

SOLICITATION NUMBER	SOL- 306-15-000003-OAA
ISSUING DATE	October 22, 2014
CLOSING DATE	November 5, 2014
POSITION TITLE	Contract Specialist (Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist)
NUMBER OF POSITIONS	Multiple
MARKETING VALUE	GS-13 (\$72,391 - \$94,108) In addition, this post has 35% post differential and 35% danger pay
ORGANIZATIONAL LOCATION OF POSITION	USAID/ Afghanistan
DIRECT SUPERVISOR	Contracting Officer Office of Acquisition and Assistance
SUPERVISORY CONTROL	Minimal. Incumbent is expected to act independently with little direction.
PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE	13 months with an option for renewal.
SECURITY ACCESS	Employment Authorization for Third Country National
AREA OF CONSIDERATION	Third Country National Personal Service Contractor (TCNPSC)

Background

The Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) plays a pivotal role in the successful execution of USAID/Afghanistan Strategic Goals and Objectives through the planning, solicitation, award and administration of contracts and agreements. OAA staff includes experienced Contracting/Agreement Officers (CO/AO), US and Third Country National Personal Services Contractors (US/TCNPSC) and Foreign Service Nationals (FSN), all of whom work with the technical teams to develop, award and administer programs. This Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist (Intermittent - US/TCNPSC) is the primary assistant and team leader to the Contracting Officer assisting USAID/Afghanistan Strategic and Special Objective teams (SOs) with achieving implementation results and SO goals and objectives. S/he works independently on activity design and implementation of A&A assignments, and is responsible for a wide range of A&A actions of all types. The incumbent must be able to apply professional procurement skills for any sector, any program and will be expected to fulfill a leadership, training and supervisory role for USAID FSN employees. Incumbent will also be required to work with multiple U.S. and host government entities and cross cultural issues.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities

The Contracting Specialist will be based in USAID's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA). The Contracting Specialist is a key assistant to the Contracting/Agreement Officer and a key team leader for specific A&A actions within the Afghanistan Office of Acquisition and Assistance. The Incumbent is a crucial player for assisting the Afghanistan/Office of Acquisition and Assistance. S/he will be readily able to apply comprehensive US Government contracting experience (either directly or via private industry experience performing US Government contracts at the prime and/or subcontract level) to a full range of Acquisition and Assistance challenges. S/he will do this by applying high-level Acquisition and Assistance knowledge, skills and abilities while working as independently as possible on activity design and implementation related to Acquisition and Assistance assignments.

Responsibilities involve a wide range of Acquisition and Assistance actions, including a preponderance of complex actions, e.g., term, award fee or completion cost type contracts, task orders, international and interagency agreements, grants and cooperative agreements. S/he will be responsible for all pre-award and post-award functions involving highly complex negotiated procurements of significant importance to the Agency. Requirements of the contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and inter-agency agreements are typically highly specialized and involve complex systems or sensitive international programs.

The Contracting Specialist/Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist may serve in a Team Leader position and will be the principal advisor for a broad range of USAID Acquisition and Assistance activities, to include high dollar, complex competitive procurement actions, but also assistance (grants and cooperative agreements), modifications, delivery and purchase orders, interagency agreements and supply schedule or other related actions. S/he shall exercise leadership skills 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. S/he may have a formal decision-making authority in the many aspects of the broad areas of acquisition and assistance.

