



JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES' PACKET

MEMO TO: ADMINISTRATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

FROM: RANDY HEISS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

SUBJECT: OCTOBER 1, 2015 CONFERENCE CALL

Please see the details below for the conference call which has been scheduled for action items that need to be approved in between the regularly scheduled meetings. *All members are invited and welcome to participate and provide their input; however, only the officers may make motions and vote.* The call-in information is located at the bottom of the agenda.

October 1, 2015 at 9 a.m.
SEAGO Main Office
1403 W. Highway 92
Bisbee, Arizona

If you have any questions, please contact me at (520) 432-5301 or send an e-mail to rheiss@seago.org.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Introductions
2. Call to the Public
3. *Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to issue a Request for Proposals for Regional Grant Writing Services – Randy Heiss
4. Adjournment

* Indicates Action Item

Attachments: Memo; Request for Proposals for Regional Grant Writing Services; Cochise County comment matrix and responses.

Direction may be given to SEAGO staff on any item on the agenda.

Call-in information: Dial 1-800-326-0013
Conference ID No.: 5682213

Press *6 to mute your phone line; Press *7 to un-mute your phone line



ADMINISTRATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TO: ADMINISTRATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
FROM: RANDY HEISS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DATE: SEPTEMBER 21, 2015
RE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – REGIONAL GRANT WRITING SERVICES

Attached is the Request for Proposals I've developed for the Regional Grant Writing Services program. I spent considerable time thinking about the scope of work and devising a rational approach to prioritizing which regional needs the grant writer will focus on first. The first draft was reviewed internally and adjustments made based on staff recommendations.

On September 14th, I sent the RFP out to the full Administrative Council and Executive Board for comment and thus far, have only received comments from one member entity (Cochise County). I am including Cochise County's final comments along with my responses to those comments for your information. I'm doing so in the event you have similar concerns, you will be able to see how I addressed them in my responses. Hopefully with this information there will be consensus to move forward with the RFP without delay so that we can have the grant writer on board as soon as possible.

Our procurement policy requires Board approval to go out to bid for goods or services exceeding \$10,000. Since the estimated cost of the grant writing services will exceed that amount, I am now seeking approval to publish the request for proposals.

I will attempt to answer any questions you may have at the meeting.

Attachments: Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Request for Proposals for Regional Grant Writing Services;
SEAGO Grant Writing Services RFP Comments and Responses 9.21.15

Action Requested: Information Only Action Requested Below:

A motion to authorize the Executive Director to publish the Request for Proposals for Regional Grant Writing Services.

Request for Proposals



Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Regional Grant Writing Services

October 1, 2015



SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA GOVERNMENTS ORGANIZATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
REGIONAL GRANT WRITING SERVICES

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The SouthEastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO) is a regional planning agency, otherwise known as a Council of Governments. A Council of Governments (COG), or Regional Council, is a public organization encompassing a multi-jurisdictional regional community. A COG serves the local governments and the citizens in the region by dealing with issues and needs that cross city, town, county, state, and in the case of Arizona, international boundaries. Mechanisms used to address these issues may include communication, planning, policymaking, coordination, advocacy, funding, and technical assistance.

SEAGO was established in 1972, and incorporated in 1976 as a 501(c)3, nonprofit organization which serves the four counties of Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, and Santa Cruz. As with other COGs, SEAGO's programs focus on issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries, such as water quality, community and economic development initiatives, transportation, aging and social service issues, and the need for affordable, adequate and accessible housing.

The Executive Board, SEAGO's Board of Directors, is comprised of one elected official from each of the following 19 local government member entities: Cochise County, Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista, Tombstone, Willcox, Graham County, Pima, Safford, Thatcher, Greenlee County, Clifton, Duncan, Santa Cruz County, Nogales, Patagonia, and the San Carlos Apache Tribe. The Board also includes five private sector representatives. There is one private sector representative from Graham, Greenlee and Santa Cruz Counties, and because the population of Cochise County exceeds 100,000 it is allowed two private sector representatives on the Executive Board.

