



USAID | WEST AFRICA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ISSUANCE DATE: July 30, 2015

CLOSING DATE: August 12, 2015, 2015 17:00 Hours, Ghana local time

**SUBJECT: SOLICITATION No. 624-15-012:
SENIOR ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST
U.S. / THIRD COUNTRY NATIONAL PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTOR**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Government, represented by the United States Agency for International Development/West Africa (USAID/ West Africa), is seeking applications from qualified U. S citizens and Third Country Nationals interested in providing Personal Services Contractor (PSC) services as described in the attached solicitation.

Submission shall be in accordance with this solicitation and at the place and time specified. In order to be considered for the position a candidate must meet the minimum qualifications listed in the solicitation. The Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist position will be located in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

All applications packages are to be submitted to:

Via courier **Regional Executive Office
USAID/West Africa
No. 24 Fourth Circular Rd. CT
P.O. Box 1630
Accra, Ghana**

Via email: accrapsc@usaid.gov. Please cite the solicitation number and position title within the subject line of your email application. Any attachments provided via email shall be in a format compatible with Microsoft Word 2003 or PDF and not zipped. Note that attachments to email must not exceed 3 MB. **Application letters and Form a302-3 must be signed. Incomplete and unsigned applications will not be considered.**

Late applications will not be accepted and will be handled in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) 52.215.1.

USAID/West Africa anticipates awarding one (1) Personal Service Contract as a result of this solicitation. Please note that this does not constitute any guarantee that a PSC will be awarded as result of this solicitation nor does it constitute any authorization by USAID to reimburse costs incurred in the preparation of an application. Any questions on this solicitation should be sent to Vida Aggrey at vaggrey@usaid.gov or the undersigned at dbrady@usaid.gov.

Sincerely,
Donald Brady
Executive Officer

U.S. Agency for International Development
No. 24 Fourth Circular Rd.
P. O. Box 1630, Accra-Ghana

Tel: 233-21-741-200
Fax: 233-21-741-365

SOLICITATION NUMBER: 624-15-012

ISSUANCE DATE: July 30, 2015

CLOSING DATE/TIME: August 12, 2015 @ 17:00 Hours, Ghana Local Time

POSITION TITLE: Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

MARKET VALUE: (\$73,115.00 – 95,048.00) The market value for this position is equivalent to GS-13 level. Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value based upon the candidate's past salary, work history and educational background. **Salaries over and above the top of the pay range will not be entertained or negotiated.**

AREA OF CONSIDERATION: Open to U. S. Citizens and Third Country Nationals

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: A base of 2 years from the date of appointment with option to extend up to a maximum of 5 years subject to satisfactory performance, continued need for services and availability of funds.

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

SECURITY/MEDICAL CLEARANCE: Facility Access – U. S. Citizens
Employment authorization - TCNs

Selected applicant must obtain security and medical clearances within a reasonable period of time (USAID will provide details regarding these clearances to the selected candidate). If such clearances are not obtained within a reasonable time or negative suitability issues are involved, any offer made may be rescinded.

1.0 BACKGROUND:

In general terms, the optimal applicant for this Senior Acquisition & Assistance Specialist position will possess extensive knowledge of US federal contracting and assistance (grants and cooperative agreements) principles, policies, and procedures from pre-award through post-award phases; solid experience with formal advertising and negotiating methods; as well as exhibit great facility with acquisition and assistance (A&A) procuring and administration requirements. In addition, for this senior PSC position, the applicant will need to demonstrate a well-seasoned familiarity with development principles, federal procurement mechanisms and donor/NGO partnering. S/he exercises leadership in conducting technically proficient procurement and assistance, fully complying with all relevant laws, regulations and procedures and performed in a positive, team and customer oriented manner.

Basic Function:

The Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist will be located in Abidjan and will report to the Regional Supervisory Contracts Officer within the USAID/West Africa Mission. The incumbent's time will be divided between the USAID/PEPFAR program (50% time) and other (non-PEPFAR) USAID activities (50% time) in Cote d'Ivoire. USAID/West Africa Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office (RAAO) is located in Accra, Ghana. Specifically, the Senior A&A Specialist ensures that all USAID/WA's A&A obligations and awards' terms and conditions effectively support USAID/WA's Development Objectives teams in achieving implementation of the Mission strategy. Senior A&A Specialist ensures that all A&A activities conform to the defined Development Objectives of the West Africa Mission, serves as a core team member of the Mission's technical teams providing guidance and assists on acquisition and assistance related matters, as well as contributes to overall Mission team work. The incumbent will be responsible for all pre-award, post-award and close out functions involving negotiated procurements of significant importance to the Agency. The job could also involve infrastructure (design, engineering and construction) contracting actions.

