



vision

# IT RFP Evaluation Process

Prepared by the Office of the CIO  
January 2011



# Goals and Objectives

- Communication Restrictions
- Security and Confidentiality
- Evaluation Team Organization
- IT RFP Evaluation Team Roles and Responsibilities
- Evaluation Process
- Ranking and Final Recommendation Process
- Final Steps
- Lessons Learned
- Questions



# Communications Restrictions

- From issuance date of IT RFP until the vendor selection and contract announcement.
  - **Only** A & I Procurement Section.
  - State representative during:
    - ❖ Pre-Proposal Conference and Oral Presentations and,
    - ❖ Response to vendor questions via written answers.
  
- Section 3: Special Provisions Information, 3. Restrictions on Communication with State Staff, page 16 of RFP template).



# Security and Confidentiality

- Throughout the evaluation process, the confidentiality and security of each proposal and the scoring process **MUST** be maintained.
- All evaluation team members need to sign:
  - Conflict of Interest Certification.
  - Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreement.

# Evaluation Team Organization





# IT RFP Evaluation Team Roles and Responsibilities



# Executive Sponsorship

- May include:

- Governor,
- Agency Director,
- CIO.
  - ❖ Supports and authorizes the scope of the project.
  - ❖ Controls and authorizes expenditure of funds.



# Selection (Steering) Committee

- Agency Deputy Director and/or Division Administrators (Senior Management):
  - Provides oversight and ensures the evaluation process is followed and that scoring decisions are **sound** and **defensible**.
    - ❖ Approves or adjusts criterion weights.
    - ❖ Resolves compliance issues and makes decision on all other evaluation matters.
    - ❖ Reviews discrepancies in proposals.
    - ❖ Makes management decisions, where necessary.
    - ❖ Reviews and confirms evaluation results.
  - Makes final selection recommendation to Executive Sponsorship.



# Evaluation Coordinator

- Coordinates the overall RFP and evaluation process with the OCIO and A&I Procurement Section.
  - Ensures the security and confidentiality of the IT RFP evaluation process.
  - Distributes proposal material to the evaluators and provides technical assistance.
  - Develops and provides scoring matrix to evaluators.
  - Assigns weights to each criterion.
  - Assigns an ID to each evaluator.
  - Maintains and tracks evaluators scoring.
  - Prepares and presents final ranking and scoring to the Selection Committee.



# Evaluation Committee

- Evaluation Team Members:
  - Recommend a minimum of three (3) members
  - Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).
  - IT Experts.
  - Project Manager (Evaluation Coordinator).
- Evaluates and scores technical and cost proposals.
- Participates in oral presentations.
- Participates in evaluator discussion.
- Rescores proposals (as necessary).



# Evaluation Process



# RFP Opening

- A & I Procurement Section:
  - Authorizes RFP announcement to be posted on the OCIO website.
  - Opens Vendor Proposals.
    - ❖ Recommend agency representative attend.
  - Confirms compliance with Procurement Rules and Procedures.
  - Confirms submission of Proposal Price Sheet.
    - ❖ Confirms signature page is signed by company official responsible for business entity.
  - Proposals must be submitted in two major sections under separate covers.
    - ❖ Technical Proposal.
    - ❖ Cost Proposal.
      - Technical and Cost Proposals copies: One (1) original, Two (2) electronic, and hard copies (Agency's discretion).



# Technical Proposal Evaluation

- Evaluation Coordinator:
  - Separates technical and cost proposals (best practice).
    - ❖ Places cost proposals in a secure location.
  - Convenes Evaluation Committee.
    - ❖ Distributes and secures required signatures on the Conflict of Interest Certification and Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreement.
      - ❑ Reiterates the confidentiality and security of the evaluation process.
    - ❖ Reviews evaluation process and distributes technical proposals and scoring matrix to evaluators.
    - ❖ Answers evaluators' questions.



# Technical Proposal Evaluation

- Evaluator(s):
  - Reads RFP before proposals are opened.
    - ❖ Reviews relevant sections of the RFP.
    - ❖ Understands mandatory requirements.
  - Evaluates based upon the technical aspects of the vendor's proposal.
    - ❖ Without the influence of the cost proposal.
    - ❖ Identifies proposal sections cross-referenced to the criterion being evaluated.
    - ❖ Reviews and evaluates proposer's detailed response and material to scoring criterion.
    - ❖ Attends and score oral presentations.
    - ❖ Adjusts scoring after evaluator discussion, where necessary.



# Other Components of Technical Proposals Evaluation

## ■ Reference Checks:

- Performed by someone not on the Evaluation Team (best practice).
- Conducts corporate and key individual reference checks.
- Compiles and furnishes copies of reference checks to evaluators.



# Other Components of Technical Proposals Evaluation

- Oral Presentation(s) [Optional]:
  - Steering Committee and Evaluation Committee jointly determine the need for Oral presentations.
  - Recommend top 1-3 vendors.
  - Same questions to all vendors.
    - ❖ Distributed prior to Oral presentation.
  - Opportunity to clarify proposals.
    - ❖ Not an opportunity to alter technical or cost proposals.
  - Recommend limiting to no more than 2 hours.
  - Allow enough time between presentations that vendors do not meet each other in the hall ways.



