

EA SOLICITATION 52-PAPT-2-01007
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q 1: Section L.4.B of the RFP implies that an "Audited and Certified Financial Statement" is to be included with the Management Proposal. However, it is not clear if this is a requirement or an option.

A 1: It is neither a requirement nor an option. It was mistakenly included and has been deleted in Amendment 1.

Q 2: We have not previously had Audited and Certified Financial Statements and our fiscal year just ended on December 31st. There is not enough time between the RFP release date and the due date of March 6th to engage an accounting firm to complete a full audit and certify our financial statements. Would the government consider extending the proposal deadline to allow enough time to obtain certified financial statements? Or would the government accept Financial Statements that are compiled and reviewed by an outside CPA Firm instead?

A 2: See A 1. There is no requirement for Audited and Certified Financial Statements in Amendment 1.

Q 3: Is the Enterprise Architecture (EA) support a new USPTO requirement or is there an incumbent? If there is an incumbent, what is the incumbent's name? Is the incumbent eligible to bid on this contract?

A 3: Enterprise Architecture support services is a new USPTO requirement.

Q 4: If not, who is the incumbent? Are they able to re-compete? Is the agency satisfied with their performance? How long has the incumbent been performing? Has the incumbent been rated for performance and is this rating available to us?

A 4: Please see response to A 3.

Q 5: If this is not a new purchase, what was the contract let for previously? What was last year's budget, how much of that budget was spent? If a new purchase, what budget figure has been allocated? Are funds set aside for this project?

A 5: See response to A.3.

Q 6: If this is a hub zone set aside, can you identify two hub zone firms that have this expertise? Apparently, pro-net.sba.gov list 22 hubs, list "none" with quals.

A 6: USPTO followed the procedures set forth at FAR 19.1305 in determining whether to set aside this acquisition for competition restricted to HUBZone small businesses. USPTO suggests you use the Advanced Search function of SBA's Pro-Net, including use of the specified NAICS code, to identify qualified HUBZone firms.

Q 7: How many copies of each proposal should be provided: Section L. 4 states an original and four copies should be provided. Section L. 6 states an original and ten copies.

A 7: This discrepancy is corrected in Amendment 1. An original and four copies should be provided.

Q 8: Will the successful Enterprise Architecture contractor be precluded from providing any other services for USPTO? For example, would the successful EA contractor be able to perform under the SDM, SETA, and/or FMEUS contracts (referenced on page 7)?

A 8: The EA conflict of interest clause addresses this issue. Please see RFP clause H.3, Restrictions on Future Contracting, for specifics relating to EA conflict of interest.

Q 9: Paragraph C.3.1 states “The USPTO estimates a requirement for a total to 24,000 hours of effort to be provided for each year of the contract (base year plus four option years)” which is approximately 12 full-time positions. Thereafter, in addition to the seven (7) positions listed in Section B, it states that nine (9) EA skill sets will be required on a full-time basis for the base year of the contract. What is the basis for determining the “Total Est. Hours” for positions listed in Section B? Should any of the nine (9) skill sets referenced in paragraph C.3.1 have been included in Section B?

A. 9: The skill sets identified in paragraph C.3.1 are to be provided as part of the labor categories listed in Section B. For example, a senior-level Applications Architect would be considered a Senior Architect labor category position. The Section C.3.1 skill sets are provided to give vendors a clearer understanding of the type of EA support that we expect to receive under the contract, especially in the first year.

Q 10: In regard to the pricing section I understand that we will be submitting pricing for the 7 line items (positions in section B). However, in addition are we also providing pricing information for the additional positions/architects outlined in section C of the proposals (e.g. Business Architect, Security Architect, Data Architect).

A 10: No, pricing is to be provided for the labor categories identified in Section B not the skill sets identified in Section C.3.1. Please see response to Q 9.

Q 11: RFP C.3.1 -- Does USPTO require/expect the contractor to provide separate individuals to concentrate on each of the 9 EA skill areas defined for the initial year of the contract? Does USPTO expect the labor effort for these areas to be level loaded (continued throughout the contract to maintain corporate knowledge)?

A 11: As noted in Section C.3.1 the USPTO estimates that the 9 skill sets identified will be required on a full time basis in the first year of the contract. However, we cannot predict the labor mix required after that.

Q 12: The RFP states that "As necessary, additional labor categories may be added in order to fulfill staffing requirements under the scope of this contract". How will this be handled?

A 12: As part of your price proposal you may list any additional labor categories and rates that you feel are necessary and appropriate to support EA work identified in Section C of the RFP. You should provide this information for the base year and the option years as appropriate.

Q 13: Can the bidder include additional labor categories? If so how should they be added with the provided numbering schema?

