

Questions and Answers for 1000252726 and 1000252725, Updated March 19<sup>th</sup> , 2024

1. Would it be possible to receive an extension of ten (10) business days from the submission deadline of March 07, 2024?

Answer:

**English:** We will extend the deadline for submission by ten (10) business from the submission deadline of March 07, 2024 to March 21, 2024

**French:** Nous allons prolonger la date limite pour le dépôt des soumissions de dix (10) jours ouvrables à partir de la date du 7 mars, 2024 jusqu'au 21 mars, 2024.

2. Could you please confirm that it is the intention of Indigenous Services Canada to award five (5) standing offer contracts under both this SOA and the same-titled Solicitation No. 10000252725 resulting in the potential for 10 standing offer contracts to provide these services?

Answer:

**English:** As stated in Part 4, section 4.4.6, the Offerors within each Work Stream with the highest five (5) Total Scores will be recommended for Award of SOAs. It is intended to award five (5) SOAs in Work Stream 1 and five (5) SOAs in Work Stream 2 for each solicitation; for a total of up to ten (10) SOAs per solicitation, or up to 20 SOAs overall.

**French:** Tel que stipule dans la Partie 4, section 4.4.6, Les offrants de chaque volet de travail ayant obtenu les cinq (5) cotes totales les plus élevées seront recommandés pour l'attribution de la COC. Il est l'intention d'attribuer cinq (5) COCs pour le premier volet et cinq (5) COCs pour le deuxième volet pour chaque demande d'offre à commandes représentant un total jusqu'à dix (10) par offre à commandes ou jusqu'à 20 COCs au total.

3. We would like to request an extension to the submission deadline of two (2) weeks. (Asked by 2 separate vendors)

Answer:

**English:** We will extend the deadline for submission by ten (10) business from the submission deadline of March 07, 2024 to March 21, 2024

**French:** Nous allons prolonger la date limite pour le dépôt des soumissions de dix (10) jours ouvrables à partir de la date du 7 mars, 2024 jusqu'au 21 mars, 2024.

4. We understand that if a Proponent submits more than six (6) Resources that only the first two (2) in each category will be scored. However, if a Proponent does submit more than six (6) Resources will these Resources' resumes be reviewed and considered pre-qualified for work under this RFSO even if they are not scored?

Answer:

**English:** If more than the identified number of Resources are proposed in any Category, only the first specified number of Resources in that Category in the order in which they are first presented

in the Offeror's Offer will be considered for Offer evaluation purposes. Any Resources in excess of the number specified will not be assessed until following any Awards.

**French:** Si plus de ressources sont proposées que le nombre spécifié pour n'importe quelle catégorie, seulement le premier nombre indiqué de ressources proposées dans cette catégorie dans l'ordre qu'elles sont présentées dans l'offre de l'offrant seront considérées aux fins du processus d'évaluation de l'offre. Toute autre ressource en excès du nombre indiqué ne sera évaluée jusqu'à la fin du processus d'évaluation.

5. Page 37, Stream 2 - Rated Criteria, R.3 Proposed Resource Team, 3.3 – The RFP indicates that the maximum points that will be awarded per resource is three (3) points and the maximum points available as indicated in the RFP is twenty-four (24) points. If only six (6) resources are scored, the maximum points available would be eighteen (18) points. Can you please clarify the scoring?

Answer:

**English:** The RFSO is amended as follows:

For solicitation 1000252726,

At Stream 1, Rated Criteria, R3 Proposed Resource Team, 3.2 – delete:

“Up to a maximum of three (3) points will be awarded per Resource, up to **twenty-four (24) points in total.**”

and replace with:

“Up to a maximum of **four (4)** points will be awarded per Resource, up to **twenty-four (24) points in total.**”

At Stream 2 Rated Criteria, R3 Proposed Resource Team, 3.3 – delete:

“Up to a maximum of three (3) points will be awarded per Resource, up to **twenty-four (24) points in total.**”

and replace with:

“Up to a maximum of **four (4)** points will be awarded per Resource, up to **twenty-four (24) points in total.**”

**French:** La demande d'offres à commandes est amendée comme suit :

Pour l'invitation 1000252726,

Pour le premier volet, Critères cotés, C3 Équipe de ressources proposées, 3.2 – est effacé:

“Un maximum de trois (3) points sera attribué par ressource, jusqu'à un **total de vingt-quatre (24) points.**”

et remplacé par :

“Un maximum de quatre (4) points sera attribué par ressource, jusqu’à un total de vingt-quatre (24) points.”