The Administrative Council is comprised of one appointed official from each of the 19 local government entities listed above. Each entity's representative on the Administrative Council is typically the city, town or county manager, city or town clerk, or their delegate. The Administrative Council meets two weeks before each regular meeting of the Executive Board and makes recommendations on all business to be considered by the Board.

SEAGO STRATEGIC PLAN

In September 2014, the Executive Board approved a small budget to hold a retreat with the Administrative Council and SEAGO staff. In January 2015, twenty-one leaders from the region met for a two-day strategic planning retreat. The primary goal of the retreat was to generate data and build support that will become the foundation for SEAGO's strategic plan. SEAGO'S mission and vision statements became the path forward for the organization's Five-Year Strategic Plan, and a facilitator led participants through a number of exercises to draw insights and identify goals and strategies.

Retreat participants voted for strategies developed during the retreat that would launch new programs or repurpose existing resources. There was significant support for SEAGO providing grant writing and management services for its member entities in the four-county region. The five-year strategic plan developed as a result of the input gathered at the retreat may be viewed or downloaded at the following link:

<http://seago.org/sites/default/files/documents/SEAGO%20Strategic%20Plan%20Board%20Adopted%205.21.15.pdf>

The SEAGO Five-Year Strategic Plan FY2016 – FY2020 together with the Fiscal Year 2016 budget was formally adopted by the Executive Board on May 20, 2015. These actions set the stage for the development and publication of this Request for Proposals.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SEAGO is hereby requesting Proposals from qualified consulting firms or individuals (herein after referred to as 'consultant') to provide regional grant writing services for SEAGO and its 19 member entities. The consultant shall be required to actively assist in the identification and prioritization of funding opportunities meeting the needs of SEAGO and its member entities, prepare applications, timely submit applications to the funding source, and respond to any questions resulting from applications submitted.

A copy of a sample contract that will be used to engage the services of the consultant is included in the Request for Proposals package. Any objection to the use of the enclosed sample contract, or proposed changes to the sample contract must be noted in the response to this Request for Proposals.

ADMINISTRATION

The SEAGO Executive Director Randy Heiss or his designee will serve as the SEAGO contract manager for the consultant's services. The consultant will confer with the Contract Manager at least bi-monthly (two times per month) to discuss program status, solicit direction, and review upcoming funding opportunities. Attendance of regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings with the SEAGO **Administrative Council (AC)** will allow the consultant to build and maintain the close working relationships essential for the program's success. Individual members of the SEAGO AC or their designee will provide oversight of any local projects and will closely coordinate local funding opportunities with the selected consultant.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

This is a pilot program and its outcomes and benefits to the region will be monitored and measured throughout the contract period. Subject to evaluation of the consultant's performance, a recommendation whether or not to continue the program and how to best fund the program will be made during the annual budget process. The initial contract will be for a period of one (1) year. The contract may be extended for up to four (4) additional years, upon agreement between SEAGO and the consultant. The contract will be awarded as 'all or none' to one individual or firm, but collaborative proposals that include a team of grant writing specialists will be accepted. The consultant must be able to complete all tasks set forth in the following Scope of Services.

Task 1: Kick-Off Meeting(s) - Close coordination with SEAGO's member entities is essential to the success of this program. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the consultant's contract manager or key members of the consulting team be present in person for this meeting. The purpose of program kickoff meeting(s) is to introduce the consultant to the SEAGO member entities, clarify the scope of the program, and to answer questions SEAGO member entities may have. The consultant shall hold a kickoff meeting with the SEAGO AC. At the consultant's option, it may hold several sub-regional program kickoff meetings throughout the SEAGO region, or meet with each SEAGO AC member individually. A program kick-off meeting may be held in conjunction with the regularly scheduled meeting of the AC on February 11, 2016. The consultant's proposal should include a proposed schedule of any program kick-off meeting(s).

