



July 12, 2024

Quality Responses

Avoiding Disqualifications when Submitting Proposals

Presentation Topics

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- 4 • Quality Control for the Proposal
- 5 • Firms, Task Leaders, and Precertification
- 6 • Non-Listed Categories
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Solicitation: Request for Proposals

Solicitation

Advertisement in Bonfire TxDOT Procurement Portal

- Request for Proposal
- Draft Scope of Services
- Draft Contract Template
- Preclusion Document (optional)
- Non-listed Category Qualifications Template (optional)
- Subprovider Contact Information form
- Questions & Answers form
- Project Information (optional)

Response: Proposal Package

Response

Attachment 1 Cover Page (Questionnaire)

Attachment 2 Proposal

Attachment 3 Project Team Composition (PTC) Form

Attachment 4 Subprovider Contact Information

Attachment 5 HUB Subcontracting Plan (state-funded contracts)

Attachment 6 Non-Listed Category Qualifications (if required)

Top Reasons for Disqualification

Obvious mistakes...

The PTC form was not complete.

A certification statement on the questionnaire was answered "No".

The Core Team Restriction or Preclusion was not followed correctly.

A task leader on the PTC form was no longer employed by the firm on the PTC form.

A subprovider was not administratively qualified for an engineering and design category.

The HSP form was not signed.

The devil is in the details...

Subprovider lost HUB status right before closing date of solicitation.

HSP was completed incorrectly.

- Only the HUB subproviders were listed on the HSP.
- Work category totals did not add up correctly or did not match PTC form.

A DBE prime or subprovider firm did not have the NAICS code for the work category and could not be counted toward the DBE goal.

Close calls

Not all of the subproviders on the PTC form were included on the Subprovider Contact Information Form.

A person described generally as the lead for a particular type of work in the proposal did not match the task leader on the PTC form for the work category that was related to that type of work.

The totals on the HSP form did not match the totals on the PTC form; however, the HUB goal was exceeded on both forms.

The prime firm used different names in the AQ system, CCIS precertifications, and the solicitation.

*Our goal today is to show how
submittals can avoid disqualification
and improve scores*



Quality Control for the Proposal

Consistency

The prime firm should perform a quality control check on the proposal:

- ✓ Does the proposal focus on the project or scenario specified in the RFP?
- ✓ Is it clear if Key Personnel are associated with a particular firm?
- ✓ If someone is called a Task Leader in the proposal, is the same person and firm listed on the PTC form for that work category?
- ✓ Are the task leaders on the NLC template the same as those on the PTC?
- ✓ Are all the firm names mentioned in the proposal consistent with the legal firm names used in every other document submitted with the proposal (PTC Form, HSP, Subprovider Contact Information)?

Experience

Are examples of experience reflective of the discipline of work in the RFP? Don't just use a firm's favorite or biggest project – make sure it relates to this solicitation.

RFP Proposal Content

Provide the relevant experience of your project manager and key staff to deliver bridge inspections...



Proposal - Experience

Project #1 – Bridge inspection
Project #2 – Bridge inspection
Project #3 – Bridge inspection
Project #4 – Bridge inspection

Experience

Do examples clearly define the individual role and contribution?

KEY STAFF EXPERIENCE

Road Runner, with ACME Engineering, will serve as a subject matter expert in Roadway Hydraulic Design.



- **Winding Mount project:** ACME provided final design of the storm sewers and cross culverts in the reconstruction and widening of this two-lane rural roadway to a divided four-


KEY STAFF EXPERIENCE

Road Runner, with ACME Engineering, will serve as a subject matter expert in Roadway Hydraulic Design.

- **Winding Mount project:** Road Runner served as the Drainage Lead for the reconstruction and widening of this two-lane rural roadway to a divided four-lane roadway. Using models he developed of the project, he designed a new storm sewer system and redesigned six major culvert crossings.



- Proposals may be scored for how well and clearly the material is presented.
- Follow the guidelines in the RFP.
- Photos/diagrams
 - nice but not scored
 - often take up valuable space
 - should add value to the content or illustrate the narrative
 - should have written content explaining context.
- Font size and margins
 - keep to practical limits
 - must be legible when printed on 8.5 x 11-inch paper.



