**Procurement Notice**

**Service Provider for FY 2018 USDA Food for Progress Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

**Issue Date:** September 26, 2017

**Closing Date:** October 1, 2017

**NOFO No:** USDA-FFPr-2018-02

**Place of Performance:** Washington DC

**Period of performance:** As agreed during the proposal development

**Application submission:** Jessica Carroll, Program Development Coordinator, jcarroll@cnfa.org, with a copy to Nino Kobakhidze, Business Development Manager, nkobakhidze@cnfa.org

**1. Background:**

CNFA is a not-for-profit agricultural development organization headquartered in Washington, DC and dedicated to increasing rural incomes by empowering farmers and rural entrepreneurs. CNFA assists smallholders to increase household-level food security and nutrition through improved agricultural practices, introduction of new varieties, diversification of crop production, food preservation and storage, development of farmer-based organizations, and strengthened linkages to markets. CNFA has a successful track record implementing agricultural development programs in 43 countries.

**2. Statement of Work:**

CNFA is seeking the services of a service provider for a short- to medium-term assignment to support the development of a proposal for the FY 2018 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food for Progress (FFPr) funding opportunity. The selected service provider will provide CNFA with a Lead Writer and a Technical Lead to develop the proposal in accordance with USDA rules, regulations, and timeline. Country selection will be determined upon release of the USDA FY 2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Interested service providers should respond to this solicitation by submitting an application by the due date above in compliance with the instructions below.

The selected consultants provided by the service provider will work closely with CNFA staff from pre-solicitation through submission. CNFA anticipates the positions to start immediately and continue through January 2018 with the total level of effort of approximately 30 days for each. The selected consultants will be required to travel to Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) and Eastern Europe on a mutually agreed timeline for this opportunity.

**3. Instructions and Requirements for Application Submission:**

* A cover page that includes your organization’s name, address, and telephone number along with the date and solicitation number and signature of an authorized representative of the offeror (Annex 1).
* A brief overview of your organization and relevant past experience not to exceed three pages.
* A brief overview of personnel who will serve as 1. a Lead Writer; and 2. a Technical Lead not to exceed one page for each.
* Two CVs, not to exceed 3 pages each as an Annex A, listing the proposed staff’s work and consulting experience, educational background, other relevant skills, and 3 references with the current position, organization name, relation to the candidate, an e-mail address and the best phone number.
* Authentic and original writing samples for each candidate proposed, not to exceed 10 pages for each submitted as an Annex B.
* Signed and filled in Forms 1420 for each candidate proposed indicating their daily rate submitted as an Annex C.
* A budget for the proposed two candidates for 30 days’ level of effort for each plus any administrative fees the service provider would charge (broken out into line items and justified) submitted as an Annex D. CNFA will cover travel, per diem, and other travel related costs directly, as applicable.

Applications must be up to six pages not to include the Annex for 2 CVs (3 pages per CV), and received by the closing date and time indicated.

Issuance of this solicitation does not constitute an award commitment on the part of CNFA, nor does it commit CNFA to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

**4. Tasks & Deliverables:**

 **For Lead Writer**

* Conduct background review to learn the context and donor priorities in the target technical area.
* Support the proposal team with the development of the strategic approach, including results framework, preliminary objectives, guiding principles, and preliminary activities.
* Responsible for writing the technical application including the introduction summary, and strategic analysis.
* Support the team in writing other sections of the proposal, as required.
* Conduct the capture trip as agreed with the team.

 **For Technical Lead**

* Conduct background review to learn the context and donor priorities in the target technical area.
* Lead the proposal team in the development of the strategic approach, including results framework, preliminary objectives, guiding principles, and preliminary activities.
* Support the team in writing the technical application including the introduction summary, strategic analysis and other sections.
* Conduct the capture trip as agreed with the team.

**5. Required Qualifications:**

**For Lead Writer:**

* Demonstrated expertise in agricultural value chains, market systems, trade, and exports required, some of which must include Eastern Europe.
* 8+ years of proposal writing and/or project management experience in the international development field required; USDA experience strongly preferred.
* A Master’s degree in agriculture, economics, management, international development, or a related field of study or equivalent work experience required.
* Knowledge of USDA regulations, especially for compliance on the proposal writing required.
* Strong writing and editing skills required.
* Strong organizational, interpersonal, and communication skills required.
* Knowledge of the USDA M&E structure and indicators required.
* Familiarity with CNFA’s technical and geographic program areas preferred.
* Experience in devising an approach for graphic designs strongly preferred.

**For Technical Lead:**

* Demonstrated expertise in agricultural value chains, market systems, trade, and exports required, some of which must include Eastern Europe.
* 8+ years of providing technical oversight and leadership on development projects and/or proposal writing experience in the international development field required; USDA experience preferred.
* A Master’s degree in agriculture, economics, management, international development, or a related field of study or equivalent work experience required.
* Knowledge of USDA regulations, especially for compliance and M&E required.
* Strong writing and editing skills required.
* Strong organizational, interpersonal, and communication skills required.
* Experience working with different partners, staff, and experience in developing organizational charts and staffing approaches strongly preferred.
* Familiarity with CNFA’s technical and geographic program areas preferred.
* Experience in devising an approach for graphic designs strongly preferred.

