



January 20, 2015

SPECIAL NOTICE: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

Solicitation Number: SOL-OAA-15-000025

Notice Type: Special Notice - Sources Sought

Subject: LAB/DATA Qualified Data Analysis Organizations

Issuance Date: January 20, 2015

Closing Date: February 10, 2015

Closing Time: 2:00pm EST

I. Purpose

The purpose of this RFI is to solicit input from organizations involved in managing, analyzing and visualizing data, particularly for the purposes of informing policy and decision-making in international development. In this RFI, we seek to gather information about the scope of a draft Statement of Work (SOW) and the community's capabilities to fulfill these requests. In particular, we want to understand the available expertise, the feasibility, and challenges faced in responding to the services outlined in our draft SOW.

II. Background

Data and their many applications are critical to development infrastructure in the 21st century, both for the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) programs and activities, and for the developing countries with whom we partner. The core goal of the Data and Analytics Team is to facilitate increased use of data and evidence to improve development outcomes. By strengthening USAID's evidence base and building its capacity to apply cutting-edge analytical tools in measuring and improving impact of our work, we aim to turn data into actionable information for development. To deliver on this vision, we seek to develop partnerships, apply innovative technologies and approaches, and build analytical capacity within USAID and host-country counterparts.

The ability to manage, conduct, and visualize analyses of relevant information is integral to long-term strategic planning, program and activity design, the evaluation of programs, and the dissemination of lessons learned. However, operating units within USAID are sometimes constrained by existing capacity to transform data into insights that could inform development programming. To address this need, the Data and Analytics team is seeking to partner with external organizations to provide support for data management, analysis, and visualization. Initial consultations have suggested services needed in the following five areas, described in detail in the attached draft SOW:

- Data analysis and visualization
- Research to contextualize development efforts and challenges
- Data infrastructure and information sharing
- Futures analysis and scenario planning

- Training and support to build Agency and host-country capacity in data and analytics

Because the learning and value derived from an analytical process may depend as much on the approach as the product, the following principles are integral to the data and analytics support provided:

- **Rapid response** – as timeliness of analytical and/or research support is critical for informing decisions that often have their own deadlines, technical services should have the ability to be deployed and completed rapidly (e.g., within weeks of the initial request);
- **Adaptable and flexible** – the technical approach should be able to support work and audiences across a wide range of sectors and countries;
- **Intellectual partnership** – to extract maximal learning from services provided, the technical approach should allow for collaboration and facilitate iterative sharing of knowledge and product development with the Data and Analytics Team and/or other USAID operating units;
- **Capacity building** – to increase the longevity and utility of the products and services provided, integrating them into existing systems; whenever possible, the methods and products should include strategies for building capacity within USAID operating units and host-country counterparts;
- **Technical excellence** – the methods and products utilized should be rigorous, transparent, and, when appropriate, reproducible, maximizing use of state-of-the art science and practices.

We seek your input to refine the scope of the attached draft SOW. See Attachment 1.

III. **Submittal Instructions**

Organizations should submit a response of no more than ***five pages in length, excluding the cover page***. Organizations should provide clear and unambiguous feedback on any concerns or input they have regarding the draft SOW and/or their capability to fulfill these requirements. They are encouraged to highlight existing or potential partnerships with leading academics or academic institutions and researchers that could be leveraged for an effort such as described above, as well as their range of proven global expertise.

Responses should include the following:

1) A cover page with the following information:

- Organization name and address
- Organization point of contact name, telephone number, and email address
- Organization business size and status (e.g., small business, 8(a), HUBZone, etc.), the number of years in business, and affiliate information
- The organization's GSA Schedule contract number, if applicable

2) A Statement of Capabilities/Qualifications containing responses to the following:

1. Outline the services your firm could provide for this mechanism. Please specify:
 - a. section(s) of the draft SOW where you can provide services, highlighting specific capabilities, e.g. "Dynamic web interfaces designed using d3.js" within Data Visualization.

- b. sub-sector of expertise, if applicable (e.g., democracy and governance, biodiversity, infectious disease, etc.)
 - c. geographical area of expertise, if applicable
 - d. given the draft SOW, what additional information (if any) would you need to write a competitive proposal?
 - e. what challenges do you anticipate in responding to requests within this draft SOW?
- 2. Has your firm managed multiple analyses at the same time? If so, how many and what was the scope of the services (time frame, dollar amount)?
- 3. How quickly would you be able to start a project once a service has been requested?
- 4. Describe your experience collaborating:
 - a. with local (host-country) experts
 - b. with academic institutions
 - c. with international development implementing partners
- 5. The firm may provide past performance information for up to five analysis projects (completed within the last ten years) which demonstrate the organization's experience in areas related to this scope of work. The list of five projects should include the following information for each referenced contract:
 - a. the name of the funding organization/client
 - b. the project name
 - c. the project location
 - d. brief project description
 - e. brief description of the methodology
 - f. brief description of the product(s)
 - g. the period of performance
 - h. the contract/funding amount
- 6. In your past work, have you perceived a need to utilize analytical, visualization, or other data support services that were not easily acquired through existing procurement mechanisms? If so, please describe the challenges and mitigation strategies that resulted.
- 7. Is there anything lacking in this SOW? Any other ideas or suggestions for this SOW?

IV. Additional Notes/ Instructions

Submit responses to this RFI to Contracting Officer Roderick Watson rwatson@usaid.gov , **no later than Tuesday, February 10, 2015.**

All aspects of the LAB/DATA Qualified Data Analysis has not been finalized and need meaningful and substantive comment from the broader community of interest. This notice can be viewed and downloaded from the Internet at www.fbo.gov. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes. Further, be aware that amendments to this Notice may be issued and will be posted on the same Internet site from which you downloaded this notice. You are advised to check the above Internet site for amendments and are encouraged to sign up for update notifications on the solicitation at www.fbo.gov. Please do not submit proposals or resumes as they will be discarded. Submissions will not be acknowledged. USAID may use any information provided without incurring any obligation. No phone calls or hand carries please.

This announcement is a Request for Information (RFI), not a Request for Proposals (RFP) and is not to be construed as a commitment by the U.S. Government to issue any solicitation or ultimately award a contract on the basis of this RFI, or to pay for any information submitted as a result of this request. It should be noted that responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any organization. The U.S. Government will not provide answers to any question submitted in response to this request. Responses will be held confidential. Proprietary information should not be sent.

Issuance of this Notice does not constitute a binding commitment on the part of the Government to issue a Solicitation, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any comments. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all comments received.

Thank you for your assistance and interest in the USAID/LAB/DATA programs.

Sincerely,

Contracting Officer, M/OAA/SIDP