Task 2: Identify Priority Community Needs - The consultant shall meet with the SEAGO member entities individually to identify unmet community needs and projects that will enable the consultant to focus on corresponding funding opportunities. These meetings may be held in person, by telephone, or by other electronic means. The consultant shall work with each SEAGO member entity to develop a prioritized listing of their top three (3) unmet needs, along with a brief description of each need. The consultant will then develop a matrix of regional needs by municipality and county.

Applications for funding opportunities that address the needs and benefit more than one community are often given preference and are more likely to be funded. The matrix of community needs will be organized such that commonalities may be drawn and potential collaborative funding opportunities identified.

In addition to community needs, the following regional needs will be included in the matrix:

- **Regional Professional Services Center (RPSC):** There was significant support at the 2015 Strategic Planning Retreat for establishing a regional professional services center that could be utilized by SEAGO member entities in developing projects in their communities. The RPSC may include engineers, architects, land surveyors, biologists, archaeologists, attorneys and other professionals who would be available to SEAGO member entities upon request.
- **Housing Program Funding:** At the peak of Arizona's housing boom, the Housing Program operated with a significant annual surplus. When the housing market collapsed, the Rural Home Ownership Program was replaced by the Save Our Home AZ (SOHAZ) program, which focuses on mortgage modification and foreclosure prevention. SOHAZ, the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling program, and a small HUD grant are the only remaining funding sources for the Housing Program since the Arizona Attorney General's Arizona Mortgage Relief Funds were swept to balance the FY 2016 state budget. Revenue collected from these programs is insufficient to cover the costs of guiding clients through a complicated and time consuming process to receive assistance. As a result, the Housing Program has needed to use SEAGO's cash reserves to subsidize the program. New sources of funding and programs that complement existing programs are needed to sustain Housing Program services at current levels.
- **Area Agency on Aging (AAA):** Despite a steady decline in funding since 2009, the AAA remains SEAGO's largest funding source. At this point, funding for certain program areas has reached a level that may soon no longer support the costs of operation. New sources of funding are needed to support existing programs or begin new programs to supplement existing programs and sustain services at current levels.

Task 3: Prioritize Regional Needs - The SEAGO region is extremely diverse in terms of community needs, demographics, and political priorities. In order to reduce the potential for conflicting interests among communities in the SEAGO region, it is necessary to develop a rational, defensible system for prioritizing which community needs the consultant will focus on first when seeking funding opportunities. Such a system is set forth below, but Applicants may present an alternative prioritization system for consideration with their proposal.

The consultant shall prioritize the matrix of regional needs based on the following criteria:

- 1) Projects fulfilling needs that will benefit two or more SEAGO member entities;
- 2) Projects fulfilling needs identified in SEAGO's Five-Year Strategic Plan;
- 3) Proposed project's potential to fulfill the purpose, goals, objectives, and interests of the funding source;
- 4) Proposed project's potential to improve quality of life (improved economic competitiveness and sustainability, improved public health and safety, projects to reduce homelessness or increase affordable housing, etc.); and
- 5) Proposed projects requiring \$250,000 or more in funding.

Projects meeting all of the prioritization criteria will be grouped together as first priority; projects meeting four of the five criteria will be grouped together as second priority; projects meeting three of the five criteria will be grouped together as third priority; and so on. This will produce a Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs. This Matrix will guide the consultant on which projects to focus first in its efforts to identify potential funding sources.

Task 4: Buy-In Meeting - The consultant shall schedule a region-wide meeting with the AC to update the AC on progress to date, present the Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs, explain the criteria used to prioritize the projects, answer questions, make any adjustments to the prioritized Matrix, and present an updated schedule. It is strongly recommended that the consultant's contract manager or key members of

the consulting team be present in person for this meeting. If the contract is renewed in subsequent years, the consultant shall repeat Tasks 1 through 4 to identify priority projects for the next contract year.