1. Pre-Award Expertise and Services. Performs or directs all actions required to conceptualize, plan, solicit, negotiate and award many kinds of acquisition and assistance actions of varying complexity. Conducts Acquisition and Assistance planning and subsequent pre-award activities fully supportive of USAID's strategic and special objectives and related results expectations and requirements.
 - a. Fully understands performance based Acquisition and Assistance principles with a resulting capability to meld Acquisition and Assistance services into specific contributions to appropriate USAID objectives and lower level indicators, outputs and inputs.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Reviews requests for Acquisition and Assistance actions (to include consulting on scope of work or program description documents), and manages the Acquisition and Assistance process whereby the comprehensive requirements of the Federal and USAID Acquisition Regulations (FAR and AIDAR), Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs), Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs), Procurement Executive Bulletins (PEBs), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Office of Management & Budget Circulars (OMB Circulars), Automated Directive System (ADS), etc., are used to competitively, (or when justified, via other means), proceed through the entire offer/application solicitation process. The incumbent must manage the technical and cost/price evaluation process plus subsequent negotiation processes in all actions (competitive or otherwise) to arrive at business management-appropriate instruments, including grants and cooperative agreements, etc. This includes completing fully documented files with certifications, negotiation memoranda reflecting complete explanations for Contracting Officer decision rationales, a comprehensive record of commitments and obligations of the parties. Finally, the incumbent manages the award process from beginning to conclusion with fully executed contract or assistance documents.
 - d. Develops long-range plans for new or complex programs. Responsible for procurement planning activities in assigned organizations, which may include reviewing and clearing project papers and representing OAA at program planning meetings. Identifies within assigned major program(s) those significant subsystems, components, equipment and services to be acquired by contract, grant or cooperative agreement or Inter-agency Agreement. Develops objectives for the program in terms of competition and price range, and constructs the contractual or assistance vehicle, which includes the use of pricing arrangements, subcontracting policy, set-aside polices, and similar considerations. Prepares and maintains current acquisition plans, appropriate milestone charts, and related schedules and keeps OAA management informed of anticipated workload demands. Anticipates problems and provides advice to project personnel on effective implementation and time frames required. Serves on project review committee.
 - e. Serves as advisor to program officials in project planning meetings. Advises program officials of the procurement instruments to be used and assists in the preparation of statements of work. Provides guidance and training to new project/technical staff on USAID regulations and FAR requirements. Collaborates in the development of evaluation criteria.

2. Post-Award Expertise and Services.

Performs all actions required to administer the complete variety of Acquisition and Assistance instruments from contractor/recipient mobilization through to closeout. Relies on a comprehensive mastery of the Mission Strategic Objective (SO) Plan, FAR, AIDAR, ADS, CFR, OMB Circulars and other procurement/assistance guidance sources to conduct output-based administration which enhances achievement of the Mission's program and assures timely delivery of the purchased supplies and/or services.

a. Exercises a proactive role during the administration phase to include coordinating with technical, controller and legal officers, conducting meetings and conferences as required, maintaining good communications with contractors, recipients and grantees, interpreting contract or award provisions, and negotiating and finalizing instrument modifications when warranted.

b. Coordinates special requirements with other US Government offices and agencies, including the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA), General Accounting Office (GAO), The Commission on Wartime Contracting (CWC), Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) and Small Business Administration. Ensures that the results contractually required are documented and that Acquisition and Assistance actions are properly closed out, to include final audits, resolving indirect cost matters and preparing any needed final modifications. Responds to Freedom of Information Act requests.

c. Provides backstopping services to the field regional personnel by advising on resolution of special procurement problems associates with waiver requests, expediting of deliveries, apparent overlapping of responsibilities, and resolution of claims. Conducts in-depth compliance review and evaluation of complex, unusual, or unprecedented contract actions requiring higher-level approval.

d. 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. Responsibilities typically include periodic site visits, approval of changes to incremental funding, preparation of rate and cost adjustments, redirection of level of effort, coordination of time extension, incorporation of change orders, preparation of stop work orders, sub-awards consents, approval of key personnel, equipment purchases, property disposition reviews and approvals, preparation of cure notices or show cause letters, and contract closeout. 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 results of the financial audits.

3. SO Team Membership and Support Services. Serves on one or more SO Team and/or provides support to SO teams located in USAID/Afghanistan as assigned or needed. Collegially represents the Office of Acquisition and Assistance viewpoint with the objective of having all team members fully understand and appreciate the key nature of the procurement and assistance function, how to obtain needed services or assistance to meet SO time schedules, as well as the statutory and procedural requirements established by Federal and USAID authorities for the purpose of protecting the U.S. Government's best interests.

4. Mission Support Services. As one of the Mission's Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialists, provides crucial knowledge of the international and local contractor and NGO community via consultation and advice to Senior Mission Management. Establishes and maintains an authoritative Mission presence to include travel and provision of consultative advice on Acquisition and Assistance policies and procedures to external groups (e.g., other USG agencies, NGOs, public international organizations (PIOs), for-profit contractors, other donors, etc.).

a. Serves as a key trainer and advisor for Foreign Service National (FSN) and Third Country National (TCN) Acquisition and Assistance staff, providing advice, training and support for FSNs and TCNs. The training/mentoring will be broad-based, to include job-specific technical training, informal day-to-day training and sharing of experience-based knowledge. The incumbent will counsel on consensus-building in a team environment, and methodology on professional conflict resolution technique.

b. Responds to protests and audits findings and recommendations by researching and developing necessary analysis, documentation, and history of the awards. Works with the Regional Legal Advisor in preparing the mission's position and provide assistance to the Contracting Officer to support the Government's defense on protests to the GAO, and programmatic and financial audits conducted by OIG, SIGAR, CWC and GAO.

