



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

RFI Number:

7200RFI22R00056

Preliminary Program Title:

Recruitment, Hiring, and Administration of
Personal Services Contracts (PSC)

Issuance Date:

April 6, 2022

Response Due Date and Time:

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

Submit Responses To:

BHAPSC@usaid.gov, with the Subject Line:
Response to RFI Number **7200RFI22R00056**
Organization/FirmName

To all Interested Parties:

The United States Government, represented by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) is seeking expressions of interest and organizational capabilities from organizations regarding the possible procurement of a Contract to provide recruitment, hiring and administration of Personal Service Contracts (PSCs). If services are procured, the contractor would recruit and provide administration for PSCs hired to perform crucial administrative, operational, and technical support services in support of USAID/BHA's international disaster response and humanitarian assistance activities and programming. The possible procurement is intended to be a pilot, targeting a limited number of positions which have been difficult to fill given the non-competitive nature of the PSC mechanism.

The intent of this RFI is to conduct market research for planning purposes and to gain a better understanding of the number of qualified and Interested Parties who are able to provide the services described in the attached draft Statement of Work (SOW). The attached draft SOW describes the currently contemplated scope of services and may vary from any final SOW that may be issued. USAID/BHA reserves the right to incorporate any, some, or none of the comments received from this RFI into any subsequent solicitations. The NAICS code contemplated for this requirement is 541611- Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services.

In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 15.209(c), the following clause is incorporated into this RFI:

“FAR 52.215-3 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR SOLICITATION FOR PLANNING PURPOSES (OCT 1997)

(a) The Government does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information solicited except as an allowable cost under other contracts as provided in subsection 31.205-18, Bid and proposal costs, of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(b) Although “proposal” and “offeror” are used in this Request for Information, your response will be treated as information only. It shall not be used as a proposal.

(c) This solicitation is issued for the purpose of gathering information and comments to the draft SOW attached to this document and does not constitute a “Request for Proposals.”

In accordance with FAR 15.201(e), responses to this RFI shall not be portrayed as proposals and will not be accepted by the U.S. Government (USG) to form a binding contract. This RFI is not to be construed as a commitment by the USG to issue any solicitation or ultimately an award on the basis of this RFI, or to pay for any information submitted as a result of this request. Responders are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI. BHA reserves the right to modify the scope and scale of the RFI.

Please note that responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any organization in any subsequent procurement. This RFI is open for submissions from any Interested Parties, including small business, veteran-owned small business, service-disabled veteran-owned small business, HUBZone small business, small disadvantaged business, and women-owned small business concerns.

Submission Instructions

Organizations with the skills and capabilities necessary to perform the work as described in the draft Statement of Work (SOW) attached to this RFI should submit a response by the closing date and time noted on page 1 of this RFI. Submission via email is required; no hard copy delivery will be accepted. E-mail submissions must be sent to BHAPSC@usaid.gov, with the Subject Line: Response to RFI Number **7200RFI22R00056**: Organization/Firm Name. Interested Parties must prepare their submission in English and address the information requested below. Interested Party submissions shall be of no more than seven (7) pages in length, excluding the cover page. Submissions must use 8.5 x 11-inch paper, with each page numbered consecutively, single spaced, 12 point font size, and in MS Word or PDF format.

The Government will not review any information, including attachments, in excess of the seven (7) pages, excluding the cover page. Responses must include the following:

1. Cover Page with Business Information (1 page)

- Organization/firm: name, address, and website address (if any).
- Organization Point of Contact(s): name, title, phone number, address, e-mail address.
- Statement of self-certification of business size and socio-economic status of the organization (e.g., small business, 8(a), HUBZone, etc.), the number of years in business, and affiliate information.
- A brief statement of interest that indicates the organization’s interest in proposing as a prime or sub-contractor.

2. Responses to Questions, not to exceed seven (7) pages:

- 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).

- 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.
- 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.
- 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?
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

BHA is not seeking technical or cost proposals at this time; do not submit a full proposal as it will be discarded. Proprietary information should not be sent. It is the Interested Party's responsibility to monitor SAM.gov for the release of any further information. USAID/BHA will not provide answers to any questions submitted in response to this RFI.

Thank you for your interest in supporting USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Christie Savage
Contracting Officer, M/OAA/BHA

Attachment:

1. Draft Statement of Work

DRAFT - SECTION C - STATEMENT OF WORK

Recruitment, Hiring, and Administration of Personal Services Contracts (PSCs)

C.1. PURPOSE

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) requires a Contract purposed to recruit, hire, and administer personal services contract (PSC) arrangements to perform crucial administrative, operational, and technical support services in support of USAID/BHA's international disaster response and humanitarian assistance activities and programming.

