



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Tate Reeves

Governor

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Chris Wells, Executive Director

November 21, 2024

AMENDMENT #1

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS/CLARIFICATION REQUESTS

RFQ Number: RFX3140003982 MDEQ-RFQ10242024

To Provide: Professional Engineering Services and Applied Sciences Services to Support the MDEQ Dam Safety Division.

Referring to *“Offerors should submit one (1) signed original Statement of Qualifications (“SOQ”), along with one (1) digital copy in Portable Document Format (“PDF”) on a Universal Serial Bus (“USB”) flash drive with all of the attachments. The signed original SOQ and USB flash drive should be submitted in a sealed envelope or package as stated below no later than the time and date specified in Section 1.1.1 for submission deadline of the SOQ package.”*

1. **Question:** Signed paper copy and USB stick required – does this mean each page should be printed, signed and posted alongside a digital copy on a USB stick?

Answer: Offerors should submit one (1) signed original Statement of Qualifications (“SOQ”), along with one (1) digital copy in Portable Document Format (“PDF”) on a Universal Serial Bus (“USB”) flash drive with all of the attachments. The cover letter, Attachment A, Attachment B, and any Amendments to this RFQ, including this document, should be signed. The PDF and USB should contain identical information.

2. **Question:** Is it not possible to do a digital submission online through a portal or via email, or some other electronic format?

Answer: No, not at this time. MDEQ is working to implement digital submissions for future solicitations.

Referring to *“The compensation for services requested under this RFQ will be negotiated collectively with the selected Offeror(s) on hourly rates” and “A rate sheet should not be submitted as part of the SOQ.”*

3. **Question:** What is the best way for a submission to be handled concerning 2.3.2 Task Descriptions? The different tasks require different abilities/experience levels each of which required different rates. For example, C1, C2 and C3 have varying degrees of skill required, and expertise needed, and therefore varying labor rates and costs.

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Answer: Rates are not to be submitted with your Statement of Qualifications. Rates will be negotiated once selection of Contractor(s) is completed. Offeror needs to demonstrate that they have personnel qualified to perform the tasks required.

Referring to “The term of the contract shall be for a period of four (4) years with an option to renew for one (1) year, upon written agreement of both parties, and under the same prices, terms, and conditions as in the original contract. The total contract term, including any renewals, shall not exceed a maximum total of five (5) years.”

4. **Question:** Costs associated with labor, equipment, licensees, and other factors will change through time. How are potential changes in costs to be addressed and shown in this response?

Answer: Rates are not to be submitted with your Statement of Qualifications. Rates will be negotiated once selection of Contractor(s) is completed. An annual increase will be part of the negotiated rates.

Referring to “B. The Offeror shall have sufficient modeling expertise to perform dam breach modeling (one-dimensional and two-dimensional). Tasks will require the Offeror to be able to use DSSWISE Lite and HEC-RAS 2D to perform dam breach evaluations for selected dam structures. The Offeror shall have sufficient modeling expertise to also perform hydrology and hydraulic modeling and analysis for spillway capacity evaluations using HydroCAD, HEC-RAS 2D or HEC-HMS. The Offeror shall obtain data, run the model, interpret the results, and prepare report(s) or other final products based on its findings as required by MDEQ. The Offeror shall provide a detailed description of the methodology, assumptions, and rationale used in their conclusions.”

5. **Question:** What are the minimum dam volume expectations for this task description (for example 10 per year)? And is the minimum number of dams to be analyzed expected increase after year 1?

Answer: There are 1,394 unclassified dams to be addressed at this time. The number of projects assigned through each work order will be based on the capacity of the Contractor(s) to complete the required evaluations at the necessary professional standard.

Referring to “D. The Offeror shall have the capability to provide Program Management Support Services. Capabilities may include, but are not limited to:”

6. **Question:** Does this capability require onsite or a remote presence. And what is the expectation on monthly hours over the course of the contract?

Answer: The selected Contractor(s) can have a remote presence but will need to be able to plan to be present in person with appropriate advance notice when/if required.

7. **Question:** Will MDEQ allow for the organizational chart to be on an 11x17 page?

Answer: No. Page size is limited to 8 ½ x 11 as stated in Section 4.1, Submission Format. Any information contained on any paper size other than 8 ½ x 11 will not be evaluated.

8. **Question:** Would MDEQ allow for electronic submissions to be submitted via a ShareFile or OneDrive? Our company's IT protocols prefer to submit things via this method than using USB as it provides safer access to the information for all parties.

Answer: No, not at this time. MDEQ is working to implement digital submissions for future solicitations.

9. **Question:** Does MDEQ anticipate interviewing consultants following review of the SOQs?

Answer: No, but MDEQ reserves the right to follow up with questions if clarification is required.

10. **Question:** Should signed addendums be included in the front of the SOQ or as an attachment/appendix in the back?

Answer: Amendments/Addendums can be placed anywhere in the SOQ.

11. **Question:** How quickly does MDEQ anticipate the 1394 dams to be analyzed for hazard determination? Would you anticipate it would be within the first two years or over the entirety of the contract's length?

Answer: The intent is to address as many of the 1,394 dams as possible within the resource constrictions. The pace of the evaluations will be driven by the capacity of the selected Contractor(s) and the availability of funding.

