



USAID | WEST AFRICA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ISSUANCE DATE: March 28, 2014

CLOSING DATE: April 11, 2014 AT 12:30 Hours Accra Time

SUBJECT: SOLICITATION NUMBER 624-14-008 FOR THIRD COUNTRY NATIONAL PERSONAL SERVICE CONTRACTOR SENIOR ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST, USAID/WEST AFRICA – MULTIPLE POSITIONS

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 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 positions will be located in Accra, Ghana.

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**

OR

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. **All applications and OF612/SF171 forms submitted 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 more than one Personal Service Contract as a result of this solicitation. **These positions will not be filled until funding is available.** 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 Dinah McKeown at dmckeown@usaid.gov or the undersigned at cives@usaid.gov.

Sincerely,

Courtney Ives
Supervisory Executive Officer

SOLICITATION NUMBER : 624-14-008

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POSITION TITLE : Senior Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Specialist - Multiple Positions

MARKET VALUE : **(\$72,391.00 – 94,108.00)** 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.**

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE : Two (2) years

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE : Accra, Ghana

SECURITY ACCESS: Must obtain Employment Authorization and medical clearance 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.

AREA OF CONSIDERATION: Open to Third Country Nationals

1. BACKGROUND

The Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist will be located within USAID/West Africa and will work with USAID/West Africa Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office (RAAO) located in Accra, Ghana. The incumbent will be responsible for all pre-award and close out functions involving highly complex negotiated procurements of significant importance to the Agency. Requirements of the contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and interagency agreements are typically highly specialized and involve complex systems or sensitive international programs. The incumbent of this position will work on actions relating to USAID/West Africa including USAID/Ghana. Travel may be necessary to countries served by USAID/West Africa.

2. Major Duties and Responsibilities

The incumbent serves as a Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist, 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, inter-agency agreements are typically highly specialized and involve complex systems or sensitive international programs. The Contractor must provide technical assistance necessary to execute a full range of procurement actions in support of USAID/West Africa and other countries including USAID/Ghana served by the contracting office. The support required includes actions such as: task orders, delivery orders, grants and cooperative agreements, fixed price (including commercial contracts) and cost reimbursable contracts, modifications to these instruments and other miscellaneous administrative actions. The Contractor must conduct

negotiations, prepare award documents and file documentation as required. The Contractor must also be available for consultation on acquisition and assistance issues.

Specifically, the incumbent:

1. Conducts Procurement Program Planning Work (20%)

- Develops long-range plans for new or complex programs. Responsible for procurement planning activities in assigned Mission teams, which may include reviewing and clearing action memos and representing the Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office at program planning meetings.
- 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.
- 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 the Supervisory RAAO informed of anticipated workload demands.
- Anticipates problems and provides advice to project personnel on effective implementation and time frames required.
- 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.
- Provides counseling and training to new project/technical staff on USAID regulations and Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) requirements.
- Collaborates in the development of evaluation criteria.
- Provides on-the-job training to lower level staff and assists the USAID/West Africa RAAO Team in selecting appropriate developmental assignments.
- 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.

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

- Develops new or innovative acquisition plans, source selection plans, and contract terms, conditions, or financial arrangements that serve as models for future major system acquisitions.
- 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.
- 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. 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.

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

- Contract methods and types used procure large, highly complex, and significant equipment systems, 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.
- 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.

4. 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. Responsibilities include but are not limited to: periodic site visits, approval of changes to incremental funding, preparation of rate and cost adjustments, redirection of effort, coordination of time extension, incorporation of change orders, preparation of stop work orders, preparation of cure notices or show cause letters, and contract closeout in consultation with the Contracting Officer.
- 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.
- Ensures the contractor's compliance with Cost Accounting Standards and requirements. Performs work associated with the analysis of automated contracting systems, or with providing advice and guidance on contracting and procurement issues including procurement using small/disadvantaged businesses.
- Terminates contracts for the convenience of the Government or default by the contractor. The incumbent is responsible for the preparation of all documentation necessary to support and defend termination decisions. Negotiates termination claims.
- Resolves audit findings on post-award audits. Responds to protests by researching and developing necessary analysis, documentation, and history. Works with the Regional Legal Advisor (RLA) in preparing the Agency's position and Regional Contracting Officer reports to support the Government's defense on protests to the Government Accountability Office (GAO).
- 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.

- Prepares comprehensive reports and recommendations to managers as a result of the reviews.

