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# Decision

**Matter of:** Koniag Technology Solutions, LLC

**File:** B-421937

**Date:** December 7, 2023

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## DIGEST

Protest challenging the evaluation of the protester's quotation is denied where the record demonstrates that the evaluation was reasonable and consistent with the terms of the solicitation.

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## DECISION

Koniag Technology Solutions, Inc. (KTS), a small disadvantaged business of Chantilly, Virginia, protests the establishment of a blanket purchase agreement (BPA) with AccelGov, LLC, under request for quotations (RFQ) No. 88310323Q00038, issued by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to provide the agency's enterprise-wide information technology (IT) services. The protester challenges the agency's evaluation of its quotation and resulting selection decision.

We deny the protest.

## BACKGROUND

The agency issued the RFQ on May 15, 2023, under the General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) Information Technology – IT Services, Category 54151S, Information Technology Professional Services contract.

Agency Report (AR), Tab 4, RFQ at 2; AR, Tab 9, Vendor Selection Decision at 3.<sup>1</sup> The RFQ, set aside for small business and issued under Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) subpart 8.4, sought quotations to establish a single-award BPA with a vendor to perform the agency's enterprise-wide IT services, referred to as NARA's Information Technology and Telecommunications Support Services (NITTSS) contract. RFQ at 2, 6; Contracting Officer's Statement (COS) at 2. The solicitation anticipated establishing a BPA consisting of a base year and four 1-year option periods, and contemplated issuing orders against that BPA on a fixed-price, time-and-materials, or hybrid basis. RFQ at 4. The total not-to-exceed ceiling value for this BPA is \$99 million. *Id.*

Award would be made on a best-value tradeoff basis, considering the following four evaluation factors: (1) technical understanding and approach; (2) management and quality control; (3) relevant past performance; and (4) price. *Id.* at 52. The three non-price (technical) factors were of equal importance, and when combined, were more important than price. *Id.*

The agency received quotations from six vendors prior to the RFQ's June 14 submission deadline. COS at 2. In assessing the quotations, the agency evaluation team (ET) documented their evaluation conclusions using written narratives that identified strengths, weaknesses, significant weaknesses, and deficiencies. AR, Tab 9, Vendor Selection Decision at 3-97. The contracting officer, as the source selection authority (SSA), conducted an independent review of the quotations, as well as reviewing the ET's evaluation findings and recommendations. *Id.* at 4-5, 17-18. Ultimately, the SSA concluded that AccelGov's quotation, with an evaluated price of approximately \$41M, provided the best value to the government, considering the evaluation factors, and established the BPA with AccelGov on August 21. *Id.* at 7, 17-18.

The agency notified KTS of its selection decision on August 22, and later provided a brief explanation of the decision on August 29. Protest at 4. This protest followed.

## DISCUSSION

The protester challenges the agency's evaluation of KTS's technical quotation. Protest at 4-5. Specifically, the protester contests the agency's assessment of a deficiency under the management and quality control factor related to the experience of KTS's service desk manager.<sup>2</sup> *Id.* Had the agency reasonably evaluated the protester's

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<sup>1</sup> The agency amended the RFQ three times. Citations to the RFQ are to the version found at AR, Tab 4. References to page numbers in the agency report are to the Adobe PDF document page numbers.

<sup>2</sup> The agency also assessed a separate weakness to KTS's quotation under the management and quality control factor, and two additional weaknesses under the relevant past performance factor. AR, Tab 9, Vendor Selection Decision at 72, 75-76. The protester, however, does not challenge those evaluation findings.

quotation, KTS argues, the firm would have been selected for the BPA award. *Id.* at 6. The agency defends its evaluation and argues that it reasonably assessed the deficiency, and that NARA otherwise evaluated KTS's quotation consistent with the RFQ's terms. Memorandum of Law (MOL) at 7-9. We have considered all the arguments and issues raised, and we find no basis on which to sustain the protest.<sup>3</sup>

The evaluation of a vendor's quotation is a matter within the agency's discretion. *OBXtek, Inc.*, B-415258, Dec. 12, 2017, 2017 CPD ¶ 381 at 6. Where, as here, an agency issues an RFQ to FSS vendors under FAR subpart 8.4 and conducts a competition for the establishment of a BPA, we will review the record to ensure that the agency's evaluation was reasonable and consistent with the solicitation's terms and applicable procurement laws and regulations. *Applied Insight, LLC*, B-421221, B-421221.3, Jan. 20, 2023, 2023 CPD ¶ 33 at 6-7. A protester's disagreement with the agency's judgment, without more, does not establish that an evaluation was unreasonable. *Technology & Telecomms. Consultants, Inc.*, B-413301, B-413301.2, Sept. 28, 2016, 2016 CPD ¶ 276 at 4.

