

Request for Information (RFI) Response – 7200RFI22R00056

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Recruitment, Hiring, and Administration of Personal Services Contracts (PSC)

Due: April 20, 2022 12:00 p.m. ET (Washington, DC)

Submitted to: BHAPSC@usaid.gov



Submitted by:

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Founded in 2012 / 10 years of experience as a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business • CVE
Certified Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) • Virginia Certified Small Veteran
Owned and SWaM Business • Cage Code: 7LPG7 | DUNS Number: 080176755

Statement of Interest: BrennSys Technology LLC

BrennSys is a customer-oriented, mission-focused contractor firm that provides commercial entities and government agencies flexibility and availability of expertise without the expense and commitment of sustaining in-house staff. Our firm focuses on public-sector staffing specializing in temporary and permanent placement of positions for federal agencies. BrennSys provides project-specific and purpose-built assignments, in addition to long-term and outsourced arrangements. We offer recruiting, security screening, on-boarding, on- and off-site personnel management, benefits and other back-office services so agencies may focus on the mission — with the assurance that its personnel are first-class.

BrennSys is interested in participating in this procurement as a prime contractor; we are expert at providing talent to federal agencies, and are supported by a number of potential subcontract teammates.

Response to Questions

1) Please describe your organization's experience and capabilities to perform the recruitment, hiring, and administration of personnel as it relates to the objectives and tasks outlined in the draft SOW. Please include if your organization has performed these services for Personal Services Contracts (as defined by FAR Subpart 2.101).

BrennSys has extensive experience, since 2010, providing recruitment, hiring, and administration of personnel to federal and other clients. For example, to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the staff we provide are currently working on a contract that runs from September, 2018 until September of 2028. These staff are developing materials to promote public and private awareness of the VA's mission, goals, initiatives and objectives. Other staff we place are working with the National Center for PTSD providing services that include all aspects of creating new media for AboutFace including video and multimedia from pre-production (planning, location scouting, assistance with recruitment of subjects) through production (video- and audio-recording, lighting and set design, etc.) and post-production (editing, mixing, color correct, captioning, audio describes, 508 compliance, etc.).

Another example of our experience is how BrennSys provides outsourced personnel to the Virginia Department of Health. Starting in 2019, we worked with the Office of Emergency Medical Services by providing personnel to assist in the development go tools for sharing resources and information to help first responders deal with the mental health impacts that occur as a result of their experiences on their very stressful jobs. BrennSys outsourced personnel ensured that social media platforms were being appropriately utilized and reached the right audiences when they needed to be there.

BrennSys capabilities include human resource management, such as temp-to-hire. In a temp-to-hire situation, a candidate may be placed permanently after a trial period in a federal agency position. This approach is a useful tool when time is needed to evaluate a candidate's performance before a commitment is made to retain the individual permanently. Temp-to-hire is ideal for a situation where a candidate may have a non-traditional background, or is currently transitioning between professions. This option allows an organization, as well as the candidate, to 'try out' one another with no obligation if either party determines a match has not been made. Conversely, this can lead to a carefully considered placement that creates a successful outcome for both the government body and the candidate.

Outsourced Placements – Outsourced placements offer federal agency's the flexibly to utilize professionals that are employed by BrennSys. These individuals are placed in a federal agency position, but are retained as employees of BrennSys. This option eliminates many of the expenses associated with retaining public sector employees. Previously selected candidates may be placed, or the firm can assist the federal agency through a targeted outreach to locate the right candidate to perform specified work. This option eliminates both the administrative process, and costs associated with the recruitment and selection process.

