



# Prince George's County Office of Central Services



## *Contract Administration & Procurement* (CA&P)

### Tips for Responding to Multi-Step Invitation for Bid

# Procurement Methods

## ■ IFB - Invitation for Bids

- Award is made to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder

## ■ Multi-Step Invitation for Bids

- Award is made to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder whose technical response has met the minimum technical score

# Procurement Methods

(continued)

- RFP = Request for Proposals
  - An RFP is a formal solicitation document to solicit binding proposals for a product and/or service

# A Multi-Step is Used When:

- County is clear on the technical requirements
- When County is seeking to ensure that the contractor is qualified to perform the required services
- County is seeking the lowest price

# Where to Start

- Read the entire solicitation once, then read it again and again!
- Read all of the instructions and explanations to ensure that you understand the County's requirements
- Be aware that information critical to your bid may be scattered among many sections of the IFB

# TO BID or NOT TO BID

- Is the Project too big or too small?
- Is the Project outside your experience and available resources (human and financial) ?
- Is the timing right? Are you too busy?



# Asking Questions

- Questions should be submitted in writing to the Buyer
- Attend the Pre-Bid Conference to obtain clarification of bid and networking opportunities
- Verbal responses are not binding; only the addendum(s) issued by the County
- Note the deadline for submission of questions
- Be aware that the County's written response to all submitted questions are distributed via a written addendum to vendors who have either downloaded or purchased the bid document



# Scheduling

- Make a schedule and stick to it!
- Make sure you leave plenty of time for copying, binding and delivering the  
**~BID ON TIME~**
- Distribute the schedule to all members of your team



# Evaluation of the BIDS

- The evaluation is done by a committee
- After the closing time, the bids are reviewed by Procurement to ensure that they meet the mandatory requirements
- Those that meet the mandatory requirements are distributed to the evaluation committee
- The bids are scored against the evaluation criteria shown in the IFB

# Document Strengths

- Professional and organized
- Is clear and detailed as appropriate
- Contains thorough project approach addressing all aspects of the bid
- Valid & current references
- The bid contains references for work similar to scope of work

# Document Weaknesses

- Bid document is not professional
- Bid document is not organized & tabbed per the Technical Response criteria
- Bid document does not demonstrate vendors understanding of the bid requirements
- Bid document does not provide evidence of sufficient resources (human & financial)
- Bid document does not contain a quality control process/program

# Document Weaknesses

(continued)

- Failure to address performance management
- Training program missing or inadequate
- No backup plan for continuity of services
- Failure to address hiring policy or retention strategy
- Lack of details in project approach

# Document Weaknesses

(continued)

- Experience does not meet the requirements of the bid
- Inspection/maintenance program for equipment incomplete
- Background check process/documentation
- Provide incomplete/outdated references information
- Document contains short answers; lacking specificity

# Document Weaknesses

(continued)

- Vendor repeats scope of work word for word (reflects vendors lack of understanding)
- Proposal fails to address all areas of the solicitation
- Failure to include licenses and permits as required
- Minority Business Enterprise Utilization Plan missing or incomplete

# EVALUATION EXERCISE

- TEAMS REVIEW THE EVALAUTION SHEET
- TEAMS REVIEW THE TECHNICAL RESPONSE
- TEAMS SCORE THE TECHNICAL RESPONSE
- TEAMS NOTE TECHNICAL RESPONSE STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES
- TEAMS REPORT OUT

# Pitfalls to Avoid

- Underestimating the evaluators. Bids that contain too much “glitz” but little substance will not score well
- Failure to follow the bid instructions regarding organization of the bid, inclusion of required information



# Pitfalls to Avoid

## (Continued)

- Failure to take the evaluation criteria into consideration when preparing your response
- Failure to understand and to demonstrate an understanding of the County's requirements
- Failure to tailor your response to the specific bid

# Pitfalls to Avoid

## (Continued)

- Failure to include all of the information requested by the County
- Submitting an unprofessional proposal (typos, blank pages, unnumbered pages, etc.)
- **FAILURE TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL BEFORE THE DATE AND TIME SPECIFIED!**

# First Impressions Count!

- Your bid response should be professional and organized
- Use a binding method that works
- Ensure that the content of your submission reflects that it was created specifically for Prince George's County
- Related topics should be kept together and most statements should not be repeated

# First Impressions Count!

(continued)

- Avoid cross-references to the extent possible – It makes it difficult for evaluators to evaluate the response if they have to jump between sections in order to get the full picture
- Organize by using section headings
- Always number pages

# First Impressions Count!

(continued)

- Make sure each copy of the bid is complete
- The bid should be easy to read and understand. You want to make sure the evaluation team gets the right message.

# If You Win

■ CELEBRATE!



# If You Lose



- Arrange a debriefing with the buyer to find out the reasons for your loss
- Try not to get discouraged
- Apply what you have learned on your next bid

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Contract Administration &  
Procurement (CA&P)

301-883-6400

301-883-6440 (fax)