2.0 MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist will be responsible for planning, developing, soliciting, negotiating, managing, and advising on procurement and contract management in relation to the Mission's assistance programs in Cote D'Ivoire. The Senior A&A Specialist will participate in actions - from project design through negotiation, administration and close-out. The Senior A&A Specialist must provide technical assistance necessary to execute a full range of procurement actions in support of USAID activities in Cote d'Ivoire that are served by the USAID/West Africa contracting office. The Senior A&A Specialist must also be available for consultation on acquisition and assistance issues for other USAID activities (e.g., field support Global Health activities). Incumbent may mentor and conduct on-the-job training to junior/less experienced staff on A&A policies and practices.

A. Conducts Procurement Program Planning Work (20%)

- Responsible for procurement planning activities in Abidjan, which may include reviewing and clearing action memos and representing the Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office at program planning meetings. Prepares and maintains current acquisition plans, appropriate milestone charts, and related schedules and keeps the Supervisory RAAO informed of anticipated workload demands.
- Identifies within assigned major program(s) those significant subsystems, components, equipment and services to be acquired by contract, grant, cooperative agreement or Inter-agency Agreement.
- Serves on project review committees. Assists program officials in project planning meetings on an as-needed basis.

- Advises program officials of the procurement instruments to be used and assists in the preparation of statements of work and in the development of evaluation criteria.
- Provides counseling and training to new project/technical staff on USAID regulations and Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) requirements.
- Provides advice to Mission personnel on resolution of special procurement problems associated with waiver requests, expediting of deliveries, apparent overlapping of responsibilities, and resolution of claims.

B. Analyzes Sources for the Items/Services Procured (10%)

- Surveys the markets to locate new procurement sources and determine the availability of items or services with specialized requirements. Prepares solicitation documents. Performs detailed analyses of all elements of cost in contractor proposals. Assists the Contracting Officer in the determination of the competitive range and prepares defensible justifications when required. Similarly, drafts request for applications for awards under assistance.
- Conducts pre-proposal conferences with prospective contractors to arrive at a clear understanding of what is required under the proposed contract. Organizes, directs, conducts and/or coordinates pre-bid/pre-proposal conferences for complex procurement actions, especially construction or architect-engineering actions, but also for complicated services (and perhaps even commodities). Ensures the proper establishment of requirements for bid and/or performance bonding in applicable requests for proposals.
- Obtains appropriate data from business and technical officials. Issues necessary modifications to clarify questions concerning such topics as specification changes, language ambiguities, or clarification of contract clauses or subcontracts.

C. Negotiates Procurement of Products and Services Using a Variety of Contract Types (20%)

- Contract methods and types used to procure large and significant equipment systems, complex programs, services, or construction where little or no contractual precedent exists. Serves as lead negotiator responsible for a significant program or for major procurements, which may include several types of instruments.
- Plans the negotiation strategy, coordinates the strategy with the negotiation team, and leads the negotiations which are conducted with contractors/grantees to develop the contract/grant prices and terms. Explores new or innovative contracting approaches to arrive at an equitable contract arrangement. In the absence of meaningful cost and price information, develops creative approaches to developing the necessary comparative data.
- Prepares the agreements and recommends its award.
- Coordinates a variety of contracts and assistance agreements requiring the development of new or modified evaluation criteria, reporting requirements and contractual arrangements. Forecasts labor and material costs when unknowns are

involved, locating or developing sources, developing approaches for procurements lacking precedent, and resolving major differences in the interpretation of the statement of work during discussions and negotiations.

- Negotiates Participating Agency Services Agreements (PASA) and Participating Agency Program Agreements (PAPA) in accordance with statutory and procedural regulations and general agreements with other Federal agencies. Negotiations include prices, terms, special conditions, and amendments. Coordinates PASA's and PAPA's with officials in participating Federal agencies and with Mission officials as necessary.
- Updates/develops guidelines and procedures for host country contracting. This will require familiarity with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness which commits donors to using host country systems.