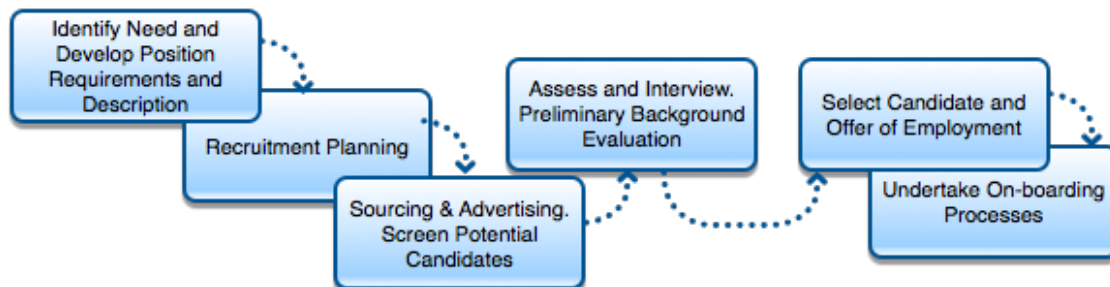
Interim Staffing Solutions for Employers – A solution for high costs associated with placing and retaining public sector employees. The BrennSys approach enables a federal agency to avoid classing on their budget the expense of an employee's pension, medical benefits and unemployment insurance. Administrative costs for recruitment and selection, such as advertising and background investigations, are assumed by BrennSys. Our clients achieve flexibility to utilize staff, as needed, in the dynamic public-sector work environment.

Candidate Benefits at BrennSys – Flexibility in work assignments; placed candidates can work as 'free agents'. Placed candidates can be W2 employees of BrennSys or 1099 contractors, and may be eligible

for medical insurance. We jointly agree to paid time off for long-term placements. Longer term employees can participate in retirement savings (such as Simple IRA), with the potential for matching employer contribution. As a W2 employee of BrennSys, placed candidates are protected by professional liability and workers' compensation insurance. Placed candidates are paid through direct deposit; employer taxes are deducted thus avoiding extra costs associated with working as an Independent contractor — a benefit our staff really like.

BrennSys has not provided personnel under a personal services contract, because of the implicit employer-employee relationship it creates between the Government and the contractor's personnel. Our federal contracts are/have been structured to relieve the government of the burden of personnel management, as well as shield client agencies from the liabilities and costs associated with taking on staff directly. This also has created efficiencies in delivering high-skilled workers on tight deadlines — BrennSys is well-regarded for our rapid-deployment surge support for overseas postings.

Exhibit: The BrennSys Talent Acquisition Process



Recruiting. BrennSys handles recruiting with our dedicated team who, in close coordination with our corporate staff, evaluate and review proposed personnel resumes and application documentation. Collectively, they will identify, vet, qualify, and down select every candidate. The BrennSys team will subsequently review each down selected candidate, conduct final interviews, and determine which candidates to hire. A project's program manager (PM) will make the final hiring decision and ensure candidates conform to their job descriptions as written and meet applicable requirements, qualifications, and experience to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. The PM will be supported by dedicated recruiters who are capable and experienced in responding to the Government's requirements.

The team regularly uses the following job boards and websites where our recruiters can source databases and post our positions to attract candidates: ZipRecruiter, Monster, CareerBuilder, DICE, Clearance Jobs, Corporate Gray, Military Hire, LinkedIn Recruiter, and Indeed. All position postings go to our Veteran portal with a military translator powered by Military.com. We attend several job fairs throughout the year, to include targeted base's career fairs and participate in their Transition Assistance Program (TAP)/Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) classes. We have built significant partnerships with key TAP programs across the nation to ensure we reach those with the necessary military backgrounds.

Employee referrals are another effective way to attract candidates, specifically in the overseas posting community, where we possess a strong "network" based on our leadership's and employees' previous military and foreign service careers. We also have the ability to develop strategic advertising campaigns to help attract qualified candidates and fill difficult positions. We target training centers, military bases, incumbent companies, and social media. These methods are used to attract the right candidates, continuously drive candidates to our Website to apply to our positions and grow our internal database. This not only helps us to fill positions, but it helps us to build our bench support for future vacancies and surge situations.