**Professional Engineering Procurement Services
(PEPS) Division**
Solicitation Number: 601CT0000005955

Original Posting Date: June 17, 2024
Posting Period: 21 Days

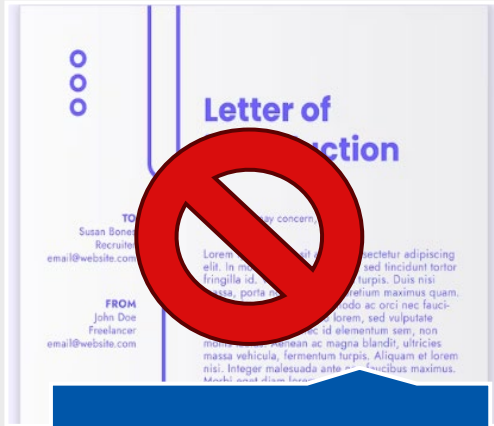
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) TO CONTRACT
FOR**

INDEFINITE DELIVERABLE CONTRACT(S)

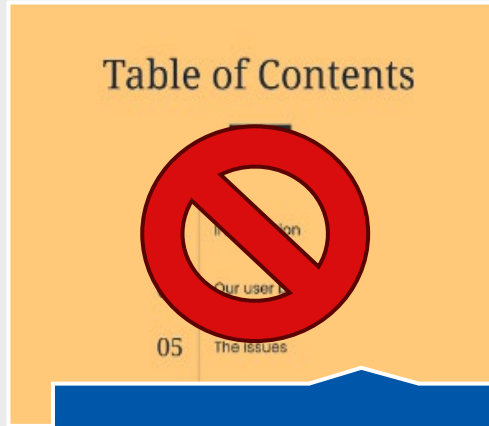
29. Proposal Format:

- a. The Proposal may be no longer than 9 pages. Pages are counted from the first page of the PDF submitted for Attachment 2: Proposal. Pages in excess of the allowable limit will be removed and will not be scored.
- b. Readability - It is TxDOT's intent to allow the provider latitude in the formatting

Do not include extra pages!



Intro letter



ToC



Blank pages

- Every page of the proposal is counted, starting at the first page of the PDF.
- Additional pages over the limit are eliminated from review.
- The selection team will only evaluate the allowed pages.

Firm, Task Leaders, and Precertification

Check and Double Check

- The team must propose a precertified Task Leader for every work category listed in the RFP. If a firm is not proposing a task leader and is only providing a supporting role in a category, it does not have to be precertified in that work category.
- A Task Leader may be proposed by the prime firm or a subprovider firm.
- The firm proposing the Task Leader must have active precertification in the work category at the time of closing.

Be Prepared



- Precertification may take several months
 - individuals must apply for precertification well in advance of the solicitation, and
 - firms must renew their precertification annually.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!

Non-Listed Categories
Keep it simple!

Follow the Instructions

- The Task Leader's Name and the Firm Name must match the names on the PTC form for the same NLC.
- Explain how the Task Leader meets the minimum requirements for the NLC. Use phrases such as "Jane Doe is a Professional Engineer and has five years of experience in designing remediation systems as shown in the following examples:"
- Remember: this is a "pass/fail" – the task leader either meets the minimum requirements or does not meet the minimum requirements. Be clear and concise.

Best Practices

Perform a Quality Control Check

Have someone other than the author read the proposal. Check the spelling – an unprofessional proposal may be scored lower by a Reviewer.

Make sure each firm name is the same on each document, including proposal headers or footers. Use the legal firm names as registered with the State of Texas.

Check the Administrative Qualification status of each firm performing engineering and design related services. If a firm is expiring soon, make sure it will not impact the submittal.

Check the PTC Form

The prime firm must verify the precertification status of each firm proposing a task leader for a work category prior to completing the PTC form. Check for active renewal status.

Organize the team information before logging into Salesforce to prepare your PTC form. Adding and deleting data repeatedly in CCIS may cause errors in the form, so try to enter data only once. Download the PTC form as a PDF and upload the same file into Bonfire.

Check the HUB or DBE Status

The prime firm must verify the HUB or DBE status of each subprovider prior to completing the PTC form. Check for active renewal status.

Federal (DBE): check the NAICS codes for each DBE subprovider.

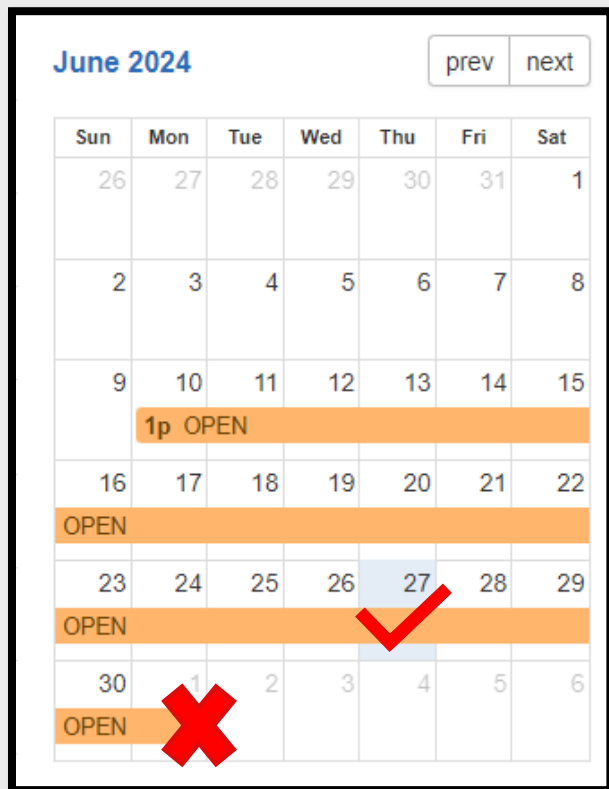
Non-Federal (HUB): Verify that the HSP form is consistent with the PTC form and CHECK THE MATH on the HSP form.

