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PFAS Consulting, Planning, Science, and Engineering Services

3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS AND METHOD OF EVALUATION

3.1. General

The following general information is provided and will be carefully followed by all Offerors to ensure that Proposals are properly prepared.

- A. A Transmittal Form (see Attachment C to this RFP) signed by a duly authorized representative of the Offeror.
- B. Each Offeror must furnish all information required by this RFP.
- C. FW reserves the right to conduct discussions with qualified Offerors in any manner necessary to serve the best interest of FW and consistent with the Virginia Public Procurement Act (Va. Code Ann. §2.2-4300 et seq., the “Act”).

3.2. Proprietary Information

- A. Except as provided herein or as otherwise set forth in §2.2-4342 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (Va. Code Ann. §2.2-4300 et seq., the “Act”), all proceedings, records, contracts and other public records relating to procurement transactions will be open to inspection in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Va. Code Ann. §2.2-3700 et seq., the “Virginia FOIA”).
- B. Each Offeror has the right to identify data or other materials submitted in connection with this procurement as trade secrets or proprietary information, which will not be subject to inspection pursuant to either §2.2-4342 of the Act or the Virginia FOIA, by completing and submitting Attachment D to FW prior to or at the time of submission of its Proposal.

3.3. Questions and Communications

- A. All contact between prospective Offerors and FW with respect to this solicitation will be formally held at scheduled meetings or in writing through the Issuing Office. Questions and comments regarding the meaning or interpretation of any aspect of this solicitation must be submitted in writing to the Procurement Contact identified on the cover page to this solicitation and must be received by the Procurement Contact on or before the deadline for submitting questions that is specified on such cover page. Only written questions will be accepted. Questions and/or comments which are submitted after the deadline set forth on the cover page to this solicitation will not be answered.
- B. FW will respond to all timely questions and comments that are properly submitted hereunder and are deemed to address a matter that is relevant and substantive in nature within a reasonable period of time, in the form of a written Addendum that will be transmitted to all prospective Offerors at the addresses furnished to FW for such purpose. Oral communications between FW and any Offeror regarding the interpretation or meaning of any aspect of this RFP are not authorized and may not be relied upon for any purpose.

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3.4. Addenda to the RFP

- A. FW reserves the right to amend this solicitation at any time prior to the deadline for submitting Bids or Proposals. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, notice of the revision will be given in the form of an Addendum that will be provided to all prospective Offerors who are on record with FW as having received this solicitation. If, in the opinion of FW, the deadline for the submission of Proposals does not provide sufficient time for consideration of any Addendum, then such deadline may be extended at the discretion of FW.
- B. It will be the responsibility of each Offeror to contact the Procurement Contact identified on the cover page to this solicitation prior to submission of a Proposal hereunder in order to determine whether any Addenda have been issued in connection with this procurement. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the failure of any Offeror to receive any Addenda will neither constitute grounds for withdrawal of its Proposal nor relieve such Offeror from any responsibility for incorporating the provisions of any Addenda in its Proposal. Upon issuance by FW, Addenda will be deemed to have become a part of this RFP to the same extent as if set forth fully herein.

3.5. Duration of Proposals

Proposals will be valid for a minimum of 120 days following the deadline for submitting offers. If an Award is not made during that period, all offers will be automatically extended for another 120 days. Offers will be automatically renewed until such time as either an Award is made or proper notice is given to FW of Offeror's intent to withdraw its offer. Offers may only be withdrawn by submitting notice at least 15 days before the expiration of the then current 120-day period.

3.6. Arrearage

By submitting an offer in response to this solicitation, the Offeror will be deemed to represent that it is not in arrears in the payment of any obligation due and owing FW, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or any other public body in Virginia. This representation will be deemed to include the payment of taxes and employee benefits. The Offeror further agrees that, in the event it is Awarded a Contract hereunder, it will not become in arrears to any such public body during the term of the Contract.

Instructions for Submitting Proposals

The deadline for submitting Proposals is shown on the cover sheet. Proposals will be opened in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Public Procurement Act. There will be no public Proposal opening.

Except as set forth below, the attached Transmittal Form (Attachment C) must accompany the Proposal. The purpose of the Transmittal Form is to formally submit the Proposal to FW and to bind the Offeror to the terms, conditions and Specifications contained in the

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solicitation. The Transmittal Form must be signed by an individual who is authorized to bind the Offeror to all matters set forth in the Proposal.

