

(b) *Statement of work/Specifications.* Statements of work or specifications must define the requirement and should, in most instances, include qualifications or limitations such as time limits for delivery of service, medical certification or credentialing restrictions, and small business or other socio-economic preferences. The contracting officer may include any other such terms as the contracting officer deems appropriate for each specific acquisition.

(c) *Documentation.* Without regard to FAR 13.106–3(b), 13.501(b), or 15.406–3, the contract file must include:

(1) A brief written description of the procedures used in awarding the contract;

(2) The market research, including the determination that the acquisition involves health-care resources;

(3) The number of offers received; and

(4) An explanation, tailored to the size and complexity of the acquisition, of the basis for the contract award decision.

(d) *Time for receipt of quotations or offers.* (1) Without regard to FAR 5.203, contracting officers shall set a reasonable time for receipt of quotations or proposals in requests for quotations (RFQs) and solicitations.

(2) Without regard to FAR 15.208 or 52.212–1(f), quotations or proposals received after the time set forth in an RFQ or request for proposals (RFP) may be considered at the discretion of the contracting officer if determined to be in the best interest of the Government. Contracting officers must document the rationale for accepting quotations or proposals received after the time specified in the RFQ or RFP. This paragraph (d)(2) shall not apply to RFQs or RFPs if alternative evaluation techniques described in 873.111(e)(1)(ii) are used. This paragraph (d)(2) does not apply to invitations for bid (IFBs).

(e) *Cancellation of procurements.* Without regard to FAR 14.404–1, any acquisition may be canceled by the contracting officer at any time during the acquisition process if cancellation is determined to be in the best interest of the Government.

873.110 Solicitation provisions.

(a) As provided in 873.109(d), contracting officers shall insert the provision at 852.273–70, Late offers, in all requests for quotations (RFQs) and requests for proposals (RFPs) exceeding the micro-purchase threshold.

(b) The contracting officer shall insert a provision in RFQs and solicitations, substantially the same as the provision at 852.273–71, Alternative negotiation techniques, when either of the

alternative negotiation techniques described in 873.111(e)(1) will be used.

(c) The contracting officer shall insert the provision at 852.273–72, Alternative evaluation, in lieu of the provision at 52.212–2, Evaluation—Commercial Items, when the alternative negotiation technique described in 873.111(e)(1)(ii) will be used.

(d) When evaluation information, as described in 873.112, is to be used to select a contractor under an RFQ or RFP for health-care resources consisting of commercial services or the use of medical equipment or space, the contracting officer may insert the provision at 852.273–73, Evaluation—health-care resources, in the RFQ or RFP in lieu of FAR provision 52.212–2.

(e) As provided at 873.113(f), if award may be made without exchange with vendors, the contracting officer shall include the provision at 852.273–74, Award without exchanges, in the RFQ or RFP.

(f) The contracting officer shall insert the clauses at FAR 52.207–3, Right of First Refusal of Employment, and at 852.207–70, Report of employment under commercial activities, in all RFQs, solicitations, and contracts issued under the authority of 38 U.S.C. 8151–8153 which may result in a conversion, from in-house performance to contract performance, of work currently being performed by Department of Veterans Affairs employees.

873.111 Acquisition strategies for health-care resources.

Without regard to FAR 13.003 or 13.500(a), the following acquisition processes and techniques may be used, singly or in combination with others, as appropriate, to design acquisition strategies suitable for the complexity of the requirement and the amount of resources available to conduct the acquisition. These strategies should be considered during acquisition planning. The contracting officer shall select the process most appropriate to the particular acquisition. There is no preference for sealed bid acquisitions.

(a) *Request for quotations.* (1) Without regard to FAR 6.1 or 6.2, contracting officers must solicit a sufficient number of sources to promote competition to the maximum extent practicable and to ensure that the purchase is advantageous to the Government, based, as appropriate, on either price alone or price and other factors (e.g., past performance and quality). RFQs must notify vendors of the basis upon which the award is to be made.

(2) For acquisitions in excess of the SAT, the procedures set forth in FAR part 13 concerning RFQs may be

utilized without regard to the dollar thresholds contained therein.

(b) *Sealed bidding.* FAR part 14 provides procedures for sealed bidding.

(c) *Negotiated acquisitions.* The procedures of FAR parts 12, 13, and 15 shall be used for negotiated acquisitions, except as modified in this part.

(d) *Multiphase acquisition technique.*

(1) *General.* Without regard to FAR 15.202, multiphase acquisitions may be appropriate when the submission of full proposals at the beginning of an acquisition would be burdensome for offerors to prepare and for Government personnel to evaluate. Using multiphase techniques, the Government may seek limited information initially, make one or more down-selects, and request a full proposal from an individual offeror or limited number of offerors. Provided that the notice notifies offerors, the contracting officer may limit the number of proposals during any phase to the number that will permit an efficient competition among proposals offering the greatest likelihood of award. The contracting officer may indicate in the notice an estimate of the greatest number of proposals that will be included in the down-select phase. The contracting officer may down-select to a single offeror.

(2) *First phase notice.* In the first phase, the Government shall publish a notice (see 873.108) that solicits responses and that may provide, as appropriate, a general description of the scope or purpose of the acquisition and the criteria that will be used to make the initial down-select decision. The notice may also inform offerors of the evaluation criteria or process that will be used in subsequent down-select decisions. The notice must contain sufficient information to allow potential offerors to make an informed decision about whether to participate in the acquisition. The notice must advise offerors that failure to participate in the first phase will make them ineligible to participate in subsequent phases. The notice may be in the form of a synopsis in the Governmentwide point of entry (GPE) or a narrative letter or other appropriate method that contains the information required by this paragraph.

(3) *First phase responses.* Offerors shall submit the information requested in the notice described in paragraph (d)(2) of this section. Information sought in the first phase may be limited to a statement of qualifications and other appropriate information (e.g., proposed technical concept, past performance information, limited pricing information).