**6. Selection Criteria:**

Award will be made to a responsible Offeror whose offer follows the NOFO instructions, meets the eligibility requirements, and is determined via a trade-off analysis to be the best value based on application of the below evaluation criteria. Best-value determination considers both technical and financial applications, i.e. the best approach and anticipated results in combination with a reasonable cost. The relative importance of each individual criterion is indicated by the number of points below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criteria | Scoring |
| 1. **Demonstrated institutional capacity and successful past performance supporting USDA FFPr proposals**

Offerors will be evaluated based on a demonstrated ability to provide proposal development services during the past 7 years, including working on USDA proposals.  | 20 |
| 1. **Education background**

Offerors will be evaluated based on the proposed candidates’ education level as per the required qualifications section above. Maximum score for one candidate is 5 points.  | 5 for each |
| 1. **Demonstrated capacity and successful past performance according to the Qualifications above**

 Offerors will be evaluated based on the proposed candidates’ demonstrated ability to support the development of a proposal(s) in the Lead Writer or Technical Lead capacity as per the Qualifications section above. Maximum score for one candidate is 15 points.  | 35 for each |
| **Total Points Possible** | 100 |

Best offer applications are requested. It is anticipated that award will be made solely on the basis of these original applications. However, CNFA reserves the right to conduct negotiations with and/or request clarifications from any Offeror prior to award, or cancel this solicitation at any time. CNFA anticipates awarding a service agreement to the successful offeror.

**7. CNFA Terms and Conditions**

**7.1 Ethical and Business Conduct Requirements:** CNFA is committed to integrity in procurement, and only selects suppliers based on objective business criteria such as price and technical merit.

CNFA does not tolerate fraud, collusion among offerors, falsified proposals/bids, bribery, or kickbacks. Any firm or individual violating these standards will be disqualified from this procurement, barred from future procurement opportunities, and may be reported.

Employees and agents of CNFA are strictly prohibited from asking for or accepting any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation from current or potential vendors or suppliers in exchange for or as a reward for business. Employees and agents engaging in this conduct are subject to termination and will be reported. In addition, CNFA will report any offeror who offers of money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation to obtain business.

Offerors responding to this solicitation must include the following as part of the proposal submission:

* Disclose any close, familial, or financial relationships with CNFA or project staff. For example, if an offeror’s cousin is employed by the project, the offeror must state this.
* Disclose any family or financial relationship with other offerors submitting proposals. For example, if the offeror’s father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the offeror must state this.
* Certify that the prices in the offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
* Certify that all information in the proposal and all supporting documentation are authentic and accurate.
* Certify understanding and agreement to CNFA’s prohibitions against fraud, bribery and kickbacks.

Please contact Jessica Carroll at jcarroll@cnfa.org with any questions or concerns regarding the above information or to report any potential violations. Potential violations may also be reported directly to CNFA at to FraudHotline@cnfa.org.

**7.2 Terms and Conditions**: This solicitation is subject to CNFA’s standard terms and conditions. Any resultant award will be governed by these terms and conditions; a copy of the full terms and conditions is available upon request. Please note the following terms and conditions will apply:

1. CNFA’s standard payment terms are net 30 days after receipt and acceptance of any commodities or deliverables. Payment will only be issued to the entity submitting the offer in response to this solicitation and identified in the resulting award; payment will not be issued to a third party.
2. No commodities or services may be supplied that are manufactured or assembled in, shipped from, transported through, or otherwise involving any of the following countries: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria.
3. United States law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. The supplier under any award resulting from this solicitation must ensure compliance with these laws.
4. United States law prohibits engaging in any activities related to Trafficking in Persons. The supplier under any award resulting from this solicitation must ensure compliance with these laws.

**7.3 Disclaimers:** This is a solicitation only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate CNFA, or USDA, to make an award or pay for costs incurred by potential offerors in the preparation and submission of an offer. In addition:

1. CNFA may cancel solicitation and not award;
2. CNFA may reject any or all responses received;
3. Issuance of solicitation does not constitute award commitment by CNFA;
4. CNFA reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on offeror failure to follow solicitation instructions;
5. CNFA will not compensate offerors for response to solicitation;
6. CNFA reserves the right to issue award based on initial evaluation of offers without further discussion;
7. CNFA may negotiate with short-listed offerors for their best and final offer;
8. CNFA reserves the right to order additional quantities or units with the selected offeror;
9. CNFA may reissue the solicitation or issue formal amendments revising the original solicitation specifications and evaluation criteria before or after receipt of proposals;
10. CNFA may modify the specifications without issuing a formal notice to all offerors when the revisions are immaterial to the scope of the solicitation;
11. CNFA may choose to award only part of the activities in the solicitation, or issue multiple awards based on multiple solicitation activities;
12. CNFA reserves the right to waive minor proposal deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.

In submitting a response to this RFP, offerors understand that USDA is not a party to this solicitation and the offeror agrees that any protest hereunder must be presented – in writing with full explanations – to CNFA for consideration. USDA will not consider protests regarding procurements carried out by implementing partners. CNFA, at its sole discretion, will make a final decision on any protest for this procurement.

**7.4 Eligibility**: By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, the offeror certifies that it and its principal officers are not debarred, suspended, or otherwise considered ineligible for an award by the U.S. Government. CNFA will not award a contract to any firm that is debarred, suspended, or considered to be ineligible by the U.S. Government.