Submit two (2) hardcopy sets of your Proposal. Identify one volume as “ORIGINAL” and include all originally signed documents in it. In addition to the hardcopy set, you must email to the Procurement Contact on the coversheet of the RFP an exact electronic copy of the hardcopy ORIGINAL Proposal within one business day of receiving a request from the Procurement Contact for the electronic copy.

Proposals must be submitted in a sealed package(s). No other form of submission will be accepted (i.e., E-mail, Facsimile, etc.). Proposal packages must be identified on the outside as follows:

From: _____

_____ Name of Offeror	_____ Due Date
_____ Street	_____ RFP No.
_____ City, State, Zip Code	_____ RFP Title

3.7. Late Proposals

Proposals or unsolicited amendments to Proposals arriving after the closing date and time will not be considered. Proposals received after the Proposal submission deadline will be returned to the Offeror unopened providing that sufficient Proposal identification information is shown on the outside of the Proposal package.

3.8. Proposal Organization

A. Proposals will address the following general topics and also emphasize the Offeror’s qualifications to perform the services. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the information presented by the Offeror and the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. Offerors are encouraged to keep their Proposal to less than 20 pages in length (11-point Arial font , printed one side, or, ten pages printed on both sides), excluding cover, cover letter, title sheets, dividers, etc. All pages in the Proposal must be 8-1/2" x 11”.

B. Offerors will follow the Proposal format outlined in this section. Failure to adhere to the prescribed format may result in rejection of the Offeror’s Proposal. Numbered sections and dividers are required for each of the sections listed and in the order below:

- **Section 1** – Forms and Narrative
- **Section 2** – Project Personnel
- **Section 3** – Experience and Qualifications
- **Section 4** – Financial Responsibility

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All Proposal elements shall be included in the Technical Proposal and shall include at a minimum the following:

1. **Proposal Section 1 – Forms and Narrative:** Transmittal Form, Attachment C, must be fully completed and submitted in Section 1 or the Proposal could be deemed non-responsive. Attachment C also includes the Insurance Checklist. Attachment D – Public Disclosure of Trade Secrets and/or Proprietary Information, Attachment E – Conflict-of-Interest Statement, and Attachment F – Document Security License and Non-Disclosure Agreement must also be completed and submitted in this section.

Written Narrative: Each Offeror must provide a written narrative that includes, at a minimum, the following:

- a. brief history of the firm and its organization,
 - b. the name and contact information of the principal or officer who will serve as the primary point of contact for the Offeror and who will have authority to negotiate on behalf of the Offeror, and
 - c. general description of the Offeror’s experience in providing the services described in this RFP, including any special qualifications, experience, awards, etc. A
2. **Proposal Section 2 – Project Personnel:** This section will contain the names, background, office locations, education, and experience of the key personnel proposed for these generic services. An organizational chart showing duties, responsibilities and the lines of communication shall be included in this section. Resumes may be included as an appendix to the Proposal. Following Award of a Contract hereunder (if any), any substitution or other change in project team personnel must be approved in advance by FW. **Provide the state and Professional Engineer License number of the Offeror and/or subcontractor employees proposed to submit work on this Contract.**

Proposal Section 3 – Experience and Qualifications: This section should discuss the experience and qualifications of the Offeror and the project personnel in the performance of tasks similar to those described herein. Include detailed descriptions of those tasks and identify the role of key team members in the referenced projects. For joint ventures, the experience of all firms as it relates to this project must be discussed. Using Attachment B (“References”), provide at least one contact for each referenced project listed above, including the title of the project, contact name of an individual employed by the project owner, with telephone number, email address, and mailing address. This contact shall be a person having direct knowledge of the relevant scope of work and the Offeror’s performance during the Contract. The Offeror shall be responsible for providing current and accurate contact information regarding each of its listed references. FW reserves the right to require additional references from the Offeror, or to obtain additional references from other sources not provided by the Offeror.

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3. **Proposal Section 4 - Financial Responsibility:** The Offeror will provide evidence of financial responsibility including a certified copy of the Offeror's most recent audited financial statement. In the absence of a recent audited financial statement, the Offeror may submit for consideration by FW a certified copy of its most recent unaudited financial statement, provided that it was prepared by an independent accounting firm in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Unless such information is included in the Offeror's Written Narrative (see Proposal Section 1, above), the Offeror additionally will provide a statement indicating the length of time the firm has been in business, the number and location(s) of its office(s), the approximate number of clients and the current number of full-time employees.

