MEL Consulting Services RFP

Website Question and Answers

Q: Could a China-registered company be eligible for this consultancy and receive the applicable USDA funds?

A: The USDA funding source does not allow for a China-registered company eligibility.

Q: Could you consider a separately scoped remote data-quality and reporting work package, rather than the entire MEL assignment?

A: All proposals will be considered but graded on the conditions outlined in the RFP.

Q: What data-access or onsite requirements would apply, and is there an indicative budget and expected level of effort for that package?

A: Visit(s) to HQ will be required, but travel expenses will be handled separately under an Advance Notice of Travel (ADNOT) contract so those expenses should not be included in the proposal. Access to Zoho Analytics will be provided.

Q: Could you clarify which documents a Colombia-based firm must provide to demonstrate eligibility to receive USDA funds, and whether you would consider a proposal limited to this data-quality and reporting component?

A: The RFP is open to all firms/consultants that meet the applicable USDA requirements, including federal procurement standards (2 CFR §§ 200.318–200.319), suspension and debarment requirements (2 CFR § 200.214 and Part 180), and any additional eligibility requirements specified in the RFP. Documentation verifying eligibility will be requested prior to contract award.

Q: Could you also confirm the payment terms for the first accepted deliverable, including the invoice-processing period and whether any mobilization payment is available?

A: Payment milestones and invoicing will be determined during the final scope of work development with the awardee. There will be an initial payment upon signing the contract.

Q: The current programme/dataset inventory, principal reporting tools, and donor reports or evaluation deliverables due during 16 November to 30 January?

A: Specific deliverables and deliverable due dates will be determined during the negotiation stage with the awardee.

Q: Whether a UK-registered company needs any additional supplier registration or donor-specific certification beyond Attachment A to receive payment under this engagement?

A: The RFP is open to all firms/consultants that meet the applicable USDA requirements, including federal procurement standards (2 CFR §§ 200.318–200.319), suspension and debarment requirements (2 CFR § 200.214 and Part 180), and any additional eligibility requirements specified in the RFP. Documentation verifying eligibility will be requested prior to contract award.

Q: Whether the 6 November deadline is intended as 17:00 CDT (UTC-5), as printed, or 17:00 St Louis local time after the daylight-saving change?

A: Correction: 17:00 St Louis CST local time

Q: For a non-U.S. individual consultant, what documentation would satisfy the requirement to be officially licensed in the country of operation, and what evidence is required to show ability to receive USDA funds?

A: The RFP is open to all firms/consultants that meet the applicable USDA requirements, including federal procurement standards (2 CFR §§ 200.318–200.319), suspension and debarment requirements (2 CFR § 200.214 and Part 180), and any additional eligibility requirements specified in the RFP. Documentation verifying eligibility will be requested prior to contract award.

Q: Since the RFP states that ASA/WISHH may award only a portion of the requirements or separate contracts, would you consider a proposal limited to concise analytical products prepared from existing aggregate program data (for example, a short editable brief plus one factual revision), rather than the full portfolio-wide MEL scope?

A: All proposals will be considered but graded on the conditions outlined in the RFP.

Q: Are disclosed AI-assisted drafting tools permitted if no confidential or personally identifiable data is uploaded, all figures are derived from supplied aggregate data, and every output is independently checked by a human?

A: All tools and methodology must be pre-approved by HQ staff prior to use and would be reviewed and determined on a case-by-case basis.

Q: May a Japanese company apply and deliver remotely from Japan? Are there mandatory travel, on-site work, or data-location requirements?

A: This work is considered remote with occasional on-site work would be needed at the HQ office in St. Louis, MO.

Q: What registrations or documentation must a non-U.S. firm provide to demonstrate eligibility to receive USDA funds?

A: The RFP is open to all firms/consultants that meet the applicable USDA requirements, including federal procurement standards (2 CFR §§ 200.318–200.319), suspension and debarment requirements (2 CFR § 200.214 and Part 180), and any additional eligibility requirements specified in the RFP. Documentation verifying eligibility will be requested prior to contract award.