D. Conducts Contract Compliance Review (15%)

- Conducts in-depth compliance review and evaluation of complex, unusual, or unprecedented contract actions requiring higher-level approval. Responsible for contract administration sufficient to ensure contract terms and conditions are met and that the contractor delivers the required goods or services in a timely manner to achieve the objectives of the Agency's projects and programs.
- Advises technical office counterparts and contractors on their administration responsibilities contained in the contract.
- Evaluates the adequacy of the contractor's business management systems for areas such as personnel compensation, insurance subcontracting procedures, and financial management. Resolves audit findings on post-award audits. Conducts in-depth analyses of contractors' financial and management systems and facilities for ability to perform and for compliance with federal regulatory requirements. Prepares comprehensive reports and recommendations to managers as a result of the reviews.
- The incumbent is responsible for the preparation of all documentation necessary to support and defend termination decisions. Negotiates termination claims.
- Reviews grantee's procurement systems and procedures. In response to requests for review by grantees for the purpose of certifying their procurement system and procedures, conducts in-depth on-site evaluations of grantees contracts, contracting procedures, contract planning, competition, cost analysis, organizations, Contractor qualifications, procurement and contract administration systems, and similar functions.
- Reviews third-party contracts submitted by grantees to ensure compliance with requirements for solicitation and award of third-party contracts. Reviews include all types of contracts (fixed price, cost-plus-fixed-fee, cost-plus-award-fee, incentive provisions, escalation provisions, etc.) for the procurement of major systems related to highly complex service contracts, equipment, construction and supplies.

E. Monitors Contractor's Performance (20%)

- Conducts reviews of highly specialized contracts, assistance agreements. Performs contract administration activities for significant, highly specialized procurements.

- Supports Contracting/Agreement Officer by providing contracting/agreement administration sufficient to ensure that the contractor/recipient delivers the required goods or services in a timely manner to achieve the objectives of the Agency's projects or programs. Responsibilities typically include periodic site visits, review of changes to incremental funding, redirection of effort, coordination of time extension, incorporation of change orders, preparation of cure notices or show cause letters, and contract closeout for Contracting/Agreement Officer review and approval.
- Recommends issuing cure or show-cause notices when the contractor is not in compliance.
- Senior A&A Specialist will be responsible for all post-award functions through close-out and will manage active awards for the assigned portfolios. Reviews official contract files to ensure no pending administrative action; contract is complete in every aspect and ready to close, and to obtain approval of all closeout documentation.
- Monitors contractor's performance on contract, regulatory, and statutory provisions through telephone conversations, correspondence, reports, vouchers, and visits. Reviews and provides recommendations on contractor proposals resulting from change orders, scheduling, problems that have arisen and proposed solutions, verification of deliveries, and similar activities.
- Interprets contract provisions for contractors and for officials of the agency, and provides appropriate advice and guidance.

F. Conducts Policy Research, Analysis, and Interpretation (10%)

- Serves as an advisor to program officials in project planning meetings. Advises program officials of the procurement and assistance instruments to be used and assists in the preparation of statement of work. Provides counseling and training to new project/technical staff on USAID regulations and the FAR requirements. Collaborates in the development of evaluation criteria.
- Formulates new or improved methods of contracting, e.g., pre-award or price/cost analysis, including responsibility for formulating guidelines, implementing new developments, and providing policy interpretation to subordinate contracting activities.
- Responds to protests by researching and developing necessary analysis, documentation, and history. Works with the RLA in preparing the Agency's position and RAAO reports to support the Government's defense on protests to the GAO. Provides ongoing technical advice and recommendations to both contracting and technical office personnel. Acts as a liaison to various offices.

G. Other Assignments (5%)

- Provides on-the-job training and assists the Junior/less experienced staff, where necessary.
- The Senior A&A Specialist shall ensure that the necessary documentation (e.g., memoranda, correspondence, technical papers, subcontract consent requests, authority to make grants under contracts, salary and personnel approvals,

equipment approvals, and Congressional inquiries) for all current A&A actions are maintained according to USAID records management regulations.

