



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question #1

Issue 1 - PBN and CRA Numbers

Background

Section 2.1 (Standard Instructions, Clauses and Conditions) indicates that the all instructions are set out in the Standard Acquisition Clauses and Conditions Manual, [Standard Acquisition Clauses and Conditions \(SACC\) Manual - Buyandsell.gc.ca](#), and that the 2003 (2023-06-08) Standard Instructions - Goods or Services - Competitive Requirements, are incorporated by reference into and form part of the bid solicitation. ([Subsection 1 - Standard Instructions - Buyandsell.gc.ca](#)).

Subsection 1.2 of the Standard Instructions indicates, suppliers are required to have a Procurement Business Number (PBN).

Our company does not currently hold a Procurement Business Number (PBN)

Suppliers may register for a PBN online at Supplier Registration Information. ([Introduction - Supplier Registration Information - Buy and Sell - Public Works and Government Services Canada \(contractscanada.gc.ca\)](#))

The Supplier Registration Information website indicates that, in order to secure a PBN, a potential supplier must first have a Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Business Number (BN), or a Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Services Tax (GST-HST) number, and their Legal Name as registered with CRA.

Issue

Our company has consulted with outside counsel, and has been informed that, even though our company is a US-registered, not-for-profit organization, it is still subject to both of these requirements.

Our company is applying for the numbers. However, our company has been advised that it takes between four and eight weeks to secure these numbers. This would be past the submission date.

Answer #1

On page 6 of the RFP at **PART 2 - BIDDER INSTRUCTIONS** under **2.1 Standard Instructions, Clauses and Conditions**. It says:

At 02 Procurement Business Number:

Delete: "Suppliers are required to"

Insert: "It is suggested that suppliers"

So, the supplier is not required to have a PBN Number.



Question #2

Issue 2 – Provincial Business Registration Numbers

Background

Section 2.5 Applicable Laws mentions contracts will be interpreted under Ontario and that a proposal could opt for another province but doesn't discuss provincial registration.

Issue

Is a bidder required to have provincial registration and a provincial registration number?

This could impact the timeline for proposal preparation.

Answer #2

As this is related to question #1, as per answer #1 it is not required to have a provincial registration number.

Question #3

Background

- Mandatory Criteria **M2** and **M3** demonstrate experience (**within two projects each**) in selected technical areas important to the overall project (fatigue performance-ASTM E647 and fracture toughness ASTM-1820).
- In order to demonstrate that our company possesses the required experience in each area, our company must provide the following information:
 - Project Name and abstract
 - Project Start and Completion Dates
 - Organization Name
 - Contact Name and Contact Information (references which may be contacted to confirm the information provided.)

Issue

Our company has performed a number of projects in these areas and has the requisite experience in these technologies.

- However, as a nonprofit contract research and engineering center, our company projects are typically performed under contract to manufacturers and other industrial companies, industry consortia and trade associations, and government agencies.
- These contract agreements, and our company policy, typically include language confirming confidentiality and/or ownership of the project results.
- In most cases, that language bars our company from releasing information about the project without permission from the project sponsor.
 - This would include References and contact information.



- This would include the type of information requested in the RFP, so our company would have to request permission from each of the project sponsors, which will take a significant amount of time.

Answer #3

In the Mandatory Criteria **M2** to **M6** it says:

In order to demonstrate that their company possesses the required experience, the bidder should provide the following information:...

So, as you can read, it is written the bidder SHOULD provide, not must.

Question #4

Mandatory Criteria **M4** and **M6**

The requirements for Mandatory Criteria **M4** and **M6** are similar to those for Mandatory Criteria **M2** and **M3** except that:

- The experience to be demonstrated is:
 - Post-test fractography with Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)
 - Determining the fracture toughness per ASTM E1820 and fatigue performance per ASTM E647 in pressurized gaseous hydrogen environment.
- The requirement also include providing examples of results of:
 - SEM fractography/characterizations (**M4**)
 - Example results of these measurements (at least one example for each of ASTM E1820 and ASTM E647 tests)

Issue

As with Mandatory Criteria **M2** and **M3**, Mandatory Criteria **M4** and **M6** deliverables request examples of actual project data and results as well. Releasing this information would require permission from the projects sponsor as well.

Answer #4

As per answer #3 it is written the bidder SHOULD provide, not must.

So, you can provide the most complete answer as you can.

Question #5

Are we allowed to bid fee/profit on this work? Typically, fixed price work allows fee/profit.