Our hiring process begins with candidate identification. We use web sources such as LinkedIn, Indeed, ZipRecruiter, ClearanceJobs.com, and Dice. BrennSys is a veteran friendly organization, and as such, we seek out members of the military through transition assistance programs, and military-friendly job fairs.

Our recruiting team performs extensive screening and interviewing procedures, both internally and externally, conducting technical interviews through investigating candidate competencies along with their interpersonal communications and personality. We perform extensive background investigations as part of our recruiting process. We also provide transparency of the process allowing the Government to provide insights into our recruiting methods and keeping them abreast of our open positions recruiting status.

For a client agency, BrennSys understands the Government mission demands a recruiting mechanism that attracts, retains, and maintains a mix of qualified, high-quality personnel who possess the necessary experience and knowledge in their respective disciplines. We staff all our contracts with high performing subject matter experts — some with a variety of security clearance levels. In addition, we support all our contracts and associated personnel with effective management and corporate reach back capabilities. Our team consists of both former military and civilian industry personnel who consistently exceed customer expectations. No matter the requirement, we never sacrifice recruiting standards. This ensures we supply only the most qualified personnel with the right experience for our customer's requirements. This includes our ability to meet technical and security requirements, as well as required certifications. In addition, our Human Resources (HR) processes (which include recruiting and hiring) meet stringent quality certification requirements such as ISO 9001:2015. Keeping a process-centric approach is a significant factor why BrennSys is able to both find and retain top-quality personnel. Tracking all candidates, staff, and former staff in our Candidate Tracking System (CaTS), we ensure compliance with customer-specific program directives and standards. This means we can catalog the skill set of potential workers, where certification requirements must be met and continuously maintained.

CaTS is BrennSys's specialized ***Candidate Applicant Tracking System***, a software tool that is used to handle the recruitment process. It tracks, sorts, handles hundreds or thousands of resumes of the job seekers and applicants. It is an intelligent system to save information, screen resumes to sort according to the skills and requirements of the recruitment team. CaTS lets our team conduct searches for the best candidates to call for interviews. This is accomplished through keywords entered by the recruitment team personnel and candidates themselves. CaTS, an online web-based portal, also manages the entire hiring process in an automated way to provide quick and easy access to human resources for our customers.

Job seekers submit online application forms and the data gets stored in the BrennSys databases of candidates. Later the HR or recruitment team sorts out the applications on the basis of saved information and their requirements, to choose their best candidates to further screen. We use CaTS to schedule meetings or interviews with the candidate, check the references posted by internal teams, test the applicants online for skills matching, and complete paperwork after a new hire using a comprehensive workflow engine.

BrennSys leverages CaTS because job seekers love the online portal approach. It is easy for them to apply online filling the forms with relevant applications that will go to the database of the organization for further screening by the CaTS systems. Faster screening makes the recruitment process quick. So, a job seeker knows he/she is hired or not, very quickly and thus looks forward to joining or searching jobs further quickly. This reduces the frustration among the job seekers and saves them from losing another opportunity. BrennSys uses CaTS to reduce the chance of overlooking or deleting a resume accidentally. So, all the resumes comes forefront for screening through different search mechanisms inside CaTS. And, of course, security of data is higher, as CaTS is cloud based.

The benefits to the Government are myriad — and BrennSys is happy to pass on the savings. Ease of use for both applicants and the employer means the hassle of sending paper applications has been eliminated. Also, it is easy for our recruitment team to get all those applications from great candidates from all over the world through just a few clicks. We also organize applicant data, as CaTS helps save and sort applicant data effectively, for future use. It also can keep track of the relevant data of the applicants regularly during the recruitment process, and later, via email updates. BrennSys uses CaTS to manage the complete recruitment lifecycle from start to end, from finding a resume, screening best possible candidate, schedule an interview and on boarding.