5. Monitors Contractor's Performance (20%)

- Conducts reviews of highly specialized contracts, assistance agreements and contracting plans. Performs contract administration activities for significant, highly specialized procurements.
- Supports Contracting/Agreement Officer by providing contracting/agreement administration sufficient to ensure terms and conditions are complied with and 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.
- Independently reviews contractors performance through site visits, correspondence, and telephone conversation for completion of applicable contract clauses e.g., small business, patent rights, labor laws, and progress reports.
- Recommends issuing cure or show-cause notices when the contractor is not in compliance.
- Conducts contract reviews to evaluate performance.
- Monitors contractor activities through personal contact or review to assure compliance with technical, financial, delivery, and other terms of the contract.
- 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. Coordinates contract administration activities for long-term, extensive technical service contracts.
- Monitors contractor's performance on contract, regulatory, and statutory provisions through telephone conversations, correspondence, reports, vouchers, and visits. Monitors status of contract performance, approval of progress payments, reviewing and providing 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.

- Conducts in-depth analyses of contractors' financial and management systems and facilities for ability to perform and for compliance with federal regulatory requirements.

6. 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 contracting policies in a functional area of procurement, 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.
- Analyzes and collates the approved annual procurement plans.
- Recommends, develops, issues, and maintains contracting policies to ensure consistency in implementation.

7. Other Assignments (5%)

- Coordinates the review and analysis of findings and recommendations in audit reports; and performs other appropriate duties.

3. OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTORS:

a) 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 contract.

b) GUIDELINES

Policies and precedents are available but stated in general terms or are of limited use. Extensive searches of a wide range of regulations and policy circulars are frequently required. The PSC uses experienced judgment and initiative in applying principles underlying guidelines,

in deviating from traditional techniques, or in researching trends and patterns to develop new approaches, criteria, or proposed policies.

c) COMPLEXITY

The work is characterized by breadth of planning, review, and coordination or depth of problem identification and analysis, stemming from the variety of the procurement functions or from unknowns, changes, or conflicts inherent to the issues. Work involves varied duties requiring many different and unrelated processes and methods which cover the full range of contracting and assistance activities in the assigned functional area (s) or contract reviews which reveal trends and common problems.

Decisions involve responsiveness to continuing changes in programs or technological developments. Procurements typically requires new or modified contract terms and conditions, funding arrangements, or policy interpretation throughout the pre-award and post award phases. The PSC develops data and recommends or initiates actions to resolve a variety of problems under assistance. Actions includes analysis of alternatives, adaptation, or modification of procedures, or resolution of incomplete or conflicting technical or contractor data.

d) SCOPE AND EFFECT

The purpose of the work is to provide expertise as a specialist in a functional area of contracts and grants/cooperative agreements by furnishing advisory, planning, or reviewing services on specific problems, projects, or programs. The work affects a wide range of procurement and assistance activities such as the operation of procurement programs in various offices or locations, the accomplishment of significant procurement of technical program goals, or the economic position of contractors or on their respective geographic areas.

All actions of the Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist will be subject to review and final approval of the responsible Contracting/Agreement Officer or his/her designee.

e) SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervision Received: The Senior Acquisition and Agreement Specialist will report to the USAID/West Africa Supervisory Regional Contracting Officer.

Exercise of Judgment: The Senior Acquisition and Agreement Specialist must exercise sound and independent judgment in interpreting and applying acquisition and assistance regulations in the course of carrying out the assigned duties. Position requires a high level of ability with regard to understanding contracting and assistance policies and regulations and the ability to analyze situations and accurately apply those regulations and make sound judgment.

Authority to make commitments: The Senior Acquisition and Agreement Specialist does not have the authority to sign A&A instruments or other documents that require a warrant, and no authority to make legal determinations that have the effect of binding the Government.

Nature, Level and Purpose of Contacts: The Senior Acquisition and Agreement Specialist will establish and maintain productive working relationships with all levels of Mission personnel, contractors and assistance recipients.

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

Physical Demands/ Work Environment: The work is sedentary and performed in an office setting.

4. QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

In order to be considered for this position, a candidate must meet the Minimum Qualifications listed below. Consideration and selection will be based on a panel evaluation of the Evaluation Factors. Additionally, interviews and writing samples may be requested only from the top scoring candidates. Please note that not all applicants will be interviewed or contacted. USAID will not pay for any expenses associated with the interviews unless expenses are pre-authorized.

- **Education:** Bachelor's degree in relevant major fields plus at least seven years relevant experience required. Relevant majors are business administration, public administration, law, banking, international affairs, procurement and contracting or finance with an emphasis on commerce, trade, and material management.
- **Work Experience:** A minimum of seven years of progressively responsible experience in the acquisition and assistance field is required.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Applicants who do not meet the required minimum qualifications above will be considered unqualified for the position and will not be further assessed against the selection criteria below. Those applicants who do meet the minimum qualifications will be evaluated and ranked based on the following selection criteria (maximum of 100 points):

The following factors will be the basis for the evaluation of all applications. All applications will be evaluated based on the documentation submitted with the application.

a) Education and training (20 points)