Task 5: Search for Opportunities - Once the Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs has been finalized, searching for funding opportunities shall be continuous until commitments to prepare and submit applications have exceeded the consultant's capacity to do so. The consultant is required to have the capacity to manage a minimum of ~~two (2)~~ three (3) funding applications concurrently while maintaining the ability to search for additional funding opportunities for the remaining projects in the Matrix.

The consultant shall use all resources at the consultant's disposal to search for funding opportunities for the projects listed in the final Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs. The consultant shall initially focus on projects in the first priority group. If no funding opportunities are available for projects in the first priority group, the consultant shall begin to search for funding opportunities for projects in the second priority group. If no funding opportunities are available for projects in the second priority group, the consultant shall begin to search for funding opportunities for projects in the third priority group, and so on.

When a funding opportunity for a project in any priority group is identified, the consultant shall contact the agencies or communities involved, discuss the funding opportunity, any requirements to provide cash or in-kind matching funds, the application deadline, the administrative requirements, and provide the agency or community a not-to-exceed cost to prepare the application. If a funding opportunity for a project in any priority group is identified, but the agencies or communities involved are unable to move forward with an application for any reason, the consultant shall resume searching for funding opportunities for the remaining projects in the Matrix.

Whenever a funding opportunity for a project in any priority group is identified, the SEAGO contract manager shall be notified along with the involved communities and shall be kept apprised of the project status and any issues that may arise. If multiple or competing funding opportunities are identified for projects in any priority group, the consultant shall identify the project that, in the consultant's professional opinion, is most likely to be awarded, and shall consult with the SEAGO contract manager to determine the appropriate course of action.

Task 6: Prepare, Submit and Track Applications - Prior to beginning a specific application, the consultant and the involved agencies or communities, shall mutually agree upon, and enter a contract for 1) a cost and fee structure for the preparation of the application, and 2) a concise delineation of the services to be performed by the consultant, and the information and/or services to be provided by the involved agencies or communities. The consultant shall work with the agencies or communities to gather any and all required data relative to the application and produce any project descriptions, narratives, or other information necessary for a competitive application. The consultant shall be responsible for preparation of the application, and when completed, shall provide the application package to the involved agencies or communities at least seven (7) days prior to the application deadline for signatures to be obtained and any final revisions can be made.

If allowed by the funding source, the consultant shall also be responsible for submitting and tracking the application once submitted. If the involved agencies or communities are required to submit the application to the funding source and track the application, the consultant shall provide all necessary assistance in submitting and tracking the application. In all cases, the consultant shall be responsible for assisting the involved agencies or communities in responding to any questions resulting from the applications submitted to funding sources.

The consultant shall keep the SEAGO contract manager apprised of the status of any application(s) in progress, pending deadlines, and communication difficulties encountered or lack of responsiveness experienced while attempting to gather information essential to a successful application from the involved agencies or communities. If the SEAGO contract manager is unsuccessful in facilitating communications or the consultant's access to data and information necessary to complete the application in a professional and timely manner, the consultant shall not be held responsible.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE SERVICES

Applicants should research the SEAGO region and take such steps as may be reasonably necessary to ascertain the needs and capacity of SEAGO and its member entities. Failure to do so will not relieve the Applicant from responsibility for properly estimating the difficulty or cost of successfully performing the services.

Submission of a Proposal shall be construed as evidence that the Applicant is familiar with the Scope of Services and conditions involved. This Request for Proposals and the included Scope of Services, is the full and complete document defining the terms of the Request for Proposals. SEAGO will not assume responsibility for any representations made by any of its officers or agents prior to the execution of the contract.