BrennSys has further augmented CaTS with a **Learning Management System** (LMS) that enables us to track skills, provide a schedule for certification and re-certification of staff, and lay out promotion/progress roadmaps with individual customized plans. BrennSys uses our corporate LMS for delivering online training and learning content to employees placed at agencies. This LMS helps onboard new hires, to get them the knowledge and skills required to perform in their roles at federal agencies, and, ultimately, advance faster in their careers. This is a another BrennSys win-win advantage that sets us apart from run-of-the-mill outsourcing agencies.

2) Please describe your organization's existing internal control systems to manage contracts of a similar magnitude using United States Government (USG) funds efficiently and effectively.

BrennSys continually improves our internal control systems to manage contracts very similar to this potential effort. We provide an audit trail for every task and expenditure, mapped to a contract's line items and deliverables. BrennSys understands that the tasks under this potential effort are extensive and require a streamlined and efficient approach to manage personnel and deliverables. Our methodology to meet requirements and exceed acceptable quality levels whenever possible is based on the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®), and refers to the five process steps of project management: initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing. It contains many processes and techniques of project management by which to evaluate or complete the way we run projects for our government clients.

The BrennSys personnel management approach ensures best value is delivered to the Government. BrennSys charges our PM as the single-point-of-contact on the front line of customer interaction. We recognize this as a high profile/impact project that requires support during business hours each working day. Our trained, certified and experienced PM will oversee this effort, and the staff undertaking the various services.

All deliverables are subject to three levels of quality control, based on the processes we will customize in our Quality Control Plan (QCP). We are adept at managing personnel so that end-user and stakeholder interaction with vital systems continue to operate smoothly, whatever the circumstance. To effectively manage and coordinate performance of efforts across the government, we emphasize a top down approach, starting with our PM, who is responsible for ensuring all activities related to managing, coordinating, and executing performance efforts under this contract flow down to the team members assigned for day-to-day execution. Our team members will take direction during weekly meetings held with the PM or from the government and flow those requirements down to the correct discipline, whether it be programmatic, logistics, engineering, or cyber related. Assigned team members coordinate resources from the government as needed to support mission requirements and manage the workflow process described, to ensure work is assigned, completed, reviewed, and correct prior to final submission.

Once a requirement is identified by the government, both the government and our team will assess what is needed and agree to an approach prior to starting the work. The PMP will be updated with tasks and

activities, and we will follow the QCP processes for inspection, validation, compliance checklists, and review prior to submission to the Government.

From a personnel management perspective, our PM will coordinate contractual requirements through our Contracts Team using a variety of automated management tools such as MS Project, MS Teams, and our SharePoint-based Virtual Program Management Office (vPMO) contracts management site. We use automated accounting systems such as Deltek Costpoint to verify, approve, and process invoices, while vPMO and Teams serve as knowledge management, communication, and collaboration tools. Within each tool is embedded workflows and processes with checks/balances that enable progress tracking and quality measures. BrennSys brings additional value to the government because our technical and status reports are factually accurate and complete, reflecting the BrennSys commitment to “white glove” quality, while we adhere to deadlines.

The government interfaces with our PM for all personnel management issues — performance, shortfalls in staffing, replacements (temporary for absences, new hires for vacancies). Our PM works with BrennSys HR to resolve employee issues regarding benefits, training, and labor laws. The PM will engage our recruiters to fill open positions rapidly. Our HR and recruiting team use a tool called Taleo and our applicant tracking system (ATS) to organize and streamline our recruiting process and help to evaluate, screen, and schedule interviews with our PM and leads. Our PM will work with our Security Team, who uses Access Commander, a security management tool, to manage notifications, scheduling, submission, and management of the security clearances across our contracts ensuring 100% compliance with security requirements. We have invested in these management tools and processes to eliminate manual, time consuming, and costly tasks. These tools and processes also allow us to optimize our personnel more efficiently, enabling better projections, and define business processes — all benefits that the Government will derive from partnering with BrennSys.