Pour le deuxième volet Critères cotés, C3 Équipe de ressources proposées, 3.3 – est effacé :

“Un maximum de trois (3) points sera attribué par ressource, jusqu’à un total de vingt-quatre (24) points.”

et remplacé par :

“Un maximum de quatre (4) points sera attribué par ressource, jusqu’à un total de vingt-quatre (24) points.”

6. Page 37, Stream 2 - Rated Criteria, R.3 Proposed Resource Team, 3.4 through 3.8 – The RFP indicates that a maximum of two (2) points per resource will be awarded. If six (6) Resources are awarded the maximum of two (2) points, the maximum number of points awarded would be twelve (12) points. However, the RFP indicates a maximum of eight (8) points will be awarded. Is it intended that a maximum of eight (8) points will be awarded across the six (6) Resources? Please clarify.

Answer:

**English:** For solicitation 1000252726, correct. A maximum of eight (8) points will be awarded for each of R3.4-R3.8 across the Resources proposed. As noted in the criteria, there is a maximum number of points available per Resource.

**French:** Pour l’invitation 1000252726, c’est exact. Un maximum de huit (8) points sera accordé pour chaque C3.4-C3.8 à travers les ressources proposées. Tel que mentionné dans le critère, il y a un maximum de points accordés par ressource.

7. The certifications listed on page 51 (Certifications Required with Offer - 5.1.2 Additional Certification Required with the Offer) do not match the Annexes at the back of the RFP. For example, 5.1.2.b. Certificate of Independent Bid Determination is described as “attached hereto as Annex D” however Annex D on page 86 is actually the Security Requirements Agreement. Please confirm the requirements and Annexes.

Answer: **Annexes have been corrected within updated document**

**English:** Offerors are to provide Annex D, E, F and G.

**French:** Les offrants doivent fournir les annexes D, E, F et G.

8. We are completing the standing offer forms and have a question related to the Project Reference Form referred to on page 13 and 31. It mentions that the required form can be found in Appendix A, but we are unable to find Appendix A.

Neither Annex A or Annex 1 seem to include the form.

Can you please advise where to find the form or how to proceed?

Answer:

**English:** Please see attached.

**French:** Veuillez trouver ci-joint

9. I am asking can a vendor be involved in multiple bids as follows via joint venture:

- Vendor Bid
- Vendor + JV Partner 1 Bid?
- Vendor + JV Partner 2 Bid?

Answer:

**English:** One legal entity may participate in the bid submission in the following manner:

a) one bid from the legal entity alone, or

b) one bid from the legal entity alone and one bid submitted in a joint venture, or

c) two bids submitted in joint venture.

No more than two bids submitted from the same legal entity is permitted in response to this bid solicitation. If a legal entity participates in more than two bids, CIRNAC will choose in its discretion which two bids to consider.

At no time will bid submissions against this RFS process result in a legal entity being awarded more than two supply arrangements that do not align with this clause”

**French:** Une entité légale peut participer dans le dépôt d’une soumission de la manière suivante :

a) une soumission à titre d’entité légale individuelle,

b) une soumission à titre d’entité légale individuelle et une soumission à titre de coentreprise,

c) deux soumissions à titre de coentreprise.

Pas plus de deux soumissions peuvent être soumises à partir de la même entité légale est permise en réponse à cette demande de propositions. Si une entité légale participe dans plus de deux soumissions, RCAANC choisira à sa discrétion lesquelles des deux soumissions à prendre en considération.

À aucun moment une proposition en réponse à ce processus de demande de proposition pourra résulter en une entité légale se voyant accorder plus de deux ententes d’approvisionnement qui ne correspondent avec cet énoncé.

10. Work Stream 1 – Annex A, Statement of Work, 7.2 Resource Categories and Qualifications, page 72 of RFP – In the section describing the formal work experience for each role, the RFP asks for experience providing strategic analysis and advisory services on projects relating to “i) Climate Change Adaptation, Clean Energy, Climate Monitoring or environment” – Could CIRNAC please define what experience/disciplines constitute “environment” in this description?