#### Deficiency

At issue is a deficiency the agency assessed to KTS's quotation under the management and quality control factor. The deficiency was based on the agency's conclusion that KTS's service desk manager lacked the requisite level of experience. The solicitation provided a statement of objectives (SOO) for the first call order, which would be evaluated as part of the technical quotations. RFQ at 68-98. The SOO required vendors to identify seven key personnel positions, including a service desk manager, as part of the evaluation. *Id.* at 78-79. The RFQ required that a vendor's service desk manager have a minimum of "10 years' experience managing a service desk." *Id.* at 78. Under this evaluation factor, the RFQ instructed vendors to submit formal resumes

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<sup>3</sup> The protester also argued that, considering AccelGov's much lower quoted price, the awardee's quotation must have included either a lower level of effort or unqualified personnel. Protest at 6. Based on price alone, the protester contended the agency must have unreasonably evaluated AccelGov's quotation. *Id.* Before submission of the agency report, NARA requested that we dismiss this allegation as speculative and lacking a valid basis of protest. Req. for Dismissal at 7-9. Our Bid Protest Regulations require that a protest include a detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds for the protest, and that the grounds stated be legally sufficient. 4 C.F.R. §§ 21.1(c)(4), (f). These requirements contemplate that protesters will provide, at a minimum, either allegations or evidence sufficient, if uncontradicted, to establish the likelihood that the protester will prevail in its claim of improper agency action. *CSR Enters., Inc.*, B-419853, B-419853.8, Aug. 19, 2021, 2021 CPD ¶ 285 at 5. Here, KTS's allegation failed to provide any evidence or support to substantiate the firm's claim that the awardee proposed fewer or unqualified personnel, and we dismissed this protest ground as speculative. GAO Notice of Ruling on Req. for Dismissal at 2; 4 C.F.R. § 21.5(f); see *International Ctr. for Language Studies, Inc.--Recon.*, B-418916.2, Sept. 9, 2020, 2020 CPD ¶ 294 at 4.

providing a “detailed employment history” for all key personnel candidates. *Id.* at 48. The agency would evaluate the “suitability of the Vendor’s management and personnel,” including an evaluation of the submitted key personnel resumes. *Id.* at 52.

In reviewing KTS’s quotation, the evaluators found that the firm’s proposed service desk manager had only five years of “experience managing service desks,” thereby failing to satisfy the RFQ’s 10-year requirement. AR, Tab 9, Vendor Selection Decision at 72. The ET, therefore, assessed a deficiency to KTS’s quotation, which, as discussed below, rendered the quotation ineligible for award. *Id.* at 9. After reviewing the ET’s consensus evaluation, the SSA agreed with the deficiency based on the finding that the service desk manager did not possess the minimum 10 years of experience managing a service desk. *Id.* at 17.

The protester argues that the assessed deficiency was contradicted by the contents of the candidate’s resume. Protest at 4-5. While not disputing that the RFQ required that a vendor’s service desk manager have 10 years of experience managing service desks, the protester instead points to language in the provided resume generally stating that the candidate has 15 years of experience performing “Service Desk management.” *Id.* (citing AR, Tab 8, KTS Quotation at 88).

Based on our review of the record, we have no basis to question the agency’s conclusion that KTS’s service desk manager lacked the experience required by the RFQ. When evaluating the individual’s resume, the agency considered not only the resume’s general statement of compliance with the RFQ’s experience requirement, but also reviewed the candidate’s specific descriptions of his previous work. MOL at 8. We find nothing objectionable with that approach. *Consummate Comput. Consultants Sys., LLC*, B-410566.2, June 8, 2015, 2015 CPD ¶ 176 at 6 (finding reasonable an agency’s determination that although resumes restated the RFQ’s qualification requirements, the accompanying work histories did not demonstrate the key personnel had the required qualifications). Here, the evaluators determined that the individual only possessed five years of experience managing a service desk--short of the RFQ’s 10-year requirement--by crediting the candidate with one year of experience serving as the agency’s current service desk manager, as well as four years in analogous team lead experience. MOL at 8. AR, Tab 9, Vendor Selection Decision at 72.