Don't wait until the last minute

June 2024

prev next

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1p OPEN						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
OPEN						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
OPEN						
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
OPEN						



- Upload documents to Bonfire the day before or at least several hours before the closing date and time. Bonfire will close and not allow your submittal at 1:00 pm.
- Open each file in Bonfire and check that it was uploaded properly.
- Bonfire allows you to remove and replace the files up until the closing date and time have passed. Take advantage of this and perform a quality check of your documents.

Screening Checklist

The checklist used by our screeners is posted.

Use it to go through your submittal and check each part.

Plan ahead and leave time for quality control!

Note that the checklist does not cover HSP requirements, but there is a Fireside Chat for that!

Criteria	RFP Requirements	Pass	Fail
Cover Page Certifications (Criterion B-1)	All the certification statements are checked yes.		
Cover Page Screening (Criterion B-2)	An individual is identified as the Prime Provider's Project Manager and has entered the required license information. The project manager identified in the cover page questionnaire must match the project manager listed in the proposal or the proposal will be considered non-responsive. If required in the RFP, the Prime Provider's Deputy PM is listed on the cover page and has entered the required license information.		
Prohibited Agency (Criterion C-1)	Per Govt. Code 2252.152, etc., Texas agencies are prohibited by law from conducting business with certain companies listed on the State Comptroller's webpage, which also includes other prohibited entities. Check all the lists located at the link below for Prime Provider Name. https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/publications/divestment.php		
Debarred Agency (Criterion C-2)	Verify that the Prime Provider firm is not on the list of FHWA excluded firms at https://www.sam.gov/ .		
Proposal within Page Limits (Criterion C-3)	The number of pages within the proposal package does not exceed the number of pages specified in the RFP. If the proposal contains more pages than specified, only the correct number of pages will be scored, the rest will be omitted. This is not a disqualification.		
Proposal Formatted Correctly (Criterion C-4)	The proposal is in substantial compliance with the remainder of the formatting requirements identified in the RFP. A proposal will not be disqualified for minor formatting issues.		

Resources



Firms eligible to do business with TxDOT

[Active precertified firms and firms that are administratively qualified](#) »



State laws and rules

[Texas government and administrative code](#) »



PEPS forms

[Precertification, administrative qualification, and PS-CAMS forms](#) »

Additional resources

- [PDF Screening checklist: non-federal process \(DBE\)](#)
- [PDF Screening checklist: non-federal process \(HUB\)](#)
- [PDF Screening checklist: federal process](#)
- [PDF DBE NAICS codes for standard work categories](#)
- [PDF Contract negotiation rules of engagement](#)
- [PDF Contract management staffing categories](#)



Screening Checklists

www.txdot.gov/business/peps/resources.html

Training and events

2024 **2023** 2022 2021

Topics

Date ▾	Topic ▾	Virtual ▾	Presentation ▾	Q&A ▾	Recording link ▾
09/08/23	PS&E Scope Template Updates and and new Function Code 135		Presentation		
07/07/23	HUB subcontracting plans - avoiding mistakes that cause disqualification		Presentation	Q&A	Recording 
05/05/23	3rd party security risks on PEPS contracts		Presentation		Recording 
03/03/23	PEPS invoice impediments		Presentation	Q&A	

More detailed information on HSP

<https://www.txdot.gov/business/peps/training-and-events.html>

Don't make it hard to determine if the submittal package is responsive!



Questions and Discussion

When to reach out?

Well before the closing date and time for the solicitation. Waiting until the last minute or until after the closing time will limit our ability to help.

Who to reach out to?

For questions related to Bonfire, use the Technical Support or HELP buttons in Bonfire.

For questions related to the solicitation, email the Procurement Engineer in the RFP.

For questions related to Administrative Qualifications: peps_admin_qual@txdot.gov

For questions related to Precertification, CCIS or the PTC Form:

peps_ccis_precert@txdot.gov



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