3.0 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

In order to be considered for the position, a candidate must meet the Minimum Qualifications listed below. Consideration and selection will be based on a panel evaluation of the Evaluation Factors. Please note that only shortlisted/finalist applicants will be interviewed or contacted. USAID does not pay for any expenses associated with the interviews unless expenses are pre-authorized. Reference checks will be conducted on those candidates selected for an interview. The applicant's references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities.

- I. Bachelor's degree in relevant major field plus a minimum of seven years substantive and professional contracting or procurement work experience is required. Relevant majors are business administration, public administration, law, banking, international affairs, procurement and contracting or finance with major in commerce, trade, or construction procurement management and materials management.
- II. Demonstrated extensive knowledge of U.S. Federal Acquisition Regulations, Assistance regulations, OMB Circulars, A&A cost principles. **Certification or substantial completion of the requirements for certification for the FAC-C or its equivalent is required. Certification in Assistance and Personal Service Contracts is required.**
- III. Fluency in English and French (equivalent of FSI-3 or above in speaking and reading) is required

4.0 EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The following factors are each listed *in their* ascending order of importance and will be the *basis* for the evaluation of all applications. All applications will be evaluated based on the documentation submitted with the application. Applicants are encouraged to provide a cover letter addressing how they meet the requirements of each of the criteria below and must submit three professional references with complete contact information. Candidates will be evaluated and ranked based on the following selection *criteria*:

Education and Training (15 points)

Bachelor's degree in relevant major field plus at least seven years relevant experience is required. Relevant majors are business administration, public administration, law, banking, international affairs, procurement and contracting or finance with an emphasis on commerce, trade, and materials management.

- Certification or substantial completion of the requirements for certification for the Procurement Management Certification Program (PMCP) or *its* equivalent is required. Certification requires successful completion of eight specified courses in procurement plus the achievement of certain competencies through a combination of training and experience. The eight courses are Federal and AID Acquisition Regulations (FAAR) (or other introductory course to the Federal Acquisition Regulations system); Competition in Contracting Act and the Role of the Competition Advocate in USAID CICA; Contract Law;

Contract Administration; Cost and Price Analysis; Small Purchases; Grants and cooperative Agreements and Personal Services Contract Seminar.

Work Experience (30 pts)

A minimum of seven years of progressively responsible experience in the acquisition and assistance field is required. Such experience must include the cost and price analysis, procurement planning, and analysis and evaluation of proposals.

- At least three years of the experience working on acquisition and assistance actions overseas with international organizations is required.

Knowledge , Skills and Abilities (55 pts)

Knowledge of U. S. Government Acquisition and Assistance regulations, *policies* and practices, including the FAR, AIDAR, relevant sections of the code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and ADS is required.

- Proven ability in the following: issuance of fixed- priced contracts, issuance of cost reimbursement contracts, issuance of special-purpose contracts and agreements, issuance of personal service contracts, business evaluations, contract administration; contract termination; and award and administration of grants and cooperative agreements.
- Demonstrated excellence in oral communication in English/French and strong writing skills. Proven ability to evaluate, interpret policy directives and regulations and to effectively communicate the Mission to implementing partners.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with cooperating government officials, business and industry officials and mission staff at all levels is required.
- The ability to exercise tact and diplomacy and ability to maintain strict confidentiality and high ethical standards relating to all areas of acquisition and assistance matters are required.
- The ability to independently organize, prioritize and follow through on all assignments is required.
- Proficiency in standard operating and application software (Windows, Microsoft word, Excel and Outlook) is required.

TOTAL POINTS: 100

5.0 OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTORS:

Knowledge Required by the Position: The position requires either: knowledge of contracting principles, laws, regulations and procedures applicable to pre-award and/or post-award actions sufficient to procure and/or administer contracts for major development, testing, and/or production, or mastery of a procurement functional area sufficient to provide expert technical leadership, staff coordination, and consultation including responsibility for formulating guidelines, implementing new developments and providing policy interpretation. Familiarity with business strategy and program or technical requirements is required sufficient to perform or direct in depth evaluations of the financial and technical capabilities, or the performance, of the contractor.

Supervision Received: The incumbent will report to and receive technical oversight and guidance from USAID/West Africa Supervisory Regional Contracting Officer in coordination with the USAID Representative Cote d'Ivoire.