C.2. BACKGROUND

In 2020, the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance was established to streamline USAID humanitarian responses, bringing together the vast expertise and resources of the former USAID Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP). BHA serves as the Agency's lead coordinator for international disaster assistance. Harnessing the expertise and unique capacities of other U.S. Government (USG) entities to facilitate U.S. Government (USG) humanitarian assistance overseas, BHA responds to all types of international disasters, including slow onset disasters such as droughts or famine, natural disasters such as earthquakes or floods, or manmade disasters such as conflict or war. BHA enhances the USG's provision of the full spectrum of humanitarian assistance activities, allows for a more cohesive and efficient approach to disaster preparedness, mitigation, and risk-reduction, and enables communities to recover from, and respond to emergencies on their own.

A large portion of BHA's workforce is composed of Personal Services Contractors (PSCs). BHA currently has over 550 PSCs in its organization, including full-time PSCs in both Washington DC and the field, as well as part-time PSCs who serve in a surge capacity. This cadre of PSCs supports the complete spectrum of humanitarian assistance duties/roles. This includes, but is not limited to, programmatic and regional experts; logisticians and operations personnel; technical experts in humanitarian assistance (HA) sectors (water, sanitation, and hygiene, shelter and settlements, economic recovery and livelihoods, etc.); donor engagement; communications; budget and finance; acquisition and assistance; human resources management; audit, etc. These PSC services are critical to BHA's mission to appropriately and timely administer international disaster response and humanitarian assistance.

Currently, BHA PSCs are solicited, awarded, and onboarded in a timely manner and in compliance with U.S. Government policies and procedures. They support all offices within BHA across all functional areas, including program management, technical expertise, and internal business processes.

BHA's mission requires both a streamlined, integrated day-to-day operational capacity to manage ongoing programs, as well as around-the-clock standby response capacity to address emerging humanitarian needs, shocks, and stresses anywhere in the world.

BHA's programs fall into two conceptual areas:

- 1) *Humanitarian Response*, needs-based humanitarian assistance provided to save lives, alleviate suffering, and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of emergencies endured by the most vulnerable populations; and
- 2) *Early Recovery, Risk Reduction, and Resilience*, activities that contribute to strengthening resilience and to the achievement of sustainable development, assisting populations recovering from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

BHA has seven offices, which include three geographic offices and four functional offices:

The Bureau's three geographic offices are: 1) Office of Africa; 2) Office of Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean; and 3) the Office of the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. Each geographic office designs, provides, and assesses humanitarian assistance for their respective regions, including assistance related to responding to, recovering from, and reducing the risk of man-made and natural disasters, while linking with other USAID investments that build resilience.

BHA's four functional offices are:

- 1) The Office of Global Policy, Partnerships, Programs, and Communications (G3PC) shapes and influences USAID's role within the international humanitarian system; leads engagement on a range of policy, programmatic, and operational issues; and positions the Agency to influence collective response to emergency needs across the globe;
- 2) The Office of Technical and Program Quality (TPQ) leads the Bureau's efforts to provide high quality programmatic and technical leadership, oversight, and guidance. In addition, TPQ leads the Bureau's external engagement with academia and coordinates research to advance the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of humanitarian and multi-year programming;
- 3) The Office of Humanitarian Business and Management Operations (HBMO) is responsible for maintaining 24/7 operability by providing leadership, planning, quality assurance, technical expertise, and process management. HBMO ensures effective stewardship of the Bureau's support services, including workforce planning, staffing, financial management, internal controls, facilities operations and infrastructure; and
- 4) The Office of Field and Response Operations (FARO) leads and manages operational assistance and the purchase and delivery of goods and services in response to declared foreign

disasters and international humanitarian needs in key functional areas, including supply-chain management, procurement, logistics, oversight, and operational coordination with the U.S. military.

BHA's humanitarian experts based overseas and in Washington coordinate with local authorities and USAID counterparts to manage funding and provide oversight to programs implemented overseas through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); international organizations, including United Nations (UN) agencies; contractors; and other organizations. BHA designs and implements humanitarian programs in coordination with the USG interagency, beneficiary populations, host governments, implementing partners, UN agencies, and other donors.

