

RFP- Strategic Planning Consulting Services Q&A

Questions due 10/17, Answers due 10/22- posted on 10/19

1) Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer: There are no residency requirements for bidding on this RFP. However, some of the work will be expected to be performed at LIPA's offices on Long Island. In addition, consultants would be expected to be generally available to LIPA during business hours in New York (9AM-5PM Eastern time).

2) Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

Answer: Yes. Some of the consulting activities will be expected to be done in person on Long Island.

3) Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? like, from India or Canada)

Answer: Some but not all. See answers to questions 1 and 2

4) Can we submit the proposals via email?

Answer: No, as specified on page 5 of the RFP, "Five (5) bound paper copies of your proposal and an electronic version on a flash drive or similar device are due no later than the Proposal Due Date noted in Article I above, in a sealed package or packages".

5) Are firms currently providing consulting services for National Grid precluded from being awarded this contract?

Answer: No. As noted on page 10 of the RFP, we ask that you describe any services previously or currently provided and we will consider any potential conflict in evaluating your proposal.

6) My question is whether you are open to solutions that expand your vision? After we have responded to the RFP you have prepared, if we are aware of technology that would significantly enhance your outcome, how would you want us to prepare and propose that information?

Answer: Since your question relates to activities AFTER you've responded to the bid, a response to this question is not necessary in order for you to submit your proposal.

7) We are interested in bidding on the Strategic Planning Consulting Services RFP and want to understand if working with PSEG precludes a firm from this contract.

Answer: No. See answer to Question 5 above. The same applies to work performed for PSEG.

8) Can LIPA describe the resource commitments it will be making (i.e., individuals, % time) from a combination of LIPA, PSEG LI, and National Grid to support the Strategic Planning activities described in the RFP?

Answer: Not with specificity given that LIPA is looking for a consultant that will create and guide us through a process. National Grid is not expected to participate in LIPA's strategic planning process.

9) Can LIPA estimate the amount of hours (i.e., a range of commitment, as a directional indication) it would plan to contract for under the proposed RFP?

Answer: No. See answer to question 8.

10) Is there an estimated budget for this effort?

Answer: An answer to this question is not necessary to respond to the bid.

11) Is budget approved for this effort?

Answer: An answer to this question is not necessary to respond to the bid.

12) Our firm would like to participate in the RFP as a sub-contractor to a prime. Are sub-contractors bound by the same performance history requirements as the prime contractors? Specifically, there is reference to having 10 years of experience at either the firm level or firm management level. Please confirm.

Answer: The requirements apply only to the prime.

13) As a sub-contractor, we are attempting to identify which prime contractors will be submitting a proposal for this RFP. Is there an interested bidders list that you can provide to us; or, is there a list of companies that were invited to participate in this RFP that we can reach out to see if we are a potential fit as an SDVOB consulting firm partner? Please advise.

Answer: LIPA can provide a list of the companies invited to bid on this RFP.

14) Is it in conflict to this RFP process if we are currently engaged in contracted work with LIPA?

Answer: No

15) Is there an expectation that PSEGLI be represented in this process? Can we make recommendations around this involvement as part of the response?

Answer: We would welcome recommendations around PSEGLI's involvement.

16) Is there an expectation that the Board be represented in this process? Can we make recommendations around this involvement as part of the response?

Answer: We would welcome recommendations around the Board's involvement.

17) What is the anticipated role for the Board in this process? Will they serve as agency approval for the plan?

Answer: LIPA expects to discuss the answers to this question with the prevailing bidder.

18) You mention that the strategic planning process needs to align with both the substance and timing of the budget and performance metric discussions. Do you anticipate for this initial work that both of these processes be finalized prior to commencing the initial planning work? Will it be appropriate to identify timing in advance of these processes for 2019 follow through?

Answer: We anticipate that the strategic planning process will commence early in 2019 and continue into the budget and metrics processes that will commence mid-year.

19) Will LIPA ensure participation of LIPA expertise in the areas of budget, performance metrics and ERM as part of this process?

Answer: Participation by those groups is LIPA's current expectation, subject to discussions with the prevailing bidder.

20) Can we assume that the planning process will take place at the LIPA office in order to accommodate local schedules? Or is there a desire to engage the participants in an off-site, fully immersed, multi-day event?

Answer: LIPA currently expects to have both in-office and offsite meetings, subject to discussions with the prevailing bidder.

21) Per Section B, bottom of page 10, of the RFP, Offerors are required to provide hourly rates for services to be provided to LIPA. In the event that Offerors cannot provide an hourly rate buildup, will LIPA also accept firm-fixed-price offers that are based on an alternative basis of estimate (i.e. firm-fixed-price weekly bundle rates), fully inclusive of all Contractor Personnel support and the deliverables required under this RFP? This would maximize competition, offer cost-effective solutions in accordance with each Proposer's best practices, and ensure an inclusive procurement open to all eligible vendors able to offer innovative solutions.

Answer: Contracts resulting from this RFP will ultimately have to be submitted to and approved by the New York State Office of the Comptroller (OSC). Having the vendors submit pricing in the same exact format is an OSC requirement.

22) On Page 9 of the RFP, it states that Proposers must "5. describe the billing system [our] firm utilizes, including how time is tracked, e.g. increments of time tracked, tracking of time per person and per matter and the detail that will be provided in the monthly bills." For Proposers that only bill on a firm-fixed-price basis and therefore do not track time per person, would LIPA accept an alternative basis of estimate such as prices per week? Such Proposers would be able to provide a brief sample bill to LIPA, as requested, demonstrating the Proposers experience in billing in this manner to other Clients.

