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DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



Pete Ricketts, Governor

June 23, 2021

Professional Research Consultants, Inc.
Attn: Laurie Speaks, SVP, Client Success
11326 P Street
Omaha, NE 68137-2316

Re: *RFP 6499 Z1, Contact Tracing and Vaccine Helpline Services in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Protest of Award*

Ms. Speaks:

We are in receipt of your grievance dated June 8, 2021 and received by our office on June 9, 2021. In your grievance you are protesting the intent to award for RFP 6499 Z1 and state that:

[Professional Research Consultants, Inc. ("PRC")] bid on Option 3 which included Contact Tracing and Vaccine options. Since [PRC is] currently handling both and have the ability to do either one, [PRC] bid on that option versus Option 1 (Contact Tracing only) or Option 2 (Vaccine only). By bidding on Option 3, [PRC was] not saying [PRC] could only do both, [PRC was] saying [PRC] could do either. [PRC was] not notified on 5/26/21 that an award had been made (since we were not evaluated). [PRC] reviewed the RFP in detail and also looked at the Q&A DHHS published. Below is taken from Addendum Six Questions and Answers, published April 16, 2021. If submitting on Option 3 ruled us out from 1 and 2, the answer to this question should have been "yes": We spoke with 7 of the 22 vendors who submitted on Option 3 and all confirmed they submitted with the intent and ability to do either one (or both) not just both. The following are vendors we spoke with that were under the same understanding as PRC. Our understanding is if you are only interested in Contact Tracing, submit for Option 1, for Vaccine Option 2, and if you are interested and willing to do both or either, submit on Option 3.

After careful review and consideration of your grievance and the RFP, we have determined that the instructions were clear as to what was required to be submitted in order to be evaluated for each option. Section I, Subparagraph Q. - Request for Proposal/Proposal Requirements of the RFP outlines the requirements of each option in order for the proposal(s) to be considered: "Bidder may submit a proposal for Option 1 - Contact Tracing, Option 2 - Vaccine Helpline, or Option 3 – both, Contract Tracing and Vaccine Helpline." This subsection also lists the requirements of each option.

Additionally, during the Q&A period, clarifying questions were submitted regarding this topic and were responded to in the Addendum Six – Questions and Answers posted April 16, 2021. Such applicable questions and responses are shown on the following page.

Amara Block, Materiel Administrator & General Counsel

Department of Administrative Services | MATERIEL DIVISION

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Question No.	Question	State Response
1.	To ensure eligibility for all options, should the vendor submit 3 separate proposals	Bidder may submit a proposal for Option 1 – Contact Tracing, Option 2 – Vaccine Helpline, or Option 3 – both, Contract Tracing and Vaccine Helpline. See Section I.Q.
67.	<p>If bidder wants to submit for all three options, does the bidder only submit for Option 3, or should bidder submit for Option 1, 2, and 3 separately?</p> <p>And if a proposal needs submitted for all three of the options, would the naming convention reflect that ex. RFP 6499 Z1 Company Name Option 1 Contact Tracing Services, RFP 6499 Z1 Company Name Option 2 Vaccine Helpline Services, and RFP 6499 Z1 Company Name Option 3 Contact Tracing and Vaccine Helpline Services</p>	<p>In order to be considered for an award in each option, bidders must submit separate responses. Bidders should submit Option 1 for just contact tracing, Option 2 for just Vaccine Helpline, and/or Option 3 for both contact tracing and Vaccine Helpline. Please see Section V.A. paragraph two.</p> <p>Yes.</p>
132.	If a bidder submits under Option 3, are they eligible to be selected for ONLY Option 3, or could they be selected for an Option 1 or Option 2 award?	See response to question #67.
133.	If a bidder submits under Option 3, are they eligible to be selected for ONLY Option 3, or could they be selected for an Option 1 or Option 2 award?	See response to question #67.
230.	If a bidder wishes to be considered for Option 1, Option 2, or Option 3, must they complete all three submissions?	See response to question #67.
231.	If a bidder submits a proposal for Option 3, can they still be evaluated individual [<i>sic</i>] for Option 1 and Option 2? If so, does the bidder need to designate this request for individual awards in their proposal?	See response to question #67.

Question 67 addresses the concern outlined in your grievance, that is, whether a vendor may be evaluated for all three options by just submitting a proposal for option three or whether a vendor must submit separate proposals to be evaluated for each option. The State's answer makes clear that separate responses must be submitted for each option in order to be evaluated.

Consequently, we find the contract was appropriately awarded and in accordance with law. The Intent to Award will stand and the grievance submitted by Professional Research Consultants, Inc. is denied.

We thank you for your interesting in doing business with the State of Nebraska and although the State will uphold the Intent to Award, we sincerely thank you for your time and feedback as to our procurement process. As with any other feedback, we will use this as a learning opportunity to make our processes better for our customers and vendors.



As a courtesy, we have enclosed a copy of our Standard Protest/Grievance Procedures for Vendors.

Sincerely,



Amara Block, Materiel Administrator and General Counsel
Department of Administrative Services

cc: Connie Heinrichs, SPB Buyer
Annette Walton, SPB Buyer
Pete Kroll, SPB Procurement Supervisor

jls