Answer:

**English:** For the purpose of this Request for Proposal, CIRNAC defines projects relating to “environment” as projects related to a) air, land and water; b) all layers of the atmosphere; c) all organic and inorganic

matter and living organisms; and the interacting natural systems that include components referred to in (a) to (c).

**French:** Pour les besoins de cette demande de proposition, RCAANC définit les projets en lien à l' « environnement » comme projets en lien avec : a) l'air, le sol et l'eau; b) toutes les couches de l'atmosphère; c) toutes les matières organiques et inorganiques ainsi que les êtres vivants; et les systèmes naturels en interaction qui comprennent les éléments de a) à c).

11. Work Stream 1 – Annex A, Statement of Work, 7.2 Resource Categories and Qualifications, page 72 of RFP – In the section describing the formal work experience for each role, the RFP asks for experience providing strategic analysis and advisory services on projects relating to “i) Climate Change Adaptation, Clean Energy, Climate Monitoring or environment” – Could CIRNAC please confirm that providing a list of each resources' past work experience through a list of employers, job titles and durations over the last 10 years would meet the mandatory requirements?

Answer

**English:** Offerors may submit descriptions of past work experience with clear durations, titles, employers and roles in response to Mandatory Requirement M3. The onus is on Offerors to ensure its submission clearly demonstrates the required duration and nature/scope of the experience as required in Annex A Statement of Work, 7.2.

**French:** Les offrants peuvent soumettre une description d'expériences de travail passées présentant clairement la durée, les titres, les employeurs et les rôles en réponse à l'exigence obligatoire O3. La responsabilité est du côté des offrants afin de s'assurer que sa soumission démontre clairement la durée requise ainsi que la nature ou l'envergure de l'expérience tel que requise dans l'annexa A de l'Énoncé des travaux 7.2

12. Work Stream 2 – Annex A, Statement of Work, 7.2 Resource Categories and Qualifications, page 73 of RFP - In the section describing the formal work experience for each role, the RFP asks for experience on projects relating to “Climate Change Adaptation, Clean Energy, or Climate Monitoring” – Could CIRNAC please confirm that providing a list of each resources' past work experience through a list of employers, job titles and durations over the last 10 years would meet the mandatory requirements?

Answer:

**English:** Offerors may submit descriptions of past work experience with clear durations, titles, employers and roles in response to Mandatory Requirement M3. The onus is on Offerors to ensure its submission clearly demonstrates the required duration and nature/scope of the experience as required in Annex A Statement of Work, 7.2.

**French:** Les offrants peuvent soumettre une description d'expériences de travail passées présentant clairement la durée, les titres, les employeurs et les rôles en réponse à l'exigence obligatoire O3. La responsabilité est du côté des offrants afin de s'assurer que sa soumission démontre clairement la durée requise ainsi que la nature ou l'envergure de l'expérience tel que requise dans l'annexa A de l'Énoncé des travaux 7.2

13. Work Stream 1 – Part 4, Section 4.2.1 Mandatory Requirements, Item M1 Corporate Profile, Page 12 of the RFP – Can CIRNAC please confirm if this section is limited to 1,000 words or is this just a recommendation?

Answer:

**English:** CIRNAC requests this section to be approximately 1,000 words.

**French:** RCAANC requière que cette section soit approximativement 1,000 mots.

14. Work Stream 2 – Part 4, Section 4.2.1 Mandatory Requirements, Item M1 Corporate Profile, Page 30 of the RFP – Can CIRNAC please confirm if this section is limited to 1,000 words or is this just a recommendation?

Answer:

**English:** CIRNAC requests this section to be approximately 1,000 words.

**French:** RCAANC requière que cette section soit approximativement 1,000 mots.

15. Work Stream 1 – Part 4, Section 4.2.1 Mandatory Requirements, Item M2 Project Summaries, Page 13 of the RFP – It does not appear that Appendix A has been provided with the RFSO documents. Can CIRNAC please confirm if Appendix A is required?

Answer:

**English:** Please see Amendment 1.

**French:** S.v.p. voir l'amendement 1

16. Work Stream 2 – Part 4, Section 4.2.1 Mandatory Requirements, Item M2 Project Summaries, Page 31 of the RFP – It does not appear that Appendix A has been provided with the RFSO documents. Can CIRNAC please confirm if Appendix A is required?