A 13: Yes, additional labor categories can be included (reference Section L.4.D of the RFP). See also response to Q 11.

Q 14: What is the total number of annual hours that should be used for a full-time position?

A 14: Each vendor calculates this somewhat differently taking into consideration leave, holidays, etc.; however, on average it is 2,000 hours per staff year.

Q 15: Can job descriptions be provided for the positions listed in Section B?

A 15: No, the USPTO will not provide job descriptions for those positions.

Q 16: Can the required information identified in Sections B.1-B.2 & K.1-K.11 be furnished on proposal documents or does it need to be furnished on separate documents supplied by vendor?

A 16: The pages furnished in the RFP can be downloaded or copied and used to submit this information with your proposal.

Q 17: Section B.1: Schedules of Items and Prices - Labor Hours: on page 2 there are two (2) CLIN 0011 identified. Please clarify.

A 17: This is an error that has been corrected in Amendment 1.

Q 18: Section C.3.1 Labor Categories: On Page 9 the Labor Category "Subject Matter Expert" is listed. However, Section C.2.1 Scope of Technical Work Effort does not reference nor identify the role and responsibilities for this position. Please provide the governments description of the experience and skills for this labor category.

A 18: A Subject Matter Expert provides knowledge and skills in specialized subject areas. For example, someone who has knowledge and skills in the implementation of XML standards might be considered a Subject Matter Expert.

Q 19: Section L.4: Does PTO want A through E of this proposal submitted in separate volumes or all sections as a separate volume? If multiple volumes, please specify the content of each volume.

A 19: Proposals shall be submitted as two volumes, with the Technical Proposal, Management Proposal, and Past Performance (A, B and C) submitted as volume one and the Price Proposal and Certifications/Representations (D and E) submitted as volume two.

Q 20: RFP B.1 -- How should the unknown cost and effort of vendor or other outside consultants, brought in at USPTO's request, be handled in this schedule? Is the effort expended for these outside consultants included in the 24,000-hour annual estimate?

A 20: Outside consultants, unless brought on as a team member or subcontractor, may be considered as Other Direct Costs (ODCs) and are not a part of the 24,000-hour annual estimate.

Q 21: RFP H.10 (l) -- Does this statement prohibit the use of couriers?

A 21: No.

Q 22: RFP H.12 -- Does USPTO pay for the "investigative processing" or should this be costed into the proposed labor rates? If the contractor pays, what is the charge for each investigation?

A 22: The USPTO pays for the investigative processing.

Q 23: RFP L.4 -- Do the 1-inch margins exclude headers and footers?

A 23: Yes.

Q 24: We are assuming that on page 43 of the RFP, Section B, Number 4 that not only is the plan to manage the teaming arrangement not part of the ten page limit, but that the teaming agreement is not part of the ten pages either. Is this assumption correct?

A 24: Yes.

Q 25: Are we required to submit Section K reps and certs for our teaming partners also?

A 25: No.

Q 26: Can we submit past performance experience of our teaming partners?

A 26: Yes, so long as it is clearly identified as such.

Q 27: Are we required to submit a list of current contracts for our teaming partners?

A 27: It's not a requirement but you may do so if you choose.

Q 28: Referencing page 19 of the RFP, Section H.3, Restrictions on Future Contracting; if IT work is **currently** being performed for USPTO, can a company still bid on/win this procurement?

A 28: Yes, a company currently performing IT for the USPTO may bid; however, a mitigation plan and conflict of interest waiver is required. If a conflict of interest currently exists, you should address this and provide a mitigation plan as part of your Management proposal. Please see Amendment 1 and clause L.4.B.6 of the revised RFP. Please note that notwithstanding the provision which allows for waivers of potential or existing OCOI, in no event will the **prime** EA contractor be permitted to serve as the **prime** contractor for the following USPTO information technology contracts and their follow-on contracts: Systems Development and Maintenance (SDM), Systems Engineering and Technical Assistance (SETA3), Information Technology Product Assurance (ITPA), and the Facilities Maintenance/End User Support (FMEUS2) contracts.

Q 29: Is sworn/oath affirmation required as submission with proposal for key/non-key personnel?

A 29: No, it is not required for submission with your proposal.

Q 30: Is the investigation required as submission with proposal for key/non-key personnel?

A 30: No, it is not required for submission with your proposal.

Q 31: If a customer reference cannot be reached, will the contractor be notified and allowed to provide a substitute reference?

A 31: No, please refer to Section L.4.C.2 of the RFP.

Q 32: We are providing "off-site" rates; however, the solicitation states that the government may require onsite support. Will the contractor be required to provide onsite rates at that time?

A 32: No.