Independent Contractor – The consultant shall provide all of the necessary labor, equipment, supplies and software to perform the services. Subject to the requirements of the Scope of Services, the consultant shall determine when, where and how to perform the services, and shall be considered an independent contractor under Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Communication – The consultant shall maintain an operational phone line, fax line, and email address for communication during the contract. If communication between SEAGO and the consultant is inadequate, then an alternate form of communication shall be agreed upon by both parties. On a bi-monthly basis, the consultant shall email a brief report based on the previous two week period's progress to the SEAGO contract manager.

DELIVERABLES

The following are the deliverables for this contract:

- Bi-monthly progress reports.
- A copy of the matrix of regional community needs by municipality and county shall be provided to the SEAGO Contract Manager no later than March 15, 2016. This may be provided in electronic or hard copy.
- A copy of the Draft Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs shall be provided to the SEAGO Contract Manager no later than March 31, 2016. This may be provided in electronic or hard copy.
- A copy of the Final Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs shall be provided to the SEAGO Contract Manager no later than April 30, 2016. This may be provided in electronic or hard copy.
- Conduct a minimum of three (3) regional meetings with the SEAGO AC at the beginning (Kick-Off), mid-point (Buy-In), and near the conclusion of the project to answer questions, describe the prioritization criteria used, provide recommendations for successful applications, provide program updates and scope of services completed, and summarize program outcomes and results.
- Submission of at least four (4) applications requesting a minimum of \$250,000 during the first year of the contract.

The contract will be considered complete upon acceptance of all deliverables by SEAGO and its member entities. **All deliverables shall become the property of SEAGO and its member entities upon acceptance of the deliverables.**

PROPOSAL CONTENT

1. **Identification:** Provide a title sheet or equivalent which includes a short title for the proposed program; name and business address of the organization that will perform the services; name, title, mailing address and telephone number of the principal contract manager.

2. Table of Contents

3. Introduction and Objectives: Provide a clear, concise statement of your understanding of the area's needs regarding this program. This statement should reflect the Applicant's understanding of the nature of the region, its demographics, economy and employment, and potential areas of opportunity.

4. Work Plan: Describe the tasks, detailing the full scope of services to be provided. The work plan should clearly define the proposed approach to accomplishing the scope of services and the specific results. As much as possible, tasks should be linked with deliverables. The methodology should be described in sufficient detail to permit an objective evaluation of the proposal. The work plan should also include the following information:

- Organizational chart of contract personnel, with manager and key team members identified.
- The names and roles of the key team members. For each team member, include the individual's commitment to the contract as a percentage of his/her total workload with the consultant, relevant qualifications and experience, and the estimated number of hours each team member will spend on each task.
- Evidence of grant award success rate.

5. Facilities and Equipment: Identify the location of the base of operations for this contract. Provide a description of the equipment and software that will be used during the contract.

6. Schedule: Provide bar type progress charts to illustrate the scheduling and interrelationships among the tasks.

7. Progress Reporting Procedures: Indicate the format of the bi-monthly reporting. The bi-monthly report shall consist of an e-mail status report to the SEAGO Contract Manager. The progress report should be limited to two pages and should include at least the following:

- Specific activities completed
- Information acquired
- Contacts made
- Percentage of task(s) completed to date.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for this contract will be primarily qualifications-based. However, the proposed effort (number of hours), the proposed schedule and overall cost indicated in the proposal will also be a factor in the evaluation process. The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals. Numbers in parentheses indicate the relative weight assigned to each category.

Consultant Profile (10 points)

This section is intended to familiarize the selection committee with the Applicants. Applicants shall include a brief profile of the prime consultant and any subcontractor(s). The profile should provide an overview of each firm's areas of expertise, recent experience with similar contracts and primary market areas. For each similar contract listed, the Applicant shall provide a brief description of services provided, the outcome of the services provided, the name and phone number of the client contract manager, contract start and end dates and total dollar value of the contract.