EVALUATION CRITERIA/SELECTION CRITERIA:

Candidates will be evaluated and ranked based on the following selection criteria:

Education: The incumbent must provide evidence of successful completion of a bachelor's degree with a major in any field, that included or was supplemented by at least 24 semester/36 quarter hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management. Please note: If candidate does not have a bachelor's degree at the time of application, candidate's application will be eliminated from the competition and will not be considered further.

Work Experience: Incumbent must have at least seven years of demonstrated work experience in the acquisition and assistance field with U.S. Government agencies or international development organizations, donors, world bank or other public/private institutions..

Communications: Incumbent must have Level IV (Fluent) speaking/reading of the English language.

Knowledge: Incumbent must demonstrate extensive knowledge of U.S. Government Federal regulations and procedures for a broad range of acquisition instruments and assistance agreements.. This includes a knowledge of award contracts, standards and U.S. Federal specifications; knowledge of U.S. and local business practices and procedures; knowledge of local and regional market conditions and norms; knowledge of cost principles and requirements, cost/pricing structures and negotiation methods and techniques.

Skills and Abilities: Incumbent demonstrates strong organizational skills and ability to plan and provide required acquisition/assistance support for USAID/Afghanistan in a timely and effective manner. Good analytical, negotiating, and time management skills are required, with strong proofreading skills and attention to detail is required. The ability to work calmly, tactfully, and effectively under pressure is essential, as well as the ability to maintain strict confidentiality and high ethical standards throughout all phases of acquisition and assistance actions. In addition, the incumbent must be able to lead meetings at all levels, provide effective and tactful procurement ethics guidance to senior management personnel, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) officials and senior executives of private sector and non-governmental organizations and must be prepared to enforce ethical standards on these individuals if necessary.

Candidates meeting the above required qualifications for the position will be evaluated based on information presented in the application and reference checks. USAID reserves the right to conduct interviews with the top ranked short-listed applicants. The interview will be one of the determining factors in the final selection.

A. TERM OF PERFORMANCE

The term of the contract will be for thirteen months. Within four weeks after written notice from the Contracting Officer that all clearances have been received or, unless another date is specified by the Contracting Officer in writing, the incumbent shall proceed to Kabul to perform the above services which may be extended upon mutual agreement and subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds. This position has been classified at a U.S. Government GS-13. The actual salary of the successful candidate will be negotiated depending on qualifications and previous salary history.

In addition, the Mission has a 35% Post Differential allowance and 35% Danger Pay. During this period you will be entitled to two Rest and Recuperation trips (R&R) and up to three Regional Rest Breaks or three R&Rs and no RRBs.

This position entitles 20 days Administrative Leave plus two days of travel time for each break. In excess of the Administrative Leave, Annual Leave or Compensatory time for the breaks can be used.

Physical Demands and Work Environment: Work in the office is mostly sedentary, depending on workload the incumbent may be requested to serve extended work hours and workdays. The travel to program-activity implementation sites outside of Kabul requires U.S. Government Regional Security Officer (RSO) approval, travel in fully armored vehicles and close coordination with the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulate security officers, Department of Defense, and International Security Assistance Force as relevant.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

Life in Kabul has somewhat improved since the establishment of the government, and great strides have been made to regularize the availability of services, utilities, and supplies of common consumer items. Living conditions, however, are still difficult but this is an historical opportunity to work closely with a dedicated team to assist the Afghans to bring about peace and stability to their war-torn country.

Afghanistan is an unaccompanied post. All staff will be housed on the heavily guarded and fortified Embassy compound.

C. MEDICAL AND SECURITY CLEARANCE:

The selected applicants must be able to obtain security and medical clearances. Third Country Nationals should be able to obtain employment authorization from the Regional Security Office. For medical clearances, Third Country Nationals should obtain Department of State Class I Medical Clearance.