Q 33: Are program management and contract administration functions allowed to be directly billed to this contract, or are these functions to be included in our fully burdened rates?

A 33: These functions should be included in your fully burdened rates.

Q 34: Will “reading room” documents be available for download online?

A 34: No, they will only be available through the reading room.

Q 35: Can potential Offerors obtain a competitive list of this RFP and bid?

A 35: No list is available.

Q 36: What is the column term “coln” mean in section B.1?

A 36: We don't see that term mentioned in section B.1.

Q 37: What are your current management planning tools being utilized and are these tools going to be utilized for the project.

A 37: The USPTO will coordinate input to its project management tool. Contractors may use MS Project to facilitate the input.

Q 38: What is the Relational Database Management System (RDBMS), being utilized within the current and new EA environment?

A 38: Oracle.

Q 39: What repositories are being utilized for storing EA Metadata? Will these repositories be available to the contractor?

A 39: The USPTO will use Rochade. The USPTO will coordinate the input.

Q 40: What modules of XML are currently and needing to be utilized for the new EA?

A 40: USPTO uses SOAP, which may be appropriate for new EAs.

Q 41: What will be the usage and expectation both business and technical of the stated prototype?

A 41: The prototype will model enterprise-wide business and technical interactions.

Q 42: What onsite working environment detail will be present for the contract for the duration? Of the EA Project and support?

A 42: None. The USPTO will host meetings in office space and conference rooms.

Q 43: What application domain areas are inclusive of your current and future EA Enterprise?

A 43: The application areas are delineated in the USPTO Strategic Information Technology Plan. The Strategic Information Technology Plan is available in the EA reading room.

Q 44: What percentage of time will your business domain SME's be dedicated to the project?

A 44: The USPTO subject matter staff will be available as needed.

Q 45: What is your formal Software Development Life Cycle for your enterprise?

A 45: The software development life cycle is described in the USPTO Life Cycle Management Manual. The Life Cycle Management Manual is available in the EA reading room.

Q 46: Will remote access to needed systems and information is available to the contractor?

A 46: The USPTO will make remote access available as needed, within security provisions.

Q 47: What knowledge management tool/repository will be provided to the contractor?

A 47: None

Q 48: What is your current EA process and methods are currently being implemented?

A 48: The USPTO follows the methodology of the Federal Chief Information Officer Council, including the Federal Enterprise Architecture Framework.

Q 49: As the EA is progressed and evolved, and development efforts completed, what is the communication process between FMEUS, SDM, SETA and the contractor?

A 49: The USPTO will coordinate interchange between its contractors as needed.

Q 50: What participation role and communication process is in place for the contractor's recommendation and input to be addressed in committee and other IT Technology Solution bodies?

A 50: As identified in Section C.2.1 of the RFP, any reviews, assessments, or recommendations will be presented to the CIO Enterprise Architect and any participation or communications with the EA Committee or others will be done under the guidance of the CIO Enterprise Architect.

Q 51: What is your definition of a business trigger and are there any currently stated or formalized for the current EA enterprise?

A 51: A business trigger is a change agent, for example a new business requirement that cannot be met by the current architecture (and should be met) or a business requirement that can be improved by changing the architecture.

Q 52: Is any of the referenced material within the mentioned publication book being implemented? Within the current EA enterprise? If so, which areas?

A 52: We are not sure what publication book you are referring to. The Strategic Information Technology Plan, the Technical Reference Model, and the Life Cycle Management Manual are available in the EA reading room.

Q 53: Section L.4 Proposal Requirements, Subsection A, Technical Proposal: On page 44 the government makes a distinction between "enterprise architecture" and "application architecture". Being that this is the first reference to " applications architecture", please provide the governments definition of "application Architecture".

A 53: The application architecture is a component of a design architecture (as opposed to a business architecture) that defines the information technology needed to manage data and support business functions. The enterprise architecture integrates business and design architecture.

Q 54: RFP C.2.1 -- Is the reference to "best practices" meant to indicate that the EA contractor will lead or assist in leading some future SEI CMM effort?

A 54: The contractor will assist the USPTO in CMM efforts, as needed.

Q 55: Page 20, second to last paragraph. "The Contractor shall not exceed the ceiling price established in each Task Order. If at any time the Contractor has reason to believe that the total amount for the task order will exceed 80% of the ceiling price specified in the order- notify the Contracting Officer with an estimate of additional amount and additional time required to complete the order." There is a 75% notification requirement for each TO and the contract on page 16 of 51. Did you mean 80% over the TO ceiling in this paragraph? Or is the potential overrun % incorrect?

A 55: The notification requirement is at 75%. Paragraph H.4 (second to last paragraph) has been revised to reflect this change.