Contract Manager Experience and Commitment (15 points)

The consultant should include a strong contract manager with extensive grant writing experience. The contract manager's profile should demonstrate experience in writing successful applications for municipalities, counties, Native American tribes and Councils of Governments or similar organizations.

Other considerations:

- The contract manager must be highly skilled at managing contracts to ensure that they are delivered within scope, according to schedule, and within budget.
- The proposal must also present the concurrent commitments of the contract manager. Specifically, it must show the existing and 18-month future time commitments of the project manager, briefly describe his/her role in these commitments, and discuss how these commitments will affect the manager's ability to manage this contract's activities. The proposal must also indicate the primary work location of the manager.

Expertise and Experience of Key Personnel (15 points)

Key team members should possess experience in the relevant skills needed to successfully deliver services under this contract. These areas could include demographic and other data collection, technical writing, and other skills involved in writing successful applications. Proposals should clearly indicate the expertise, background, and availability of each team member. Any professional credentials should also be noted.

Work Plan and Schedule (40 points)

The proposal should discuss in detail how the required work plan will be carried out. It should include how team members will be utilized during each task and how the consultant will coordinate communities. This section provides Applicants with the opportunity to discuss original ideas or concepts that they believe are directly relevant to this program. Experience in writing successful applications for housing programs, aging services, or other regional services should be noted in the proposal.

In addition to the criteria identified above, further evaluation of the consultant's qualifications and experience may include reference checks and an oral interview.

Cost (10 points)

The proposed cost will also be considered in the selection process.

Local Presence in the SEAGO Region (10 points)

The SEAGO region encompasses approximately 14,000 square miles. In order to limit the impact of travel costs on the overall cost of the contract, the consultant's physical presence in the SEAGO region will also be considered in the selection process.

SCHEDULE AND COMPENSATION

The initial term of the contract is **twelve (12) months** from the date of the notice to proceed. All services and deliverables shall be completed to the satisfaction of the SEAGO Contract Manager and the SEAGO member entities (as may be applicable).

The [consultant shall provide a not-to-exceed cost to perform the above Scope of Services](#). The cost quoted in the Applicant's proposal shall be the total compensation for the consultant to perform the Scope of Services. When funding opportunities are identified for projects listed on the Prioritized Matrix of Regional Needs, the consultant will negotiate separate, formal contracts directly with the involved community or communities to prepare an application. If a funding opportunity for any SEAGO project(s) is identified, the consultant will negotiate a separate contract directly with SEAGO to prepare an application.

Invoices – The consultant shall invoice the percent of the contract completed on a monthly basis. The invoice shall show the total percent previously completed. The invoice shall show the consultant's name, address, phone number, fax number, and any other necessary information. Consultant will be required to

file an IRS Form W9 with SEAGO before any payments can be processed. [Consultants are encouraged to obtain a DUNS and to register on SAM.gov.](#)

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted as directed in paragraph "INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT." Proposals will be retained by SEAGO for thirty (30) days unless withdrawn prior to submission deadline. Any costs incurred by Applicant in preparing the Proposal or incurred in any manner in responding to this document, may not be charged to SEAGO.

In addition to content requirements, proposals must meet the following requirements to be considered responsive.

A maximum number of fifty (50) pages is allowed for this proposal. The proposal must be submitted on 8.5"x11" paper with type size no smaller than 12 point. The fifty-page limitation applies to all sheets in the response, including but not limited to: letter of transmittal, cover sheet, table of contents, text, graphs, divider sheets, tab sheets, index and appendices. Two-sided sheets will be counted as two (2) pages. In addition, the proposal must be submitted in Adobe PDF file format on a compact disk.

For the prime consultant and all sub-contractors listed in the proposal, provide: name of contact person, address, e-mail, phone number, and fax number. [The prime consultant shall provide its DUNS within its proposal.](#) Proposals not meeting all submittal requirements may be considered non-responsive and may not be evaluated. SEAGO assumes no obligations of any kind for expenses incurred by any response to this solicitation.

