

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

RFP – Digital Substation Technology – Kazakhstan Electricity Grid Operating Company (KEGOC)

QUESTION: Is this project restricted to US companies only?

ANSWER: No, this competition is open to U.S. and international consultants.

QUESTION: Can we team up with consultants or other partners to do the study?

ANSWER: Yes, teaming with other firms is allowed.

QUESTION: Does USEA assist in matching companies with consultants?

ANSWER: No, USEA does not assist in matching companies with consultants.

QUESTION: If we do not participate in the RFP for the study, could we still bid on the project once it is released?

ANSWER: USEA will not be involved in implementing a digital substation technology for KEGOC beyond the Scope of Work described in the RFP. Therefore, we cannot comment on bidders' eligibility or any other issues related to that project.

QUESTION: In USEA's experience does the study company in most cases get awarded the eventual project?

ANSWER: We do not have enough experience with this issue to provide a definitive answer.

QUESTION: Could we team up with a Kazakh company to do the study on the ground? Are there any restrictions on this?

ANSWER: There are no teaming restrictions. The only organizations not eligible are those subject to OFAC regulations (<https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/>) and those that are barred from working with the U.S. Government (a full list can be found on the System for Award Management, <https://sam.gov/SAM/>).

QUESTION: With reference to the following paragraph under Evaluation Criteria - "Selection of an offer for a subcontract award will be based on an evaluation of proposals against qualifications, subject matter expertise, technical approach and budget justification. Proposals shall first be evaluated from a technical standpoint (qualifications, subject matter expertise and technical approach) without regard to proposed budget justification. For those proposals determined to be technically acceptable, budget justification will be evaluated." - it shows that this RFP is looking for quality performance in a subcontractor. If this is correct, why is the evaluation criteria 30% for Cost, and the Technical approach (quality) only 25%?

ANSWER: In our opinion, quality of a subcontractor's performance cannot be determined by the technical approach alone, and that is why we also evaluate proposals for a subcontractor's experience with similar projects and subject matter expertise. These three criteria – experience, subject matter expertise and technical approach – amount to 70% of the total score, which, in our opinion, is sufficient to ensure quality of a proposal. Furthermore, as this consultancy is

funded by the U.S. Government, costs must be reasonable and interested bidders should strive to provide best cost value to USEA and USAID in terms of high-quality results that meet objectives of this RFP in the most effective manner.

QUESTION: Is it the intention to, in addition to “suggesting a KEGOC substation to host a pilot application”, also design and/or install a pilot as part of the scope of this procurement?

ANSWER: No. This consultancy will not include any design or installation activities for a pilot project.

QUESTION: Can a manufacturer (technology supplier) participate in this bid either as prime or sub-contractor?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: If a manufacturer (technology supplier) participates in this bid, will the supplier be disqualified for follow-on projects potentially related to this consultancy?

ANSWER: USEA will not be involved in implementing a digital substation technology for KEGOC or any other follow-up projects beyond the Scope of Work described in the RFP. Therefore, we cannot comment on bidders’ eligibility or any other issues related to future projects potentially related to this consultancy.

QUESTION: Will teaming with a local consultant be required?

ANSWER: No.

QUESTION: Can a sub-contractor participate in more than one bid with different prime bidders?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Does USAID plan to fund a follow-up activity with KEGOC resulting from this feasibility study RFP?

ANSWER: We have no information regarding USAID’s future funding plans for KEGOC. As of today, we are unaware of any plans by USAID to fund any follow-up activities with KEGOC resulting from this digital substation technology project.

QUESTION: Does USEA plan on providing support in terms of identifying local counterparts at KEGOC for this project and setting up key meetings?

ANSWER: Yes, USEA will serve as a liaison and provide all required assistance with setting up meetings and other activities.

QUESTION: Does USEA have any background information or reports from previous work regarding KEGOC’s readiness to implement a digital substation program?

ANSWER: Unfortunately, we do not.

QUESTION: Does USEA expect the consultant to prepare reports in Task 4 based on actual bids or are pro forma cost estimates acceptable?

ANSWER: Pro forma cost estimates will be acceptable.