

VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER
PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT No. VBOC-2016-05
Q&A SESSION
JUNE 16, 2016

1. How many pages can the Technical Proposal be?

Answer:

Your technical proposal should be no longer than 20 pages. While there is no page limits cited in the program announcement, we expect you to use your professional judgment and submit a technical proposal that is well-written, concrete and succinct.

2. How many pages can the Attachments and Exhibits be?

Answer:

While there is no limit on the number of attachments/exhibits or the pages, we ask that you use your professional judgment in reference to attachments and exhibits and don't inundate the evaluators with too many documents. Again be as succinct as possible.

3. What font should be used as well as what size should the font be and margin measurements?

Answer:

Again use your professional judgment keeping in mind that the font should be legible and easy to read and standard margins should be used—no less than 1 inch.

4. Is the technical proposal to be single or double spaced? If doubled, can tables and charts be single spaced?

Answer:

See answers to questions 2 and 3.

5. Can tables and charts have smaller font size (i.e. 10 point)?

Answer:

See answers 2, 3, and 4

6. What Indirect Rate may we request as part of the proposal?

Answer:

If you have a current approved indirect cost rate agreement, you may enter that rate in your budget and attach a copy of your current rate agreement. If your rate has expired, you may enter the old rate as a 'place holder' and attach your letter to or from your cognizant agency stating that a new rate proposal has been submitted; however, if you are funded, you may not charge any funds from that indirect cost rate (placeholder) until the new rate has been established. At that time, a budget modification may be processed to enter the new rate and at that time, cost may be charged against that rate. If you have never had an indirect cost rate, you may enter what is referred to a 10 percent de minimis rate without any documentation to support that rate. It is important that any cost paid from this rate cannot be charged as a direct cost. You may keep this rate as long as you wish, but only if you have never had an indirect cost rate. At any time, when you have an indirect cost rate developed, you can then replace the 10% rate with that new approved rate. If the new approved rate is below 10%, there will no requirement to reimburse the federal government the difference. Additionally, if you replace that rate with an approved rate that is higher than the 10%, you shall not be able to retroactively charge that new rate to the beginning of the fiscal year. The new rate will become effective on the date of the modification and will be in effect until that rate agreement expires.

7. Do you need to be an established business to qualify for this?

Answer:

Yes, the organization has to be established and can demonstrate it has prior knowledge and the expertise needed to assist veteran small business owners and entrepreneurs start, manage and grow successful, solvent small firms, to include number of business starts, jobs created/retained, contracts awarded, and loans approved. Furthermore, only established businesses/organizations have access to grant/cooperative agreements opportunities on grants.gov.

8. Can a new nonprofit organization apply for this grant, if the purpose of the foundation is to house, employ, and train homeless veterans and try to transition them into living on their own again?

Answer:

Nonprofits that can demonstrate past performance in providing entrepreneurship counseling and training to veteran, service-disabled veteran, and Reserve Component members that has resulted in the startup of new businesses, creation/retention of jobs, secured loans and resulted in the award of contracts may apply.

9. How much involvement are VBOCs expected to provide in support of B2B trainings?

Answer:

VBOCs are expected to participate 100 percent in all B2B trainings within the centers' respective states and 50 percent outside the state.

10. Section 5.3 (3) – Program Director – As this is titled an “Initial Phase” grant, does the Program Director need to already be on staff within the organization, or, can the project plan include the filling of that position?

Answer:

The project may include filling the director's position; however, be aware that the VBOC is required to be operational within 30 days of the issuance of the award. This means a director must be identified and hired within that time frame, in addition to following hiring procedures as required by the Cooperative Agreement policies