

**Highlights of NASA Ames Research Center
Computational Sciences Research and Development Services
NNA04040939J-LMV**

This document highlights significant aspects of the attached Computational Sciences Research and Development Services DRAFT Request for Proposal (DRFP). Included in this overview is a brief discussion of some of the issues related to the contract scope and intent selection criteria, and other issues of significance to this acquisition. These highlights provide a section by section overview of important information regarding the DRFP. However, these highlights should not be a substitute for a thorough and comprehensive review of the DRFP.

The Government's intent is to enter into a contractual arrangement which will allow the Ames Research Center to successfully meet its mission of providing high quality research and development in support of the Computational Sciences Division's requirements, doing so in a safe, secure manner at a competitive price. The Government is confident that the mission can be accomplished through a partnership between the cognizant Ames organizations and the Contractor.

Work that is similar to the work contemplated in this RFP is currently in progress under contract NAS2-00065. That contract primarily supports the Computational Sciences Division in the Automation Sciences Research Facility (ASRF), building N269.

Background Information Specific to this Acquisition:

The proposed acquisition is a follow-on to the current contract NAS2-00065, that is presently being performed by QSS Group, Inc. Contract NAS2-00065 provides computational sciences research and development support at Ames Research Center over a five-year performance period, at an estimated cost of \$128 million. This contract was awarded on a competitive basis under the 8(a) program.

The Government contemplates a Cost-Plus Award-Fee (CPAF) (zero base fee) contract. Contract Task Orders (CTOs) will be a critical tool used to administer this contract since the Government cannot precisely predict the magnitude of services that will be required during the life of the contract. CTOs will allow the Government to accommodate requirements without performing contract modifications. The Government intends to issue CTOs as required during the life of the contract, which allow the Contractor to address changes in the service levels needed. Historically, this contract has had around 50 new CTOs each year.

The issues discussed above were factors in the development of the selection criteria to be used for evaluating the proposals received as a result of the final RFP. The evaluation factors—Mission Suitability, Past Performance, and Cost—have been developed and prioritized to allow the Government the ability to choose a Contractor which it believes will best meet the objectives of this contract. Mission Suitability was chosen as the most important factor because the Government believes that it will offer the best insight as to whether an offeror will be successful. Although Past Performance was determined to be of slightly lesser importance to Mission Suitability, it is considered of more importance than Cost .

Industry Comments/Questions:

NASA Ames Research Center thanks all those who submitted questions and comments in response to the draft Statement of Work (SOW). We are continuing to seek feedback from the vendor community and invite all comments that would enhance competition for this acquisition.

- a. **Contract Type:** The Government is considering a CPAF contract. Feedback is requested on how the Government might incentivize performance under this contract type.
- b. **Contract Value:** The Government estimates the contract value at \$16M to \$40M per contract year. This range is predicated on fluctuations in projected program funding. Feedback is requested on inclusion of this range, impact as to pricing, contractor risk, and capability to ramp up or down.
- c. **Oral Presentations:** The Government is considering the use of oral presentations for the offerors' proposed Management Plan. Feedback is requested on the use of oral versus written proposals for a portion of the required information and if the subjects suggested are acceptable to the offerors.
- d. **Overall Draft RFP Comments:**

This acquisition will be issued as a competitive 8(a) solicitation.

Interested parties are requested to provide the Government with comments on any aspect of this DRFP. The Government requests that potential offerors *submit written* questions or comments on any topic related to this acquisition *no later than* October 28, 2004 at 2:00 PM PDT. The questions shall be sent electronically to the Contracting Officer at Lupe.M.Velasquez@nasa.gov.

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THIS DRFP

1. SECTION B. SUPPLIES OR SERVICES AND PRICE/COST

- a. The Government contemplates a CPAF (zero base fee) contract. During the performance of the resulting contract, the Government will reward contractor cost control performance achieved without sacrificing the quality or utility of specified task requirements.
- b. The Government has elected to use individual contract line items to identify the phase-in, base period, and option periods. The Government envisions that approximately fifty (50) tasks may be authorized per fiscal year. A performance-based approach does not require that a separate Contract Line Item Number (CLIN) be established for each task.