Answer:

**English:** Please see Amendment 1.

**French:** S.v.p. voir l'amendement 1

17. May proponents name the same staff resources (M3, R3) in both Streams 1 and 2?

Answer:

**English:** If a resource meets the requirement on both Stream 1 and 2, the offerors might submit the a resources under both streams.

**French:** Si une ressource rencontre les exigences pour les volets de travail 1 et 2, les offrants peuvent soumettre les ressources pour les deux volets.

18. May proponents provide the same project references (M2, R1, R2) in both Streams 1 and 2?

Answer:

**English:** If a project addresses both Work Streams, it may be submitted against both Work Streams. As the scope and requirements of experience differ between the Work Streams, the onus is on the Offeror to ensure the Project Summary demonstrates the requirements/criteria for the Work Stream(s) to which it is being submitted.

**French:** Si un projet est en lien avec les deux volets de travail, celui-ci peut être soumis aux fins des deux volets de travail. Considérant que l'envergure et les exigences liées à l'expérience diffèrent entre les deux

volets de travail, la responsabilité est du côté de l'offrant de s'assurer que le projet démontre qu'il rencontre les exigences et critères pour le ou les volets de travail pour lequel ou lesquels il est soumis.

19. Given the complexity of the RFSO, the requested detail to be provided by proponents, and given federal year end deadlines, would CIRNAC provide proponents with a four-week extension to the submission deadline to April 7, 2024?

Answer:

English: Please see Amendment 1.

French: S.v.p. voir l'amendement 1

20. Can proponents bid both the main contract and the set aside contract for these RFSOs? For example, could a bidder on the main contract enter into a partnership/Joint Venture with an Indigenous or Inuit business to also bid on the set aside RFSO?

Answer:

English: Yes, please see Q&A #9

French: Oui, s.v.p. voir la question et réponse #9

21. Work Stream 1 – Part 4, Section 4.2.1 Point Rated Requirements, Item R3 Proposed Resource Team, Page 19 to 20 of the RFP – The total number of points that can be awarded for each item does not reflect scoring for a team of six (6) resources.

1. In Item 3.2, "The Resource Team should demonstrate having applied experience with one or more of the following tasks within the past ten (10) years. One (1) point will be awarded for each task a Resource has completed within the past ten (10) years. Up to a maximum of three (3) points will be awarded per Resource, up to twenty-four (24) points in total". Based on the scoring for six (6) staff, the maximum number of points appears to be eighteen (18) points in total. Please confirm the number of points eligible for this requirement.
2. For Items 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 remaining resource evaluations, the total points available is lower than the wording suggests. For example, in 3.3, it is noted that "up to a maximum of two (2) points will be awarded per Resource, up to eight (8) points in total." Please confirm the number of points eligible for this requirement.

Answer: 21-1.

English: Please see Q&A #5 and Amendment 1.

French: S.v.p. voir question et réponse #5 et amendement 1

Answer: 21.2.

English: The number of points indicated for 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 is correct. Please see also Q&A #6.

French: Le nombre de points indiqué pour 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 et 3.6 est correct. S.v.p. voir également la question et réponse #6

22. Work Stream 2 – Part 4, Section 4.2.1 Point Rated Requirements, Item R3 Proposed Resource Team, Page 36 to 39 of the RFP – The total number of points that can be awarded for each item does not reflect scoring for a team of six (6) resources.

1. In Item 3.3, “The Resource Team should demonstrate having applied experience with one or more of the following tasks within the past ten (10) years. One (1) point will be awarded for each task a Resource has completed within the past ten (10) years. Up to a maximum of three (3) points will be awarded per Resource, up to twenty-four (24) points in total”. Based on the scoring for six (6) staff, the maximum number of points appears to be eighteen (18) points in total. Please confirm the number of points eligible for this requirement.
2. For Items 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 remaining resource evaluations, the total points available is lower than the wording suggests. For example, in 3.4, it is noted that “up to a maximum of two (2) points will be awarded per Resource, up to eight (8) points in total.” Please confirm the number of points eligible for this requirement.

Answer: 22-1.

English: Please see Q&A #5 and Amendment 1.

French: S.v.p. voir question et réponse #5 et amendement 1

Answer: 22.2.

English: The number of points indicated for 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 is correct. Please see also Q&A #6.