3) Based on your organization's experience performing the tasks to be performed in order to fulfill the objectives outlined in the draft SOW, please specify the dollar value of implementing the tasks and the period of performance, if applicable.

Upon thorough review of the draft requirements outlined in the provided statement of work, BrennSys has applied our parametric estimating system to come up with a basic order of magnitude cost estimate, presented in the following exhibit. This BOMCE also includes a high level timeline for delivering quality personnel based on what we understand the needs of the Government are. Our methodology is uses the statistical and accuracy-based parametric estimating technique for calculating the time, cost, and resources needed for project success.

Combining historical and statistical data, parametric estimating uses the relationship between variables to deliver accurate estimations, and leads to the numbers we have come up with, in the following table.

Exhibit: BrennSys BOMCE per Contract Year

Task Area	Timeframe	FTEs Required	Hours per Contract Year	Estimated Loaded Rate	Cost
PSC Recruitment	Contact Start - Ongoing	2	3800	\$ 102.00	\$ 387,600.00
PSC Selection, Hiring, and On-boarding	60 days after award until 60 days before end of the contract period	1	1900	\$ 112.00	\$ 212,800.00
PSC Administration and Support	30 days after award until end of the contract period	2	3800	\$ 115.00	\$ 437,000.00
Total per Contract Year					\$1,037,400.00

4) Please describe the type of contract(s) your company has held for similar services as outlined in the draft SOW (i.e., fixed-price, cost-reimbursement, hybrid). What contract type(s) would you recommend for this potential contract and why?

BrennSys has held fixed-price and cost-reimbursement contracts. We recommend a fixed price contract for this procurement as it guarantees the Government the best value, as this model allows the agency predictability about the services provided. We also recommend the government consider a Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan that tracks effectiveness of the personnel the contractor provides to the agency.

5) Please specify if your organization has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy and if so, describe how it is being or has been implemented on current or previous contracts.

The BrennSys Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policy addresses our processes and policies that encourage representation and participation of diverse groups of people, including people of different genders, races and ethnicities, abilities and disabilities, religions, cultures, ages, sexual orientations in our hiring and other contracting endeavors.

BrennSys Technology LLC is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and company's achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability,

political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

All employees of BrennSys have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company-sponsored and participative events. All employees are also required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility. Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with the company's diversity policy and initiatives should seek assistance from a supervisor or HR representative. We have implemented this policy on past and current contracts with great success, bringing on-board a diverse body of personnel who have exceeded customer expectations in terms of skills, expertise, and execution of duties — a testament to the success of making diversity a cornerstone of the BrennSys business model.

6) Please explain if the draft SOW provides sufficient information to understand the tasks to be performed in order to fulfill the objectives outlined in the draft SOW. Please reference the page number and specific section of the draft SOW in the response.

In our opinion, BrennSys believes the draft SOW provides sufficient information for Recruitment, personnel selection, Hiring, and On-boarding, and Administration and Support so that we could write a proposal that meets or exceeds the government's requirements. We understand the objectives are to provide a streamlined process, from identification of a requirement through recruitment and hiring, to security/medical clearance, and then to an eventual start date that will allow BHA to meet its PSC hiring goals and expand its ability to fill critical gaps in staffing. We would propose to provide a market competitive benefits package for any staff hired on behalf of the government, while providing contract management for each individual.

7) Do you have any other feedback or recommendations on the draft SOW? Please reference the page number and specific section of the draft SOW in the response.

Our general feedback would be for the government to tighten requirements around staff oversight. Otherwise, a pitfall might be poor service delivery — which may fall behind schedule or below expectations. We would encourage the government to address requirements for confidentiality and security — which may be at risk in these days of challenges cyber security. One question to consider: is there a lack of flexibility as related to the three tasks? The contract could prove too rigid to accommodate change, leading to management difficulties.