would be used to address the IT system. This would include development, deployment, transition and operation of large volume environmental data in an enterprise IT system, effective subcontracts management, how to achieve unified team front (across government, subcontractors, and contractor); approach to workforce management, recruitment and retention of staff, effective financial management methodologies; and cost effective management to reduce the total overall cost of ownership (TCO).

b. **Development, sustainment, and operations of IT systems.** Please provide innovative approaches, methodologies for addressing the development, sustainment, and operations of large scale environmental IT systems. Responses should include current Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) level. Describe how the above approaches and methodologies will ensure timely delivery of goods and services in a cost effective manner given cost and schedule constraints. Describe capabilities to proactively manage relationships with broad-based geographically dispersed team to consisting of other contractors, subcontractors, and Federal employees. Please address the areas below.

   - Development activities to create new systems and capabilities in support of NESDIS products and services
     - Development and enhancement of substantial new capabilities/features
     - Enterprise-enabling technologies (e.g., expanding new interfaces, etc.)
     - Increased efficiency of access and dissemination with big data sets
     - Enterprise-wide solutions (open and extensible interfaces) to communicate with other systems
     - Leveraging cloud services to bolster CLASS opportunities and service delivery mechanisms
   - Preplanned sustainment activities to modernize or enhance components of the system to reduce lifecycle cost, leverage technology advancements, improve capability, and extend system life requirements
     - Technology refresh, capacity planning, operating system management, management and reducing TCO.
• Operations and maintenance activities and functions to ensure efficient and effective control of
  o Day to day operations regarding ingest, archive, and system migration of data
  o System monitoring to include load balancing, utilization and performance management,
    compliance of service level agreements and quality metrics,
  o Data center operations, off-hours support for IT systems, and asset management.
  o Timely procurement of maintenance agreements/renewals

c. IT security management. Responses should include approach to comply with standards, regulations,
and policies of the Department of Commerce, NOAA, NESDIS, and associated NIST and FIPS standards.
Also include other areas including authentication, authorization, accounting, and accreditation. Please
describe approaches used to monitor, secure, and protect the system as it operates, as well as through
sustainment.

d. Transition planning. Please provide relevant information on low risk, thorough, cost effective
transition approaches, methodologies, key activities, and/or tools utilized to address:
  • Transition of on-going IT system program from one contractor to another
  • Typical time line and activities description for such a transition

e. Knowledge of NOAA policy and procedures.

RFI Response Section 3 – Corporate Experience (10 page limit)
Responses are requested to include, but are not limited to, the following information:

a. Commercial Environment. Provide relevant details providing the same or similar services offered, or
made to the general public or to non-government entities for purposes other than governmental
purposes. Relevant details to this request should include, but not be limited to information regarding
the size and length of effort, indicate whether the responder performed as a prime or subcontractor,
customary practices (warranty, financing, discounts, contract types, etc.) under which the sales of these
services are made, security details, customary practices regarding customizing, modifying, or tailoring a
service to meet customer needs and associated costs, the kinds of factors that are used to evaluate
performance, the kinds of performance incentives used, the kinds of performance assessment methods
commonly used, the common qualifications and labor categories of the people performing services, and
requirements of law and regulations unique to these services. This response can demonstrate the
responders’ abilities and capacity to meet requirements CLASS.

b. Government Environment. Provide relevant details in the response in providing the same or similar
services offered or made to Government agencies other that NOAA. Relevant details to a NOAA-
proposed acquisition should include but not be limited to information regarding the contact number,
agency, responder should include the contract number, indicate whether responder performed as a
prime or subcontractor, size and length of the effort, type of pricing and/or cost security details, the
kinds of factors used to evaluate performance, the kinds of performance incentives, the kinds of
performance assessment methods, the qualifications of the people performing the services, and any
unique terms and conditions, and methods used for cross program communication. This response can
demonstrate the responders’ abilities and capacity to meet requirements CLASS.