The Government estimates that these services will range from \$16M to \$40M per contract year.

c. The contract will establish incentives for contractor performance on an individual task basis. Tasks under this contract are expected to vary in complexity, risk and duration. The award fee pool will be based on the sum of the negotiated amount per task order for each award fee period.

2. SECTION C: STATEMENT OF WORK (SOW)

The SOW applicable to this RFP, located in Section C, describes the requirements for work to be performed under a Performance-Based Task Order contract at Ames Research Center (ARC). Although this is a research organization, the SOW is intentionally written in an “outcome/output” manner, as opposed to a detail or design specification, to allow the successful contractor to perform a “job” on a completion basis. This approach will require greater diligence on the part of the Government, in terms of clearly stating the objectives of each “job” and on the Contractor for deciding how to meet the Government’s requirements in a cost effective and timely manner.

3. SECTION D: PACKAGING AND MARKING

Required clauses through FAC 01-24.

4. SECTION E: INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE

Required clauses through FAC 01-24.

5. SECTION F: DELIVERIES OR PERFORMANCE

All delivery requirements for reports and other deliverables, some of which are described in more detail in the solicitation, will be found in the Contract Deliverables Requirements List (CDRL) an attachment In Section J, (Attachment A-3). Each individual task will have associated delivery dates. As each task order is issued, the schedule, cost and technical performance objectives will be identified by the task requester.

6. SECTION G: CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION DATA

Note that there is Government Furnished Property and that a list of that property is included as an attachment in Section J (Attachment A-2).

7. SECTION H: SPECIAL CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

a. Attention is directed to the clause at H.4, (Limited) Release of Contractor Confidential Business Information (CBI). This is now a standard clause for all ARC contracts and is expected to be codified in the NASA FAR Supplement. The clause puts the contractor on notice that other contractors within NASA may have limited access to confidential business information.

- b. No inherently government actions will be performed under this contract. (See Section H.13).

8. SECTION I: CONTRACT CLAUSES

- a. Required clauses through FAC 01-24
- b. The NASA and SBA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), enables NASA contracting officers to contract directly with 8(a) direct contracting authority with 8(a) contractors and streamline the 8(a) contracting process.

9. SECTION J: LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

NONE

10. SECTION K: REPRESENTATIONS, CERTIFICATIONS AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF OFFERORS

Required provisions through FAC 01-24.

11. SECTION L: INSTRUCTIONS, CONDITIONS, AND NOTICES TO OFFERORS

a. FAR 52.215-1, "Instructions to Offerors-Competitive Acquisition," ensures that offerors are aware that the Government intends to evaluate proposals and award a contract without discussion with offerors (except clarifications as described in FAR 15.306(a)). The Government intends to award on the amount proposed. The Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if necessary. The Government seeks to maximize the quality of the offeror's initial proposal, improve the efficiency of the selection process, and reduce lead-time.

b. The Government intends to utilize a combination of oral presentations and written proposals for this solicitation. Offerors should review the instructions carefully, paying particular attention to:

- page counts and page limitations
- information submitted pertains to the appropriate volumes and sections
- format requirements

c. Due to the nature of research and development work, the Government cannot pre-specify all of the tasks to be performed. Therefore, the Government is providing the historical estimates of the direct labor categories and work-years experienced on the current contract. The offeror is encouraged to submit their vision of the best staffing plan needed to meet the requirements and should not feel constrained by the historical estimates provided by the Government.

d. A Phase-In Plan and Health and Safety Plan are required as part of the proposal submission and will be evaluated under the Mission Suitability Factor.

Conclusion:

This concludes the Highlights for the DRFP. Potential offerors are encouraged to attend the Pre-Solicitation Conference which is scheduled on Tuesday, October 19, 2004. Details will be posted in a separate notice. Any questions should be submitted in writing via Email to Lupe.M.Velasquez@nasa.gov.

As a final note, the information provided in these highlights is not intended to be construed differently from the information in the solicitation. Should an apparent conflict in interpretation exist, the information in the solicitation takes precedence.