# Other Components of Technical Proposals Evaluation

- Evaluator Discussion:
  - Held before and/or after oral presentations are completed.
  - Allows evaluators to share observations and insight to the proposals.
    - ❖ Identifies inconsistency in proposals.
    - ❖ Not intended to persuade or influence teams members.
    - ❖ Vendor oral presentations considered part of proposal.



# Technical Scoring Criterion

- **Mandatory Requirements:**
  - Pass or fail based upon the mandatory requirements specified in RFP.
    - ❖ Zero (0) = non-compliance.
    - ❖ One (1) = compliant.
  - Addresses goals and objectives specified in RFP.
- **Other Criterion Examples (See RFP Template)**
  - ❖ Proposer Background and Experience
  - ❖ Staffing and Project Organization
  - ❖ Proposer's Project Work Plan
  - ❖ Approach to Contract Performance
  - ❖ Value Added
  - ❖ Oral Presentations
- **Weights need to be applied to each criterion.**



# Technical Scoring Examples

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
0	<b>No value</b>	The proposer has omitted any discussion of this requirement or the information provided is of no value.
1-3	<b>Poor</b>	The proposer has not fully established the capability to perform the requirement, has marginally described its approach, or has simply restated the requirement.
4-6	<b>Average</b>	The proposer has an acceptable capability or solution to meet this criterion and has described its approach in sufficient detail to be considered "as meeting minimum requirements".
7-9	<b>Good</b>	The proposer has demonstrated an above-average capability, approach, or solution and has provided a complete description of the capability, approach, or solution.
10	<b>Excellent</b>	The proposer has provided an innovative, detailed, efficient approach or established, by references and presentation of material, far superior capability in this area.



# Technical Scoring Guidelines

- Do NOT write in proposals.
  - Facilitates easier scoring.
  - Include supporting notes and comments on the scoring sheets.
- Use technical proposal matrix and scoring descriptions to assign scores.
  - No fractional scores.
  - Missing scores are sent back to the evaluator (only complete score sheets are counted).
- Score should reflect evaluator's assessment of proposer's overall approach to the requirement(s) as specified in the RFP.



# Cost Proposal Evaluation

- Conducted after technical proposal and oral presentation evaluations are complete.
- Determine whether each Cost Proposal complies with mandatory requirements.
  - Examine proposals to ensure that all arithmetic calculations are correct.
  - Identify and list exceptions to price quoted.
- Discretionary to open all Cost Proposal(s).
  - Minimum threshold is set for Technical Proposals.
  - Threshold must be disclosed in RFP.



# Cost Proposal Evaluation (continued)

- Conduct Cost Analysis:
  - Not just bottom line.
  - Deliverable based vs. time and material.
  - Addresses all deliverables, services and responsibilities specified in the RFP.
  - All inclusive (personnel, overhead, travel, equipment usage, and other miscellaneous costs for the contract period quoted).
  - Maintenance (five year cost):
    - ❖ % of total cost shown on Proposal Price Sheet.
    - ❖ Yearly escalation cost.
  - Hourly rate (change request only).



# Cost Scoring Guidelines

- Refer any errors found on the cost proposal schedules to the Selection Committee for resolution.
- Total cost on each cost schedule shall equal the total bid price on the Price Sheet.
  - Resolution Guidelines:
    - ❖ In case of error in the extension of prices in the proposal, unit prices will govern.
    - ❖ Minor computational errors recommend agency consults with Procurement Section for resolution.



# Ranking and Final Recommendation Process

- Use the summary scoring and ranking form to perform the final scoring and ranking.
  - Official document for Procurement Section.
- Technical and cost scores are added together.
  - Total score includes oral presentations' scores.
- Proposer with the highest score is ranked first.
- Prepare final rankings and recommendation for the Selection Committee.
- The Selection Committee makes the final decision on selection.



# Final Steps

- Selection Committee presents vendor selection recommendation to Executive Sponsorship.
- Executive Sponsorship approves tentative award.
- Evaluation Coordinator advises A & I Procurement Section of tentative award.
- Procurement Section sends tentative award letter to selected vendor.
- Contract Negotiations.
- Contract approval and signing.
- Work commences after the Procurement Services approves the contract.
  - Agency submits contract and AG HEAT approval form with Requisition (RQS) to Procurement Section.
  - Procurement Section assigns MSA # and sends MSA cover letter to Agency.



# Lessons Learned

- Communicate, Communicate and Communicate.
  - top-down, bottom-up, and cross-organizational communications.
  - Cannot stress enough.
- Schedule needs lots of slack time.
  - Evaluations take longer than expected due to complexity and/or resource availability.
  - Contract negotiations take longer than expected attorney involvement and developing SOW.
  - Need to allow adequate time for review and approval by all parties.
- Scoring does not work without weights.



Questions?