Pre-Proposal Conference - A non-mandatory pre-proposal conference will be held at the SEAGO Main Office located at 1403 West Highway 92, Bisbee, AZ, 85603 on **Wednesday, October 21, 2015 at 10:00 AM.**

AWARD OF CONTRACT

Proposals will be evaluated as more fully set forth in the paragraph entitled SELECTION PROCESS.

Contracts will be made or entered into based on the outcome of the evaluation process and any subsequent negotiations. The Contract will be executed in two (2) duplicate originals. The decision to award the Contract will be made and all Applicants notified of the results within thirty (30) days of the submittal deadline.

SEAGO reserves the following rights:

1. To waive informalities in any proposal or in the proposal procedure.
2. To negotiate with the Applicants that submit proposals, in the manner allowed by law.
3. To reject the proposal of any persons or entities who have previously defaulted on any contract with SEAGO.
4. To reject any and all proposals.
5. To re-advertise for proposals.
6. To award the Contract on the basis of the best proposal, as evaluated by the criteria set forth in paragraph entitled SELECTION PROCESS.
7. To increase or decrease the scope of services herein specified as funds may permit.
8. To accept any item or combination of items of a proposal.
9. To conduct interviews with any or all Applicants, if deemed necessary, prior to the development of the short list.
10. To hold any or all proposals for a period of thirty (30) days after the date of opening.
11. To impose any insurance requirements as deemed appropriate by SEAGO.

Each Applicant, by submission of a Proposal, agrees to waive any and all claims for damages against the officers or employees of SEAGO when any of the rights reserved by SEAGO herein may be exercised.

FEDERAL FUNDS USAGE

No federal funds will be used to fund any part of a contract entered into as a result of this Request for Proposals.

WAGE, LABOR, AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO)

The consultant and any sub-contractors shall comply with all federal, state or local EEO requirements as a requirement of any contract entered into pursuant to this solicitation. SEAGO is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (DBE)

SEAGO hereby notifies all Applicants that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this solicitation, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to this Request for Proposals and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION

By submission of a proposal in response to this RFP, the contractor certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in federal contracts by any federal department or agency. If the consultant is unable to certify any of the statements in this certification, the consultant shall attach an explanation to their proposal.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The consultant, at its own expense, shall purchase and maintain the herein stipulated minimum insurance. All insurance required herein shall be maintained in full force and effect until all work or service required to be performed under the terms of the contract is satisfactorily completed and formally accepted. Failure to fully maintain all insurance may, at the sole discretion of SEAGO, constitute a material breach of contract.

The consultant's insurance shall be primary insurance as respects SEAGO, and any insurance or self-insurance maintained by SEAGO shall not contribute to it.

REQUIRED COVERAGE:

Automobile Liability:

The consultant shall maintain automobile liability insurance with respect to the consultant's owned, hired, and non-owned vehicles assigned to or used in performance of the services. The consultant's insurance will provide primary coverage in the event of an accident or any other claim. Consultants may choose the level of insurance coverage that it believes is appropriate, notwithstanding that such insurance must meet the mandatory minimum insurance coverage required by applicable State laws and regulations. However, SEAGO accepts no responsibility for damage to the consultant's personal, firm-owned, or hired vehicle. In the event of an accident, the consultant and the consultant's insurance company are responsible for all damage and repair to the consultant's vehicle and are primary for all other claims.

In case any service is subcontracted, the consultant will require the sub-contractor(s) to maintain automobile liability insurance with respect to their owned, hired, and non-owned vehicles assigned to or used in performance of the services to at least the same extent as required of the consultant.

Workers Compensation:

The consultant shall carry worker's compensation insurance to cover obligations imposed by federal and state statutes having jurisdiction of the consultant's employees engaged in the performance of the work or services under the contract, with employer's liability insurance of not less than \$100,000 for each accident, \$100,000 for each employee, and \$500,000 deceased employee policy limit.