Available Guidelines: Reference and guidance materials to be used by the Contractor in performing the duties shall include, but not be limited to the following

- Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)
- AID Acquisition Regulations (AIDAR)
- Code of Federal Regulations
- OMB Circulars
- A & A policy Directives (AAPDs)
- Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs)
- Procurement Executive Bulletin (PEB)
- USAID Automated Directives System (ADS)

Exercise of Judgment: The Contractor must exercise sound and independent judgment in interpreting and applying acquisition and assistance regulations in the course of carrying out the assigned duties. Authority to make commitments: the incumbent will not have the authority to sign A & A instruments or other documents that require a warrant, or the authority to make legal determinations that have the effect of binding the Government. If a u.s. citizen, the incumbent may be eligible for a warrant, but it is not guaranteed. Nature, Level and Purpose of Contacts: The Contractor establishes and maintains solid working relationships with all levels of Mission personnel, contractors and assistance recipients.

Interpersonal skills: The Contractor must exercise discretion and tact in a variety of stressful situations and when dealing with personnel to resolve challenges that arise during the course of the work, for which there often is not a clear solution. Teamwork within the cluster and between clusters for the overall success of Mission operations is essential.

Time required to perform full range of duties: The Contractor is expected to be an expert in the field of USG acquisition and assistance procedures.

Period of performance: The term of the contract will be for two years with possible extensions contingent on the need for continued services, satisfactory performance and *availability* of funds.

6. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS:

Interested individuals are required to submit the following:

- Fully completed and hand-signed copy of a302-3 forms are available at <http://www.usaid.gov/forms/>.
- Cover letter and a current resume/curriculum vita (CV). The CV/resume must contain sufficient relevant information to evaluate the application in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria. Broad general statements that are vague or lacking specificity will not be considered as effectively addressing particular selection criteria.

- Applicants must provide a minimum of three and a maximum of five references within the last five years of the applicant's professional life from individuals who are not family members or relatives. Three references must be from direct supervisors who can provide information regarding the applicant's knowledge of contracting work. Applicants must provide e-mail addresses and/or working telephone numbers for all references.
- **Application letters and Form a302-3 must be signed. Incomplete and unsigned applications will not be considered.**

7. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSCS:

Forms outlined below can found at; <http://www.usaid.gov/forms/>

1. AID form a302-3.
2. Contractor Physical Examination (AID Form 1420-62). *
3. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86), or *
4. Foreign Activity Data (AID 6-85). *
5. Finger Print Cards (SF-87). *
6. E-QIPS Signature Forms.*
7. Notice Required By Privacy Act (AID 500-5).*
8. Fair Credit Reporting Act (AID 500-4).*

* Forms 2 through 8 shall be completed only upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.

8. ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE POLICY DIRECTIVES (AAPDs) contain information or changes pertaining to USAID policy, regulation and procedures concerning acquisition and assistance including Personal Service Contracts. Please refer to the USAID website http://transition.usaid.gov/business/business_opportunities/cib/subject.html#psc to locate relevant AAPDs.

9. BENEFITS/ALLOWANCES:

As a matter of policy and as appropriate, a USPSC is normally authorized benefits and allowances in accordance with AIDAR Appendix D and other relevant Agency and Mission polices. Third Country Nationals (TCN), as a matter of policy and as appropriate are authorized benefits and allowances in accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and other relevant Agency and Mission polices. TCNs in Cote d'Ivoire are included in ICASS support, including Embassy housing and access to the Medical Unit.

BENEFITS:

Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance

Pay Comparability Adjustment

Annual Increase (pending a satisfactory performance evaluation)

Eligibility for Worker's Compensation

Annual & Sick Leave

*Note: If a US citizen, the Contractor's salary will be subject to employee's FICA and Medicare contribution.

ALLOWANCES (as applicable).

(A) Temporary Lodging Allowance (Section 120).

(B) Living Quarters Allowance (Section 130).

(C) Post Allowance (Section 220).

(D) Supplemental Post Allowance (Section 230).

(E) Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260).

(F) Education Allowance (Section 270).

(G) Education Travel (Section 280).

(H) Post Differential (Chapter 500).

(I) Payments during Evacuation/Authorized Departure (Section 600)

FEDERAL TAXES: USPSCs are not exempt from payment of Federal and State Income Taxes.

END OF SOLICITATION