4. **Proposal Section - Financial Responsibility:** The Offeror will provide evidence of financial responsibility including a certified copy of the Offeror's most recent audited financial statement. In the absence of a recent audited financial statement, the Offeror may submit for consideration by FW a certified copy of its most recent unaudited financial statement, provided that it was prepared by an independent accounting firm in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Unless such information is included in the Offeror's Written Narrative (see Proposal Section 1, above), the Offeror additionally will provide a statement indicating the length of time the firm has been in business, the number and location(s) of its office(s), the approximate number of clients and the current number of full-time employees.

3.9. Evaluation Committee and Criteria

Evaluation Committee: FW will establish an Evaluation Committee (the "Committee") to review, evaluate, and rank each Proposal. The Committee will be composed of individuals designated by FW. The Committee may request additional technical assistance from other sources.

Evaluation Criteria: Each Proposal will be reviewed for compliance with the requirements of this RFP. The Offeror assumes responsibility for addressing all necessary technical and operational issues in order to meet the objectives of the RFP. Each Proposal will be evaluated and ranked according to the criteria set forth below:

1. **Technical Competence:** The projects in the Proposal demonstrate experience with topics described in this RFP.

2. **Quality of Work:** Demonstrates practices of the Offeror assure that high quality work is delivered to the client.

3. **Proposed Project Personnel:** Review of Offeror's proposed project personnel including their resumes.

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4. **Financial Responsibility:** Review of Offeror's financial responsibility based on the certified audited financial statement and related information for its most recently completed fiscal year.
5. **Principal Participation:** Review of the resume for the Principal or Officer of the firm who will have responsibility for oversight of the work to be performed for FW and the role of the Principal or Officer in overseeing and ensuring the quality of the work.
6. **Professional Registration:** The Offeror and/or subcontractor employees proposed to submit work on this Contract are registered as Professional Engineers and licensed in the Commonwealth of Virginia or are eligible to obtain same by reciprocity. Evidence of an application of reciprocity must be submitted to FW within one month of award of a Contract resulting from this RFP.

3.10. Acceptable and Unacceptable Proposals and Rejection of Offers

FW reserves the right to: (a) reject any or all Proposals received; (b) cancel this RFP at any time prior to Award; and/or (c) waive informalities in the event that FW determines such action is in its best interests. Proposals must meet or exceed the mandatory requirements of this RFP. If an Offeror does not meet a mandatory requirement it will be rejected.

3.11. Oral Presentations

Finalists may be required to make individual presentations to the Committee as part of the technical evaluation process. If so notified by FW, the Offeror must provide a presentation within two calendar weeks of notification or as may be arranged by FW. Failure to provide a satisfactory presentation will be grounds for a declaration that the offer is non-responsive. Presentations will be conducted at FW's offices or virtually, at FW's discretion.

3.12. Final Ranking and Selection

Each Proposal will be ranked by the Evaluation Committee based upon the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. Selection will be based upon the Evaluation Committee's judgment of the Offeror's ability to perform the scope of services in a responsible manner using the highest standards of quality. FW will be the sole judge of the Offeror's responsiveness and responsibility.

3.13. Negotiation

FW staff will engage in individual discussions with one or more Offeror(s) deemed fully qualified, responsible and suitable on the basis of initial responses and with emphasis on professional competence, to provide the required services. At the conclusion of discussions, on the basis of evaluation factors set forth in the RFP and all information developed in the selection process, FW will select in the order of preference one Offeror whose professional qualifications and proposed services are deemed most meritorious.

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If a Contract satisfactory and advantageous to FW can be negotiated at a price considered fair and reasonable and pursuant to contractual terms and conditions acceptable to FW, the Award shall be made to that Offeror. Otherwise, negotiations with the Offeror ranked first shall be formally terminated and negotiations conducted with the Offeror ranked second, and so on until such a Contract can be negotiated at a fair and reasonable price.

In the event that FW determines in writing and in its sole discretion that only one Offeror is fully qualified, or that one Offeror is clearly more highly qualified and suitable than the others under consideration, a Contract may be negotiated and Awarded to that Offeror. FW reserves the right to negotiate any aspect of the Proposal or the Contract in any manner that best serves the needs of FW and is within the scope of this RFP. FW is under no obligation to Award, but may do so based upon an analysis of submitted Proposals and subsequent interviews and negotiations.

END SECTION 3