Q: Would you consider a proposal limited to data quality, analysis, and reporting, or must one bidder cover the full scope?

A: All proposals will be considered but graded on the conditions outlined in the RFP.

Q: Is there an indicative budget or expected level of effort for the initial term? What are the payment milestones, payment currency, and invoice terms?

A: Level of Effort should be determined by the submitter based on the information provided in the RFP. Payment milestones will be determined during the final scope of work development with the awardee. Currency is typically USD, but it is possible that local currency might be an option.

Q: Does the November 6 deadline mean 5:00 PM CDT as printed, or local Central Standard Time?

A: Corrections: 5:00 PM local Central Standard Time

Q: Does the 10-page proposal include the CV and/or bidder's capabilities?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a maxim number of pages for the consultant CV?

A: The CV should be capped at 3 pages.

Q: Are the WMOSB Proof of Certification and Attachment A Technical Proposal Authorization Cover Page counted against the 10-page limit?

A: No

Q: What RFP number should go on Attachment A? What proposal validity period do you expect?

A: No RFP number is needed, but the title of the RFP should be included in the email subject line and on the Attachment A.

Q: For budgeting purposes, are there specific deliverables that WISHH expects in the November-January period of performance or should bidders base their proposed budget on the daily rate for the consultant(s)?

A: Specific deliverables and deliverable due dates will be determined during the negotiation stage with the awardee.

Q: Does WISHH anticipate that the tasks and deliverables can be completed by one full-time equivalent consultant or is there an expectation that a greater level of effort is require? Does the same hold true for the potential extension period? If not, can you provide additional details regarding deliverables to be completed?

A: Anticipated that the tasks and deliverables can be completed by one consultant. It is anticipated that the tasks and deliverables will be less than a full-time equivalent consultant. The same holds true for the extension period.

Q: Would the separately scoped services (major evaluations, dashboards, field assessments) be added to this contract as amendments or task orders, or bought through separate procurement?

A: Specific services such as major evaluations and field assessments may be added as amendments or put out through a separate procurement depending on the scale and scope of each.

Q: Is the consultant to provide capacity building and technical assistance virtually or is there an expectation of travel to WISHH headquarters in St. Louis or to overseas locations? If travel is required, can you provide additional information to inform our proposed budget?

A: Occasional Travel to WISHH headquarters in St. Louis is expected. Travel to overseas locations is a possibility. All travel will be negotiated under a separate Advance Notice of Travel (ADNOT) contract and should not be budgeted in the proposal.

Q: Who will be the consultant's main point of contact? Is there in-house MEL staff, or an outgoing or incumbent consultant to hand over from?

A: The POC will be determined at the time of contracting. There isn't an in-house MEL staff or outgoing incumbent to assist with hand-over.

Q: Is there an incumbent - a current firm and/or consultant that is currently managing all of this, or is it being done in-house?

A: No

Q: Do you have a desired budgetary range that you're looking to be within and are you willing to provide that information? Along these lines, as the initial contract period is for 2.5 months, with an option of extending for another year, would you like pricing for both the initial investigation, as well as an annual fee?

A: Yes, please include the pricing for both the initial period and the year following.

Q: How many active markets are currently within ASA/WISHH's programming?

A: 25

Q: If we can provide ASA/WISHH with additional services, such as data collection, dashboard development, market development, etc., is it okay to include those in our proposal?

A: Yes, but a separate budget would be recommended.

Q: The RFP Scope includes providing *"technical oversight and coordination for baselines, midterm and final evaluations, research studies, assessments, and other analytical assignments."* What specific evaluations, research studies and assessments are you looking for technical oversight and coordination of?

A: Specific evaluations, research studies, and assessments will be determined based on evolving programmatic priorities, applicable U.S. government funding requirements, and project needs. Additional details regarding the scope and nature of these assignments will be communicated as appropriate.