D. BENEFITS AND ALLOWANCES:

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a PSC is normally authorized to the benefits and allowances listed in this section. [NOTE: A contractor meeting the definition of a Third Country National shall be eligible for any of the listed fringe benefits to include health and life insurances, differentials and allowances.]

1. BENEFITS:

- 1) Contribution toward Health & life insurance
- 2) Pay Comparability Adjustment
- 3) Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- 4) Annual & Sick Leave
- 5) Access to Embassy medical facilities, commissary and pouch mail service as per post policy

2. ALLOWANCES (If Applicable)*:

- 1) Temporary Lodging Allowance (Section 120)
- 2) Living Quarters Allowance (Section 130)
- 3) Post Allowance (Section 220)
- 4) Supplemental Post Allowance (Section 230)
- 5) Post Differential (Chapter 500)
- 6) Payments during Evacuation/Authorized Departure (Section 600) and
- 7) Danger Pay (Section 650)
- 8) Education Allowance (Section 270)
- 9) Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260)
- 10) Education Travel (Section 280)

* Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians Foreign Areas).

E. CONTRACT INFORMATION BULLETINS (CIBs) or ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE POLICY DIRECTIVES (AAPDs) PERTAINING TO PSCs:

AAPDs and CIBs contain changes to USAID policy and General Provisions in USAID regulations and contract. Those documents can be found at this website:

http://www.usaid.gov/business/business_opportunities/cib/subject.html#psc

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AAPD 06-11	Home Leave and Revised General Provision 5, Leave and Holidays
AAPD 06-10	PSC Medical expense payment responsibility
AAPD 06-07	AIDAR, Appendix D: Contract budget, salary determination and salary increase
AAPD 05-02	Clarification of Policy for Personal Services Contracts with Anticipated Contract Performance Periods Exceeding Five (5) Years
AAPD 06-01	Medical evacuation insurance
CIB 01-07	Clarification of the extension/renewal policy regarding PSCs
CIB 01-05	Clarification of the Rest and Recuperation (R&R) Policy Regarding Third Country Nationals
CIB 99-22	PSC Policy
CIB 98-23	Guidance regarding Classified Contract Security and Contractor Personnel Security Requirements
CIB 98-11	Determining a Market Value for Personal Services Contractors Hired under Appendix D.
CIB 97-16	Class Justification for use of Other Than Full and Open Competition for Personal Services Contracts with U.S. Citizens Contracted with Locally, with CCNs and TCNs Subject to the Local Compensation Plan, and for Overseas Contracts of \$250,000 or less
CIB 96-23	Unauthorized Provision in Personal Services Contracts
CIB 94-09	Sunday Pay for U.S. Personal Services Contractors (PSCs)
CIB 89-29	Use of Government Bill of Lading for Transportation of Personal Service Contractor (PSC) Household Effects, Unaccompanied Baggage and Privately Owned Vehicles

Various Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs) and Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs) pertain to Personal Services Contracts can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs>

Additionally, AIDAR Appendixes D or J also applies to PSCs can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/aidar.pdf>

F. REQUIRED FORM AND DOCUMENTS FOR INITIAL CONSIDERATION:

Interested applicants must submit the following documents or their applications may not be considered for this position:

1. U.S government OF-0612 form which is available at the following websites: <http://www.ussc.gov/employment/of0612.pdf>
2. A current curriculum vitae (CV) or resume;
3. A minimum of three (3) professional references, who are not family members or relatives, with working telephone and email contacts. The applicant's references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities. At least one reference provided should be a current or former supervisor.

4. A written statement that addresses the Evaluation/Selection Criteria in this solicitation, and how the applicant believes their experience and skills meet or exceed these criteria.
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.

G. APPLYING

All applications must be submitted electronically by e-mail with the subject line **Contract Specialist (Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist) (TCNPSC) “SOL- 306-15-000003/OAA”** to: AfUSAIDJobs@state.gov

Attention: USAID/Afghanistan
Human Resources Office

Applicants may submit an application against this solicitation at any time but prior the closing date mentioned above unless revised. The highest ranking applications may be selected for an interview. **Please note that only short listed candidates will be notified.**

Point of Contact:

Any questions about this solicitation may be directed to: KabulAIDHR@state.gov.

Note: No in-person appointments or telephone calls will be entertained, unless you are required to have more information about this solicitation.

Place of Performance

USAID/Afghanistan
U.S. Embassy
Great Massoud Road
Kabul, Afghanistan