A review of the candidate’s resume supports the agency’s calculation of five years’ experience. The resume explained that the individual has been the agency’s current service desk manager since 2022, or a period of one year, during which he was “[r]esponsible for managing the performance of an IT customer support team of 40 staff.” AR, Tab 8, KTS Quotation at 88. While none of his other positions were specifically identified as a service desk manager, the individual had also previously served a period of four years (2018 - 2022) as a team lead, a position similarly described as leading an “IT customer support team of 12 staff.” *Id.* at 88-90. The candidate’s other position descriptions included acting as an “informal mentor” and performing various IT and desktop support services--none of which referenced managing a service desk or “IT customer support team.” *Id.* at 89-90.

The protester suggests that the agency's evaluation simply looked at the position titles listed in the resume; the record, however, reflects that the agency looked beyond those titles and considered the actual duties performed, crediting the individual with additional experience in the process. AR, Tab 9, Vendor Selection Decision at 72. Consequently, we find nothing unreasonable with the agency's assessment in this regard.<sup>4</sup> *AmVet Techs., LLC*, B-415150.2, B-415150.3, June 5, 2018, 2018 CPD ¶ 202 at 3-5 (concluding agency reasonably assessed a deficiency where resume showed program manager candidate lacked the required minimum experience).

### Remaining Challenge

As noted above, the solicitation required vendors to submit formal resumes for all key personnel candidates. RFQ at 48, 78. A review of the solicitation shows that the provision of key personnel meeting the experience requirements established by the SOO was a material requirement of the RFQ. Under the management and quality control factor, the solicitation advised that the agency would "assess whether the Vendor exhibits adequate management capability and effective quality control procedures to accomplish the overall objectives of the prospective BPA order" by evaluating "the Vendor's key personnel resumes, draft Quality Control Plan, Staffing Plan, and draft Transition-In Plan." RFQ at 52.

Clearly stated solicitation requirements are considered material to the needs of the government, and a quotation that fails to conform to the material terms and conditions of the solicitation is considered unacceptable and may not form the basis for award. *Kearney & Co., PC*, B-420331, Feb. 4, 2022, 2022 CPD ¶ 56 at 10. Where, as here, a solicitation states that the qualifications of key personnel will be evaluated, and a quotation fails to demonstrate that key personnel hold qualifications that the solicitation requires them to possess, the quotation may be evaluated as unacceptable. *Deloitte Consulting, LLP*, B-416882.4, Jan. 6, 2020, 2020 CPD ¶ 21 at 6.

Here, KTS's quotation failed to meet this material requirement of the solicitation, and its quotation, therefore, could not form the basis for award. *Kearney & Co., PC*, *supra*. Because we conclude the agency's evaluation of the protester's key personnel was

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<sup>4</sup> Moreover, to the extent KTS's quotation lacked clarity regarding the nature of duties performed, it is a vendor's responsibility to submit a well-written quotation, with adequately detailed information that clearly demonstrates compliance with the solicitation requirements and allows for a meaningful review by the procuring agency. *Sigmattech, Inc.*, B-410933, Mar. 18, 2015, 2015 CPD ¶ 110 at 7. This principle is no less important where a solicitation requires the submission of resumes to demonstrate the ability or experience of key personnel. *Sevatec, Inc.*, B-405681, Dec. 9, 2011, 2011 CPD ¶ 273 at 6. A firm that does not affirmatively demonstrate the merits of its quotation risks rejection of its quotation or risks that its quotation will be evaluated unfavorably, as was the case here. *Security Mgmt. & Integration, Inc.*, B-409463, Apr. 3, 2014, 2014 CPD ¶ 120 at 3.

reasonably, KTS is not an interested party to challenge the agency's selection decision. *Management Sys. Int'l, Inc.; Blumont Eng'g Sols., Inc.*, B-418080 *et al.*, Jan. 9, 2020, 2020 CPD ¶ 24 at 9 (dismissing remaining allegations where reasonably assessed deficiency rendered proposal ineligible for award). That is, KTS would not be in line for award, and thus, lacks the requisite economic interest to maintain its protest of the remaining issues. *Computerized Facility Integration LLC, a Newmark Co.*, B-420865, Sept. 28, 2022, 2022 CPD ¶ 245 at 7. Consequently, we need not address the remaining challenge to the agency's selection decision.

The protest is denied.

Edda Emmanuelli Perez  
General Counsel