

ASTRO RFI #2 Questions:

October 15, 2019

Draft Section C:

Q1: As the Draft Section C is currently written, there appears to be a conflict between Section C.4 and Section C.6. Section C.4 seems to say that ancillary support services are specifically allowed to be performed on ASTRO by virtue of being "integral and necessary to complete a total integrated solution under a requirement within the scope of ASTRO." Section C.6 specifically excludes ancillary support services, but refers to Section C.4 for the definition of ancillary support services - which leads to a circular reasoning situation.

A: There is no conflict. Ancillary services are allowed when integral and necessary as allowed in C.4. However, an ancillary service cannot be the predominate scope of a task order, which is what C.6 prohibits. For example, creating a slide deck may be an ancillary service to a task order for aerial surveying, but the task order cannot be solely for the creation of slide decks.

Q2: Para C1, Background - Please clarify the intended definition and applicability of the anticipated "pools" versus separate MA-IDIQ contracts, as discussed in Para C.1, Background .

A: Pools are separate contracts. We intend to award a number of different Pools (with a number of contractors in each Pool) under the overall family of contracts called ASTRO.

Q3: In our support for various C5ISR missions, the government requires the purchase of hardware in prototype development, R&D, field operational testing, upgrades and sustainment. Mission support may also require small limited production runs following field testing. Given the proposed scope of ASTRO supporting COCOMs in the operation and maintenance of ISR missions, will ASTRO provide for significant material/equipment purchases to provide full mission support?

A: Yes, ancillary support products are allowed when integral and necessary in accordance with Section C.5.

Q4: In section 2.2.13, item 15 refers to "Tank Repair and Maintenance". Are the referenced tanks meant to be tanks, void, openings, or is it referring to tanks as in M1A2 Abrams?

A: The term tanks in this section refers to military ground platforms like the Abrams, Hercules, Wolverine, Bradley, Paladin, Strykers, etc.

Q5: If 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2 are focused on data gathering and analytics, it is a bit confusing as to why areas such as AI, Big Data, Machine Learning, Machine Vision, Modeling + Simulation, Neural Networks, and other data science and AI focused task areas are not also under 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2.

A: 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2 are operational activities. Data science is behind operational activities like data analysis, but using Big Data as an example, Big Data (or any of the data sciences) is not an operational activity in and of itself.

Q6: It is not immediately clear the scope difference between 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2 and why there was a separation needed there. It seems that both are focused on the core technology capability of data gathering and data analysis. If the government could articulate more explicitly why that distinction is needed, that would be helpful to vendors in making decisions as to how to provide support.

A: 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2 are both operational activities. 2.2.1.1 identifies operational activities associated with ISR (Data gathering and analysis). 2.2.1.2 identifies operational activities that are NOT ISR. For example, using drones to detect and locate wildfires is an ISR activity as defined in the contract and would belong under 2.2.1.1. Putting out those fires with manned and/or unmanned systems is NOT an ISR activity, but it is an activity within scope to satisfy Combatant Command missions and would belong under 2.2.1.2.

Structure:

Q1: Is it anticipated that ASTRO will echo the OASIS Pool structure, i.e., will it have SB and U contracts with pools related to size standards and/or NAICS?

A: No. ASTRO may only be used for task orders placed by FEDSIM or other GSA AAS individuals specifically authorized to use the contracts for requirements exceeding \$100 Million. Accordingly, there will be no small business set-aside or Government-wide program at this time.

Q2: Will there be small business set-aside under the contract? If so, what is the expected %?

A: No.

Q3: Will the contract be an OTA (Other Transaction Agreement) or under normal FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulations)?

A: Ordering under IDIQ contracts are subject to FAR Part 16 ordering procedures, which are some of the most flexible and streamlined ordering procedures available to the federal government.

Duration:

Q1: What will the contract duration be?

A: Unknown at this time. This issue will depend on the results of the market research.

Evaluation Criteria and Source Selection:

Q1: Will companies need to bid to be included in the ASTRO family of IDIQ contracts?

A: Yes.

Q2: Will companies need to achieve a score to be accepted into the ASTRO family of IDIQ contracts?

A: There is no set score that must be achieved. Scores will be evaluated and then competitively compared to other proposals and the highest scoring companies will win contracts. The number of contracts and number of pools is yet to be determined, but will be vetted with Industry as part of our market research efforts.

Q3: What factors will be used to self-score?

A: The evaluation factors and score system are yet to be determined, but will be vetted with Industry as part of our market research efforts.

Q4: How will an acceptable score be determined?

A: There is no such thing as an acceptable score. If the solicitation states that 40 vendors will be selected for a given pool, then companies with the top 40 evaluated scores from proposals received will receive contracts regardless of what those scores are.

Q5: Can the ASTRO team provide a timeline as to when they plan to release the evaluation factors that will be used for onboarding?

A: We plan on releasing a draft pool structure, as well as a draft of the evaluation factors and self scoring sheet for Industry input in the Fall.

Miscellaneous:

Q1: Is this a new requirement or an existing requirement?

A: This is a new contract concept. There will likely be existing FEDSIM requirements that will be re-competed under ASTRO as well as new requirements that come in.

Q2: Could the Government provide labor categories and estimated labor hour?

A: Labor categories will be provided with the issuance of the full draft solicitation expected to be released this Fall. There are no estimated labor hours as there is no specific requirement being performed. That sort of information would be tied to individual task orders once the contract is in place.

Q3: This is a big and complex IT service requirement, how can an IT company like us with intensive commercial experiences compete on this requirement?

A: According to the Government definition of IT, this is NOT an IT service contract. However, commercial projects will be allowed in the evaluation scheme.

Q4: Are there any specific requirements about personnel, level of security clearance?

A: No, not at the master contract level. These are requirements that are likely to apply at the task order level.

Q5: Is FCL required for ASTRO contract?

A: Not required, but likely to be included in the point-based evaluation scheme.

Q6: Will GSA or other agency sponsor for FCL?

A: There will be no sponsoring of FCL for the purposes of this source selection.

Q7: How many Task Orders are projected per year?

A: 20 or more

Q8: Can you define how many small and how many large Task Orders?

A: As the minimum order threshold is anticipated to be \$100 Million, there will be no small task orders.

Q9: What are the various NAICS codes being utilized?

A: There are numerous NAICS codes that are covered by the scope of ASTRO. A draft Pool structure and NAICS alignment will be released for Industry feedback in the Fall.

Q10: What is the projected dollar values of individual task orders?

A: The minimum order threshold is anticipated to be \$100 Million. However, task orders may be of significantly higher dollar value than the minimum.