C.3. CURRENT CHALLENGES

There are many challenges BHA faces with its current practice of issuing individual personal services contracts (PSC) that it seeks to solve by issuing a contract to recruit, hire, and administer PSCs. These challenges include the following:

1. Lengthy and Complicated Time-to-Hire: It currently takes BHA 600 days to hire a PSC, from identification of a requirement through recruitment and hiring to security/medical clearance and then an eventual start date. The excessive length of time to issue individual contracts prevents BHA from meeting its hiring goals.

2. Lack of Competitive Benefits Package: PSCs are not U.S. Federal direct-hire employees and do not receive the same benefits package. For example, PSCs are not eligible for benefits governed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), including the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) and the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) and they do not receive 401(k) matching. This prevents the PSC from being a market competitive hiring mechanism against the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations (UN), and other U.S. Government (USG) agencies.

3. Individual Contract Management: BHA spends an inordinate amount of time managing individual PSC contracts, including but not limited to, performing performance evaluations, processing incremental funding and option year actions, and modifying contracts when regulations change. It is costly in terms of staff time (BHA and the Office of Acquisition and Assistance) needed to maintain this requirement and the volume of actions lends itself more easily to errors.

C.4. CONTRACT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this contract is to provide crucial administrative, operational, and technical support services through a Contract for the recruitment, hiring, and administration of personal services contracts (PSC) in support of BHA. A personal service contract is "a contract that, by its express terms or as administered, makes the contractor personnel appear to be, in effect, Government employees" (FAR Subpart 2.101). The Contract would employ individuals under a PSC arrangement, which is intended to create a functional employer-employee relationship between the Government and the individual. Such functional employer-employee

relationship shall be only to the extent necessary for providing the services required under this contract.

The three objectives to be achieved through the Contract are:

Objective 1: 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.

Objective 2: Provide a market competitive benefits package for PSCs.

Objective 3: Provide contract management for each individual PSC.

C.5. SCOPE

The scope of this Contract is to provide support in the recruitment, hiring and administration of Personal Services Contracts (PSCs). Under the Contract, BHA will target up to 30 positions, to be specifically identified by BHA including administrative, information technology (IT), budget, and finance support positions.

PSCs hired must be able to perform inherently governmental functions on behalf of USAID/BHA. All positions must be filled by U.S. citizens with the ability to pass a background check and obtain and maintain the necessary facility and employee security clearance at the Secret level.

USAID/BHA will provide the following to the Contractor:

- Staffing requirements, including workforce planning guidance and expectations
- Scopes of work for PSCs
- Support in selection of PSCs
- Input to performance evaluations for PSCs

The scope of the contract will apply to the following tasks:

- Task 1 - PSC Recruitment
- Task 2 - PSC Selection, Hiring, and Onboarding
- Task 3 - PSC Administration and Support

C.5.1. PSC Recruitment

The Contractor shall directly recruit PSC employees. The Contractor will maintain the capacity to effectively manage multiple complex recruitments simultaneously to provide support commensurate with BHA's large PSC workforce. The Contractor shall provide PSC recruitment services in the following areas, which may include but are not limited to:

C.5.1.1. Develop a Recruitment Strategy

The recruitment strategy will identify the variety of information sources from which candidates will be sought. The strategy describes the recruitment process and advertising/distribution channels to be used. The Contractor shall include diversity outreach activities in recruitment and hiring practices by recruiting highly qualified professionals from a diverse pool of candidates, deliberately conducting outreach to promote the recruitment of underrepresented populations, groups, and communities.

C.5.1.2. Present a Recruitment Plan for Each Open Position

Upon receipt of a PSC requirement, the Contractor will develop a plan for the recruitment. The plan will describe the recruitment process for that position, including associated reimbursable costs. The plan will identify advertising and distribution channels to be used.

C.5.1.3. Provide Assistance in the Development of Solicitations

As PSC requirements are identified, BHA will provide a scope of work (SOW) to the Contractor. The Contractor will review the SOW and develop a solicitation for the position that meets the requirements for posting on the Contractor-maintained recruitment website and other advertising/distributing channels. The Contractor will maintain records of PSC SOWs and solicitations.

C.5.1.4. Develop and Maintain a Recruiting Website

The Contractor will provide and maintain a recruiting website. The recruiting website will include a summary of BHA's mission and structure, PSC requirements and application instructions, and other features and relevant information.

C.5.1.5. Post/Advertise Positions

For all recruitments, the Contractor will advertise the requirement on the Contractor-maintained recruitment website and other advertising/distributing channels.