- Bachelor's degree in relevant major fields plus at least seven years relevant experience required. Relevant majors are business administration, public administration, law, banking, international affairs, procurement and contracting or finance with an emphasis on commerce, trade, and material management.
- Certification or substantial completion of the requirements for certification for the Procurement Management Certification Program (PMCP) or FAC-C or its equivalent is required. PMCP 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 Acquisition Regulations (FAR) (or other introductory course to the Federal Acquisition Regulations Systems); 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 Seminar. Certification in Acquisition and Assistance is required.

b) Work Experience (30 points)

- A minimum of seven years of progressively responsible experience in the acquisition and assistance field is required. Demonstrated prior experience and ability to exercise independent judgment and lead teams in the full range of responsibilities; procurement planning, solicitation, analysis and evaluation of proposals, negotiation and award of acquisition and assistance instruments, costs and price analysis, administration, termination, negotiation or changes, execution of options, investigation and resolution of contractor delays, contractor performance appraisal, subcontractor surveillance and disposition of claims.
- Experience that demonstrates pre-award skills and experience in making formal presentations and in post award administration.
- At least, three years of the experience working on acquisition and assistance actions overseas with international organizations is required.

c) Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (50 points)

- Demonstrated knowledge of federal contracting and assistance principles, laws, statutes, Executive Orders, regulations and procedures applicable to pre-award and/or post-award actions sufficient to procure and/or administer contracts, grants and cooperative agreements for a variety of specialized equipment, services, and/or construction, or to conduct studies of problem areas and develop standard methods and operating procedures.

Knowledge of the following is preferred:

- Acquisition Regulations (AIDAR)
 - Contract Information Bulletins (CIBS) / Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDS)
 - Office of Procurement Administrative Memoranda (OPAMS)
 - Automated Directive System (ADS)
 - Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular
 - Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations as appropriate.
- Proven ability in the following: issuance of fixed-priced contracts, issuance of cost reimbursement contracts, issuance of special-purpose contracts and agreements, business evaluations, contract administration; contract termination; and award and administration of grants and cooperative agreement.
 - Demonstrated excellence in oral communication in English and strong writing skills. Proven ability to evaluate, and interpret policy directives and regulations, produce technical documents 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 plan, organize and manage complex negotiations and meetings is very important. Strong organizational skills; ability to work independently with little supervision; ability to work

calmly, tactfully and effectively under pressure and to demonstrate extreme flexibility to manage more than one activity at a time is essential.

- The ability to maintain strict confidentiality and high ethical standards relating to all areas of acquisition and assistance matters are required.
- Must have demonstrated strong computer skills in specialized software, including Windows, the Microsoft Office Suite, word processing and spreadsheets.
- **Language Proficiency:** Level IV (fluent) English skills are required. Demonstrated fluency in both written and spoken English is required. Working knowledge (level II) of French is a plus.

Past Performance/Professional Reference Checks

Interested applicants are advised that USAID/West Africa will conduct reference checks and request input from past employers concerning applicants' past work performance, technical knowledge, required skills, including teamwork and team-building experience. USAID/Ghana may also require a written test and/or writing samples.

Those applicants determined to be competitively ranked may also be evaluated on interview performance. These interviews may be conducted by telephone.

5. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS:

Interested individuals are required to submit:

- Fully completed and hand-signed copy of an Application for Federal employment (SF-171) or an Optional Application for Federal Employment Form (OF-612), 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.
- 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.
- Date of availability to begin assignment in Accra, Ghana.

6. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSCS:

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

1. Standard Form 171 or Optional Form 612.
2. Contractor Physical Examination (AID Form 1420-62). *

3. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86), or *
4. Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85). *
5. Finger Print Card (FD-258). *

* Forms 2 through 5 shall be completed only upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.

7. ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE POLICY DIRECTIVES (AAPDs) contain information or changes pertaining to USAID policy, regulation and procedures concerning acquisition and assistance. Please refer to the USAID website: <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs> to locate relevant AAPDs.

8. BENEFITS/ALLOWANCES:

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a TCN-PSC is normally authorized the benefits and allowances as per Mission Order and AIDAR Appendix J. AIDAR Appendix J can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/aidar.pdf>.

BENEFITS:

- Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
- Pay Comparability Adjustment
- Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- Annual & Sick Leave

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) Educational Allowance (Section 270)*
- (9) Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260)*
- (10) Educational Travel (Section 280)*

* Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians Foreign Areas).

TCN positions in Ghana are not covered by the ICASS service provider/USG housing pool system. Therefore, in lieu of government provided housing TCNPSCs are eligible for a housing allowance. TCNPSCs will be allowed an amount for rent equal to the post rental ceiling set by Overseas Building Operations. Other allowances in support of housing costs include a furniture and appliances allowance; a generator allowance; and a residential expenses allowance. Full details are available upon request. Shipment of a POV however is not covered under the contract.