Answer #5

In the financial bid presentation sheet of the RFP it says:



The all-inclusive firm price to perform the work is Canadian funds, applicable taxes excluded. Any Travel and Living Expenses and other miscellaneous expenses must be included in the firm price.

So, it is an all-inclusive firm price that we are asking for.

Question #6

Deadline for completion of work: assessment for Phase 1 is due by end of fiscal year 2024. We anticipate Fatigue and Fracture testing in H2 to begin earliest by Sept 1, 2024, the timeline outlined in the SoW document for this testing (Phase 1 assessment – Table 3, Tasks 4-7) will likely need to be extended.

Answer #6

All the assessments of phase 1 must be completed by March 31st, 2025 and all the assessments of the optional Phase 2 must be completed by March 31st, 2026.

Question #7

Budget: is there a preset budget based on funding amount (OERD, NRCAN, CanmetMATERIALS, etc) which we should be aware of prior to the preparation of the proposal?

Answer #7

The current allocated budget for Phase 1 is US\$220k and similarly for Phase 2 is US\$220k.

Question #8

Post-test Fractography: please confirm # tests/specimens for this task, and specific pipe/materials to be tested for quote (Phase 1 assessment - Table 3, Task #7)

Answer #8

Phase 1: Complete post-test fractography are required for at least one sample from each of the triplicate test of fatigue and fracture for all the three examined materials as indicated by Table 1, namely at least total six fractography analysis. All other tested specimens must be properly stored and returned in a reasonable time for subsequent assessment at CanmetMATERIALS.

Phase 2: Complete post-test fractography are required for at least one sample from each of the triplicate test of fatigue and fracture for all the three examined materials as indicated by Table 2, namely at least total six fractography analysis. All other tested specimens must be properly stored and returned in a reasonable time for subsequent assessment at CanmetMATERIALS.

Question #9

The RFP stated testing up to 3000 psi in pure hydrogen gas. Since no target hydrogen concentration in the steel materials were provided, we are understanding that the hydrogen charging method and level must produce an equivalent in-situ hydrogen concentration



representative of service up to 3000 psi. Is this clarification correct? (Specifically, alternate hydrogen charging method e.g. cathodic charging in an environmental cell as opposed to hydrogen gas acceptable)

Answer #9

All the required fatigue and fracture assessment must be conducted in pressurized pure hydrogen gas as indicated in the RFP. Aqueous test environments (e.g. cathodic charging) are not accepted.

Question #10

Can the type and approximate size/weight of the fitting be described? Will the fitting be wholly provided or a portion of the fitting?

Answer #10

The grade (448 to 690), wall thickness (15 to 24 mm), diameter and geometry (flat plate or curved segment of a fitting) will be decided subsequently. A portion of a quenched and tempered fitting will be provided.

Question #11

Can alternate fatigue crack growth test parameters outlined in Table 1 be proposed?

Answer #11

The fatigue crack growth tests must be conducted in a pressurized hydrogen gas environment with the test parameters that are indicated in the RFP. Alternate fatigue test parameters (e.g. wave form, frequency, stress ratio, increasing / decreasing load) can be proposed by the contractor but CanmetMATERIALS (NRCAN) has the sole right to accept these proposed alternate parameters or reject and demands the contractor to proceed with the initially agreed test parameters according to the posted RFP.

Question #12

Is there flexibility in the proposed schedule in the RFP, reason we ask is that our Canadian partner, high pressure test capability won't be online until early 2025. We see a couple options to meet the RFP, is NRCAN open to any of them?

Option 1: RFP status quo schedule (no flexibility in schedule) – Our company would propose that all phase 1 testing been done aqueously vice high pressure gaseous because our Canadian partner capability won't be online yet. Phase 2 testing would be as per RFP with high pressure gaseous using our Canadian partner new capability.

Answer #12 – Option 1

The required fatigue and fracture toughness tests must be carried out in pressurized gaseous hydrogen environment as described in the RFP. Aqueous test environments are not accepted.



Option 2: RFP flexible schedule (accept delaying phase 1 completion) – RFP schedule accepts a delay in Phase 1 high pressure gaseous testing until our Canadian partner new capability is online in early 2025 and with all phases 2 testing completed as per RFP in our Canadian partner new capability.

Answer #12 – Option 2

Upon the contract award, the assessments must be started without any delay and according to what is required by the initial RFP and milestone. The delay to 2025 is not accepted.