C.5.1.6. Develop and Maintain an Applicant/Personnel Database

The Contractor shall provide and maintain a database of candidates and interested individuals' applications which meets Federal information system requirements. The Contractor will assume full responsibility for updating and maintaining the database and ensure it maintains compliance with required Federal information system requirements. Applications of all candidates qualified for standardized and newly established positions will be added to the database. Information from the database shall be provided to BHA upon request. The Contractor must provide current reports on qualified candidates and availability as requested by BHA.

C.5.2. PSC Selection, Hiring, and Onboarding

The Contractor must directly manage and support the hiring and onboarding of PSCs by providing the following services, including but not limited to:

C.5.2.1. PSC Selection

The Contractor will receive, acknowledge, and compile applications from interested candidates, screen applications, and conduct reference checks. In coordination with BHA, the Contractor will facilitate and shall document the selection process. In addition to the foregoing, the Contractor will provide services in the following areas, which may include but are not limited to:

- Arranging and conducting interviews with selected candidates. Interviews must have participation from USAID.
- Negotiating the contract with the selected PSC in accordance with USAID/BHAs requirements and the Contractor's human resources policies and procedures.
- Performing a responsibility determination for each PSC prior to hiring, e.g., verifying that the PSC individual is not on the U.S. Department of Treasury's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs.
- Coordinating the security clearance or required HSPD-12 for the selected PSC. The contract cannot be issued until a temporary or final favorable security clearance or access eligibility has been made by the appropriate USAID security office.
- Contacting all applicants regarding their selection status.

C.5.2.2. PSC Hiring and Onboarding

The Contractor shall hire PSCs in accordance with USAID/BHAs staffing requirements and the Contractor's human resources policies and procedures. The Contractor will provide hiring and onboarding services in the following areas, which may include but are not limited to:

- Conducting orientations for new PSCs, including covering PSC responsibilities, roles, and how they function in the US Government structure.
- Coordinating with USAID/BHA on PSC workspace, use of government furnished equipment, and remote access, if applicable.

C.5.3. PSC Administration and Support

The Contractor must directly manage and support compensation and benefits, employee relations, training, and performance for PSCs. The Contractor shall provide the following administration and support services, including but not limited to:

- Comprehensive compensation management and benefits administration
- Comprehensive PSC performance management with input from USAID/BHA

- Manage diplomatic passport and visa requirements, security clearances, medical clearances, and immunizations for PSCs traveling overseas. The Contractor must explain the requirement of a Department of State medical clearance and provide instructions to meet the requirement, Department of State regulations, and submitting the forms to the Department of State.
- Coordinate travel reservations and processing for PSCs traveling overseas, including airline and hotel reservations, managing travel databases, and tracking travel budgets.
- Tracking and monitoring PSC information and required clearances. The Contractor must provide information to USAID/BHA as requested. The information must include, but is not limited to:
 - Availability of funds allocated for each PSC
 - Security clearances and dates of required security clearance actions
 - Medical clearances
 - PSC contract period of performance start and end dates
 - Status of Agency approvals required, as applicable
- Preparing all contract modifications in accordance with Contractor's procurement policies, e.g., incremental funding, extensions, budget revisions, as required, and contract closeout.

C.6. CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP

The Contract is intended to create a functional employer-employee relationship between the Government and the PSC to the extent necessary for providing the services required. The performance of personal services by the individual hired to perform the services under a PSC arrangement are subject to the day-to-day supervision and control by Government personnel. The Contract does not create an employer-employee relationship between the Government and any corporation, partnership, business association, or other party or legal entity with which the individual may be associated.

The USAID Contracting Officer (CO) and Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) will provide technical direction to the Contractor. In addition, Activity Managers may be put in place by USAID to assist with contract management and oversight to specific BHA organizational units.

C.7. GOVERNMENT FURNISHED EQUIPMENT

USAID will provide on-site PSCs with a workstation and appropriate IT equipment, such as a computer and a desk telephone. USAID will provide orientation and training on USAID-specific systems, policies, and procedures particular to the work to be performed by the PSC employee such as network, systems, and applications to which PSCs will have access as a part of their workstation configuration.

C.8. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is for [to be determined] after the effective date of the award. The effective date of award is [to be determined].

C.9. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The primary place of performance for this Contract will be Washington, DC. However, the PSC may be required to provide administrative, operational, and technical support services overseas.

Telework or remote work may be allowed under this Contract in accordance with the contractor's policies and procedures and working with the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and Contracting Officer (CO) to determine positions suitable for telework or remote work.

[END OF SECTION C]