French: Le nombre de points indiqué pour 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 et 3.6 est correct. S.v.p. voir également la question et réponse #6

23. “Could the date range on the M2/R1/R2 Project Summaries be extended to having 'taken place during the past ten (10) years'? The shutdowns and safety measures implemented during and after the COVID pandemic significantly impacted projects relevant to this SOA's scope of services; extending this window would provide a clearer picture of proponent experience.”

Answer: 23.

English: Projects are required to have "taken place" within the last five (5) years. Please note a project may have begun more than five (5) years ago, provided some aspect of the project has taken place in the last five (5)

French: Les projets doivent « avoir eu lieu » au cours des cinq (5) dernières années. Veuillez noter qu'un projet peut avoir débuté il y a plus de cinq (5) ans, à condition qu'un aspect du projet ait eu lieu au cours des cinq (5) dernières années.

Further to our review of subsequent Q&A for this procurement and noted extension to March 21, we are submitting an enquiry in writing:

*While we fully understand that there are never any guarantees of work through Standing Offers with the Government of Canada, the previous cycle of this Standing Offer 2018-2024 – including 4 extensions) is one of the very few federal agreements on our books where there have been no call-ups for our firm. Please advise if there is any new information to indicate if this SOA renewal would be used differently by ISC, and particularly for Stream 2 – Technical Advisory.*



I would otherwise maintain my recommendation to our teams to not submit a bid, due to not having received a single call-up on the previous 6-year cycle of SOA. Please also note the following facts relative to this past cycle:

1. We were first ranked, per 2018 email below. We qualified for the 2<sup>nd</sup> work stream for “Technical Advisory Services, worth up to \$2M over the first three years. We did not submit on any other work streams. We understand there were 5 spots for Stream 2, but only 3 compliant submissions – so lack of competition in 2018.
2. We agreed to extend the agreement four times, with last amendment to end of March 2024 (pdf attached, indicated \$2M envelope that was same as initial 2018 award). I have added your ISC colleagues on cc. who reached out to us for these amendments.
3. We followed up regularly with ISC authorities to inquire as to upcoming call-ups to help keep our teams ready – in addition to the initial proposal investment. Response was either unclear or there was a suggestion that CIRNAC or ISC was not in a position to predict.

This contrasts with the PSPC Standing Offer on Sustainability and Climate Change (see screen shot below for reference numbers) where we were also in the top 3 across all 6 PSPC Regions in Canada, for similar \$ range in each, and have received multiple call-ups from PSPC and its clients such as DND, RCMP, etc. I would also add that our PSPC client contacts for this other SOA have been quite responsive on future work potential, allowing us to plan for work flow and keep our teams prepared and ready to serve and provide best value to Canada.

Answer 24:

**English:** We fully understand the disappointment and frustration you may have had concerning the previous standing offer process and lack of subsequent call-ups. We understand that staging a bid takes a lot of time and effort. Unfortunately, there are never any guarantees when applying to standing offers; however, work and demand pertaining to climate change, adaptation, clean energy, natural resources and the environment in the context of Indigenous communities has significantly expanded in recent years. Furthermore, we have expanded the areas of interest to go beyond climate change adaptation, as was the case in the previous standing offer agreement. As such, we expect more contract awards for companies that qualify under this solicitation process.

**French:** Nous comprenons parfaitement la déception et la frustration que vous avez pu ressentir à l'égard de la précédente procédure d'offre à commandes et de l'absence de demandes subséquentes. Nous comprenons également que la préparation d'une offre demande beaucoup de temps et d'efforts. Malheureusement, il n'y a jamais de garantie lorsqu'on postule à des offres à commandes ; cependant, le travail et la demande concernant le changement climatique, l'adaptation, l'énergie propre, les ressources naturelles et l'environnement dans le contexte des communautés autochtones ont considérablement augmenté au cours des dernières années. En outre, nous avons élargi les domaines d'intérêt pour aller au-delà de l'adaptation au changement climatique, comme c'était le cas dans la précédente convention d'offre à commandes. Nous nous attendons donc à ce que davantage de contrats soient attribués aux entreprises qui se qualifient dans le cadre de cette procédure d'appel d'offres.

25. I would like to also place a request for a 1 week extension to evaluate and modify our response once our question has been addressed.

Answer 25:

**English:** We will not be granting an additional extension beyond the original ten (10) business day extension at this time.

**French:** Nous n'accorderons pas de prolongation supplémentaire au-delà de la prolongation initiale de dix (10) jours ouvrables.