Answer: See answer to #21 above.

23) Per Section B, bottom of page 10, of the RFP, "any rate increase for years three through five of the contract shall not exceed the lesser of five (5%) percent or the percent increase in the "National Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers"... for each of the previous contract years (years 2, 3, and 4)." Can you clarify whether the maximum escalation from year to year is <5%, or whether the maximum increase from Year 1 labor rates to Year 5 labor rates should not exceed 5%?

Answer: Rates are the same in year 1 and 2. For year 3, 4 and 5, the increase will be equal to the National Consumer Price Index for All Urban Customers (CPI-U) of the prior year or 5%, whichever is less.

24) Can you elaborate on the perceived conflict of interest for firms that work with National Grid, Lockheed Martin, and PSEG?

Answer: It is up to the bidders to determine whether any services currently or previously provided by the bidder to these companies could create the appearance of, or an actual, conflict with providing strategic planning consulting services to LIPA.

25) On page 15, the RFP states “For purposes of this solicitation, LIPA hereby establishes an overall subcontracting goal of 30%; 15% for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (“MBE”) participation and 15% for Women-Owned Business Enterprises (“WBE”) participation. While there are no Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (“M/WBE”) participation goals in this RFP, Respondents are encouraged to use M/WBEs in connection with their proposed project.” Additionally, Page 15 includes the following statement: “For purposes of this solicitation, LIPA hereby establishes an overall subcontracting goal of 6%. While there are no Service Disabled Veteran-Owned (SDVOB) Business participation goals in this RFP, Respondents are encouraged to use SDVOBs in connection with their proposed project.” These two statements are contradicting. Does LIPA intend to establish an overall subcontracting goal of 30% with 15% for MBE participation and 15% for WBE participation, or an overall subcontracting goal of 15% for this solicitation/RFP?

Answer: There is an overall subcontracting goal for MWBEs of 30%. 15% MBE and 15% WBE. There is a 6 % SDVOB subcontracting goal, see amended language in the RFP.

26) Page 13 states “The non-cost criteria listed above will be given more consideration than the cost criteria in LIPA’s evaluation of proposals,” whereas Page 12 states, “Although proposed cost will be given significant consideration in the selection process, LIPA reserves the right to negotiate lower fees with any firm selected, or a different fee structure than proposed.” Can LIPA provide clarification on the relative importance of cost/price in relation to the non-cost/price evaluation factors?

Answer:

LIPA will evaluate proposals based on 80% technical, 20% cost.

27) Can LIPA define “Joint Proposals” in the following statement on the bottom of Page 14, “Joint proposals will not be accepted”?

Answer: Joint proposals involve two or more companies proposing to share prime responsibility for providing the services (as opposed to a prime and a subcontractor relationship which is permitted).

28) what is LIPA’s current planning strategic cycle? How often do you produce strategic plans and when is the next upcoming milestone?

Answer: An answer to this question is not necessary to respond to the bid.

29) Page 16 states “The successful Proposer(s) must agree to provide LIPA with audit access on request during the term of the contract and for seven (7) years thereafter.” If firm-fixed-price offers are acceptable, can LIPA confirm that auditable documents are limited to deliverables and invoices?

Answer: Auditable documents are not limited to deliverables and invoices. LIPA must have audit rights to any document generated in connection with LIPA work performed by the consultant.

30) What positions are included on LIPA’s senior leadership team?

Answer: CEO, CFO, GC, CIO and four VPs

31) Will the contractor be expected to participate in briefings or presentations to the LIPA board? What other external stakeholders will contractor be expected to interface with, on LIPA’s behalf?

Answer: That will be determined as the process progresses. Briefings or presentations to the LIPA Board seem likely.

32) Does the scope of Services also include assistance in business analysis and planning for LIPA’s functional group leaders?

Answer: Yes, to the extent such work is deemed to be necessary within the strategic planning process proposed by the prevailing bidder. LIPA has in-house capabilities as well.

33) Please clarify the information requested on the “anticipated commitment of time to LIPA’s account” for the senior professionals on the project team. Since this appears to an indefinite quantity contract, with a fairly open-ended scope of services and perhaps multiple contractors, the level of time required for delivery of services is uncertain. Is LIPA asking for the level of time that the proposer would be willing to commit?

Answer: Yes, LIPA is asking for the level of time that the proposer would be willing to commit.

34) The two-year window for account references appears unduly limiting. For most strategic planning engagements, the consultant is bound by strict confidentiality agreements that prohibit disclosure to third parties of the existence of the consulting contract or the nature of consulting services provided. So the number of disclosable engagements in the last two years could be limited and not reflective of the consultancy’s qualifications. Would LIPA consider widening this window to the last five years?

Answer: LIPA has amended the RFP and change it to 5 year.

35) For most strategic planning engagements, the consultant is bound by strict confidentiality agreements that prohibit disclosure to third parties of the existence of the consulting contract or the nature of consulting services provided. Would it be acceptable to limit the list of companies and services requested at the end of this paragraph to those clients who are serving LIPA or participate in the NYISO market?

Answer: LIPA will not limit the universe of companies that bidders might use as references. Bidders should list whatever companies they feel comfortable listing based on their legal and contractual obligations to their other clients.

36) The RFP states that “Joint Proposal will not be accepted.” Can the proposer include subcontractors on their team, subject the same conflict and other contractual terms?

Answer: Yes.