12. **Question:** What size of a team are you looking for to support your program management needs? Our team anticipates this number may fluctuate over time as you a hire more staff internally or have greater project needs.

Answer: The Scope of Work for each work order may be tailored to work within the parameters of the staff available to support the scope for each selected Contractor(s).

13. **Question:** Will out of state consultants be considered, if so, will out of state consultants be less favorable than in state consultants?

Answer: All SOQs will be evaluated equally in relation to Offerors who are located in Mississippi or who are located out of state.

14. **Question:** Is there an estimate on the number of work orders?

Answer: No.

15. **Question:** Are there any expectations on project duration? Or number of dam assessments expected to be completed per year?

Answer: Not initially, but this will be an informed process based on performance. Once a work order is completed, the expectation is that performance will establish future expectations.

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16. **Question:** Do we need to demonstrate experience with DSS-WISE Lite, or simply be able to use it?

Answer: Experience with DSS-WISE Lite is preferred.

17. **Question:** Can you clarify “demonstrate specific familiarity with MDEQ Dam Safety Division permitting processes, regulations, permit requirements, and data systems” in Section 4.6.2.1 “Task Specific Factors” Item #5? Do we need to show projects in Mississippi that demonstrate this familiarity? Or is a written understanding of these items documented in the SOQ adequate?

Answer: Knowledge of the Offeror is required and should answer the question as needed to demonstrate proficiency.

18. **Question:** Will including a survey and Geotech subconsultant result in loss of points in the SOQ evaluation?

Answer: Please refer to Section 4.6.2.1(5), Evaluation Factors, Qualifications of the Offeror, for scoring related to subcontractors.

19. **Question:** Are there any HUB requirements?

Answer: No.

20. **Question:** Does the Offeror need to identify/assign specific staff in the proposal who would be assigned onsite?

Answer: Yes. The anticipated roles of your staff should be included in your submission.

21. **Question:** In section 4.1 the paper size is listed as 8 ½ x11 does this mean that any sheets that are 11x17 would not be allowed? Or would it count as 2 pages?

Answer: Any information contained on any paper size other than 8 ½ x 11 will not be evaluated.

22. **Question:** Section 4.1 states the offeror will be limited to no more than twenty-five pages front and back in their SOQ. Does this mean 25 physical pages so 50 digital pages, or that the front of a page and the back of a page each count as a page of material? Can you clarify in the digital format what the page count intention is?

Answer: 25 front and back physical pages would be 50 digital pages.

23. **Question:** For the page count do tabs and covers that add structure to the proposal count against the page count if no material is on them? Does a cover letter count against the page count?

Answer: The only exceptions to the page count are mentioned in Section 4.2 of this RFQ.

24. **Question:** Section 1.1 states the offeror should provide a submission including electronic files that shall not be password protected and shall be capable of being copied to other media including readable in Microsoft Word and/or Microsoft Excel. Can you clarify that a PDF is acceptable as stated later in the RFQ, but the intention is that the files are not compressed or protected in such a way that the material could not be exported into excel or word?

Answer: Offerors should submit one (1) signed original Statement of Qualifications (“SOQ”), along with one (1) digital copy in Portable Document Format (“PDF”) on a Universal Serial Bus (“USB”) flash drive with all of the attachments.

25. **Question:** If MDEQ needs to request assistance for Subject Matter Expert (“SME”) review, would that be on documents that are submitted to the Agency for review from outside the agency or would that be more of a general service issue?

Answer: It would likely be for assistance when MDEQ receives documents submitted for review from outside the Agency that we need assistance on. It could also be that we may see certain issues commonly enough that we need to increase our level of training for that subject in-house. Dam Safety may ask for assistance in training staff so that we have some expertise and experience in-house to be able to rely on people in-house moving forward.

26. **Question:** How is the agency viewing DSS-WISE and is there an opportunity to supplement or use another program in lieu of DSS-WISE?

Answer: Yes, there is an opportunity upon an appropriate proposal of said program. MDEQ Dam Safety can do a review and look and see if an alternative program provides the same capabilities for our agency as DSS-WISE. From a resource standpoint, if it can operate and function in a similar manner to DSS-WISE, it may be accepted. Right now, MDEQ looks to DSS-WISE as being the lead option because of the resources that have been put into the program and the open functionality for our agency. The amount of time and effort that FEMA has put into the development of the program is substantial, as well as the assets that the State of Mississippi has put into getting the Lidar and everything up to date on the DSS-WISE server. It is a quick tool in terms of setting up the model. It's a short number of steps, maybe seven steps, to go through and get a breach model set up, then it just goes into a queue and runs on the NCCHE server. After that, the user just waits for an email alert that your run is completed. The program does not require software to be loaded on the user's computer, the full system is set up to run on the NCCHE servers. Given that access to DSS-WISE is administered by MDEQ Dam Safety, our agency also has the ability to log in and review the model simulations directly on the NCCHE server. So, from a time and resource standpoint, if an alternative program or something similar is proposed, we could be open to that on a case-by-case basis.

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Offeror shall acknowledge receipt of Amendment #1 by signing and returning this Amendment #1 with its Statement of Qualifications.

By signing below, Offeror acknowledges receipt of Amendment #1, and that its SOQ is being offered in compliance therewith.

Offeror's Name: _____

Signature: _____

By (Print Name): _____

Title: _____

Date: _____