

LDEQ ANSWERS TO PROPOSERS QUESTIONS
RFP No. 300003591
“Analytical and Consulting Services”

LDEQ’s answers to the following questions are intended to provide information to potential proposers questions to RFP No. 300003591.

Questions and answers that may potentially result in the disclosure of information from proposals of competing bidders will not be published.

Question 1: List of Items, Schedule of Requirements, Scope of Work, Terms of Reference, Bill of Materials required.

LDEQ’s answer: *These items may be found in RFP Attachment 1, Statement of Work, Section 2.0 Contractor Tasks, Section 3.0 Project Schedule, Section 4.0 Minimum Qualifications of the Contractor’s Personnel, and Section 5.0 Project Management.*

Question 2: Names of countries that will be eligible to participate in this tender.

LDEQ’s answer: *This is open competition, not limited to companies based in any particular country(s). In accordance with RFP Part II, Section 2.1, any company must have a certificate of authority to transact business in Louisiana from the Louisiana Secretary of State.*

Question 3: Information about the Tendering Procedure and Guidelines

LDEQ’s answer: Procedures and guidelines are governed by Louisiana Revised Statutes 39:1551-1755 and Louisiana Administrative Code Title 34, Part V.

Question 4: Estimated Budget for this Purchase

LDEQ’s answer: *This information cannot be released during the advertisement period, as it could compromise the RFP process with regard to competitive price proposals.*

Question 5: Any Extension of Bidding Deadline?

LDEQ’s answer: *Proposal due date and time are unchanged and remain as indicated in the original RFP.*

Question 6: Any Addendum or Pre Bid meeting Minutes?

LDEQ’s answer: *This Question & Answer document is the only addendum. There were no pre bid meetings or minutes.*

Question 7: Can you provide a copy of the current contract pricing?

LDEQ's answer: For a copy of current contract pricing documents, proposers may submit a public records request according to the process explained in the following link:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/Default.aspx?tabid=2231>

Question 8: Can you provide an editable version of the RFP to include tables and forms?

LDEQ's answer: The posting of the RFP on the Department's web site has a section labeled: Forms (Optional Fill-in forms to be used by Proposers).

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/FinancialServices/RequestforProposals/3000003591.aspx>

Question 9: What is average spending per year on the current contract?

LDEQ's answer: Average annual spending, divided between two (2) contract laboratories, is \$511,210.22:

Fiscal Year (FY)	Combined Expenditures Labs A + B
12/13	\$512,496.94
13/14	\$509,923.50
Ave Annual Expenditures	\$511,210.22

Fiscal Year 14/15 spending as of June 17, 2015, divided between Labs A and B, is \$454,704.97. FY14/15 expenditures are not complete at this time.

Question 10: RFP Section 2.1 Corporation Requirements refers to a Certificate of Authority, is a certificate of registration with the Secretary of State sufficient?

LDEQ's answer: The Department is unsure what a certificate of registration with the Secretary of State is. If the winning proposer is an out of state company, they must file a certificate of authority with the Secretary of State.

Question 11: RFP Section 1.5 Submission of Proposals, please clarify submittal requirements. Do you require 1 full original of the proposal including technical and pricing, 4 copies of same and 1 original of the financial information, all under one cover?

LDEQ's answer: As per RFP Part I, Section 1.9 Definitions, "shall" denotes a mandatory requirement and "should" denotes a preference, not a mandatory requirement.

As per RFP Part I, Section 1.5 Submission of Proposals:

- One (1) original of the technical proposal (to include technical and pricing) shall be submitted.
- Four (4) copies of the technical proposal (to include technical and pricing) should be submitted.
- One (1) copy of the financial information should be submitted.

As per RFP Part III, Section 3.2, the technical proposal (including pricing) is Volume I, and as per RFP Part III, Section 3.3, the financial information is Volume II. Volumes I and II are submitted under separate covers.

Question 12: For remote locations is it acceptable for the bidder to provide pre-paid Fedex or other commercial carrier?

LDEQ's answer: No, prepaid labels are not acceptable. The Department needs to have a local presence, especially during emergency events where same day pick up may be needed. The Proposer should have either laboratory personnel or a 3rd party courier service available for this contract. Shipping samples on a routine basis is not acceptable. For emergencies or case-by-case, it might be necessary, but LDEQ shipping samples should not be used as a continual option.

Sample pickups are on an as needed basis. Typically, every regional office gets approximately 3-5 visits per month, but more if needed. Refer to Attachment 1, Statement of Work, Section 2.6, Sample Pickup and Transport, for regional offices and designated pickup locations

There are typically heavier sample loads in Baton Rouge and New Orleans than the other regions since those are larger Department offices. Baton Rouge and New Orleans may sometimes get approximately 8-10 visits.

Question 13: Exhibit 3, please confirm that units are correct.

LDEQ's answer: Yes the units are correct.

Question 14: Exhibit 3, the limits listed are approximately 20 to 200 times lower than the reference method Reporting Limits. Is it possible to have these reporting Limits reviewed and verified?

LDEQ's answer: The values are correct. If results are reported by the Contractor down to the listed limits in Exhibit 3, even as estimated values between MDL and PQL, that is acceptable. As per RFP Part III, Section 3.2.3, Item (2), two links provide information on testing normally used by the Department on a routine basis. The testing identified in Schedule of Prices C and Exhibit 3 are not normally used by the Department on a routine basis.

Question 15: Will requesting changes to the Consulting Agreement be considered non-responsive?

LDEQ's answer: RFP Part IV, Section 4.1 identifies circumstances which will result in proposer disqualification. Requesting changes to the consulting agreement will not automatically result in a proposer being considered non-responsive. Requested changes to the consulting agreement should be noted in the proposal. If the proposal is recommended for tentative selection, negotiations will ensue on non-mandatory contract terms. Negotiations may need approval from the Department Attorney(s) prior to contract signatures. If negotiations are not completed within fifteen (15) business days (as per Appendix A, Proposal Cover Sheet, Item 9), the Department will select the next highest rated proposal for tentative award.

Question 16: Page 13 of the Consulting Agreement is missing. Can this be provided?

LDEQ's answer: Page 13 is included with this Q&A document.

Question 17: If there are no direct subcontracting opportunities available for this contract or suitable certified disadvantaged business identified to fulfill the requirement, if subcontracting of lab services is identified, do we submit Attachment 5 indicating our indirect spending with all disadvantage businesses?

LDEQ's answer: If the use of subcontractor services is not identified in the proposal, but is determined after contract award, the process in Article 30 of the Consulting Services Contract shall be followed, whereas the Contractor shall obtain written Department approval prior to subcontracting any or part of the services. Upon the Department's approval of the addition of subcontractor(s), the Contractor shall resubmit EPA Forms 6100-3 and 6100.4 which will indicate spending or anticipated spending with disadvantaged business(s), as per RFP Attachment 5, Item (2) (c). Regardless of whether or not subcontractors are used (i.e., indicating "N/A" as applicable), the Contractor shall submit Attachment 5, Form A on an annual basis, with the first submittal covering October 2015 through September 2016, as per RFP Attachment 5, Item (2) (a).

d. **Acceptability of Insurers**

All required insurance shall be provided by a company or companies lawfully authorized to do business in the jurisdiction in which the Project is located. Insurance shall be placed with insurers with a A.M. Best's rating of **A-:VI or higher**. This rating requirement may be waived for workers compensation coverage only.

If at any time an insurer issuing any such policy does not meet the minimum A.M. Best rating, the Contractor shall obtain a policy with an insurer that meets the A.M. Best rating and shall submit another Certificate of Insurance as required in the contract.

e. **Verification of Coverage**

Contractor shall furnish the Department with Certificates of insurance reflecting proof of required coverage. The Certificates for each insurance policy are to be signed by a person authorized by that insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. The Certificates are to be received and approved by the Department before work commences and upon any contract renewal thereafter. The Certificate Holder must be listed as follows:

State of Louisiana
Department of Environmental Quality
Financial Services Division
P.O. Box 4303
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4303
Attn: LaGov No. [REDACTED]

In addition to the Certificates, Contractor should submit the declarations page and the cancellation provision endorsement for each insurance policy. The Department reserves the right to request complete certified copies of all required insurance policies at any time.

Upon failure of the Contractor to furnish, deliver and maintain such insurance as above provided, this contract, at the election of the Department, may be suspended, discontinued or terminated. Failure of the Contractor to purchase and/or maintain any required insurance shall not relieve the Contractor from any liability or indemnification under the contract.

f. **Renewal of Insurance**

In the event that the Contractor provides certificates of insurance valid for a period of time less than the term of the contract, said certificates shall be acceptable, however, the Contractor shall be obligated to renew its insurance