In case any service is subcontracted, the consultant will require the sub-contractor(s) to provide worker's compensation and employer's liability to at least the same extent as required of the consultant.

Proof of Insurance:

Prior to commencing services under the contract, the consultant shall furnish SEAGO with evidence of insurance issued by the consultant's insurer(s), as evidence that policies providing the required coverage, conditions and limits required by the contract are in full force and effect.

In case any service is subcontracted, the consultant will require the sub-contractor(s) to provide evidence of insurance to at least the same extent as required of the consultant.

Cancellation and Expiration Notice:

If a policy expires during the life of the contract, evidence of renewal must be received by SEAGO fifteen (15) days prior to the expiration date. Insurance required under the contract shall not expire, be canceled, or materially changed without thirty (30) days prior written notice to SEAGO.

SEAGO maintains the right to impose additional insurance requirements as it feels appropriate.

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT, DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

- A. **One (1) original bound copy of the complete proposal, and one (1) unbound copy of the proposal must be received by 4:00 p.m., on Wednesday, November 18, 2015** to be considered responsive. Proposals submitted via facsimile are not acceptable.
- B. **The Proposal, whether in an envelope or other wrapping shall have "SEAGO Regional Grant Writing Services" marked clearly on its cover and shall be addressed to Randy Heiss, Executive Director, SEAGO, 1403 West Highway 92, Bisbee, AZ 85603.** Failure of the Applicant to provide all of the required information may result in the rejection of the Proposal. Proposals received after the specified time of closing will be returned unopened.
- C. ~~The A not-to-exceed proposed~~ cost will be submitted with the proposal, which will include clear discussion on how to conduct and complete all services listed in the Scope of Services. The proposed cost include all necessary costs including, but not limited to; travel expenses, labor, materials, taxes, profit, insurance, and other overhead expenses. The proposed cost will be firm, and is based upon availability of budgeted funds from year to year. Percentage or cost plus proposals will not be accepted.
- D. The successful consultant shall complete the required services within twelve (12) months of the Notice to Proceed.
- E. The SEAGO Executive Director or designee, along with an evaluation committee will be responsible for evaluating the proposals and recommending the highest ranked consultant for contract award.
- F. No interpretations of the meaning of any part of the Request for Proposals will be made to any Applicant orally. Any request for additional interpretation shall be in writing and faxed or e-

mailed to Randy Heiss, (520) 432-5858 or rheiss@seago.org, not later than five (5) days prior to the proposal opening (exclusive of weekends and holidays). Any and all additional information, interpretations, or supplemental instructions will be in written form as an addenda to the RFP which, if issued, will be faxed or e-mailed to all prospective Applicants (at the appropriate fax number or e-mail address furnished by each prospective Applicant for this purpose), not later than two (2) days prior to the scheduled proposal opening (exclusive of weekends and holidays). Failure of any Applicant to receive any such addendum shall not relieve such Applicant from any obligation under the proposal as submitted. All addenda so issued shall become part of the contract documents.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

If an Applicant wishes to appeal the decision to reject its proposal, the Applicant must write to the SEAGO Executive Director at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the next scheduled SEAGO Executive Board meeting, requesting to be placed on the agenda. The Applicant will then have an opportunity to present its case to the SEAGO Executive Board. Appeals shall be submitted in writing to: Randy Heiss, Executive Director, SEAGO, 1403 West Highway 92, Bisbee, AZ, 85603, Fax (520) 432-5858 or emailed to rheiss@seago.org.

Appeals must contain, at a minimum, the name, address and telephone number of the appellant, the signature of the appellant or its representative with authority to sign; a detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds of the appeal including copies of relevant data; and the form of relief requested. The SEAGO Executive Director will review the appeal statement and the rationale used in the evaluation of the proposals and will decide whether the proposal should be reconsidered for award. The SEAGO Executive Board's decision shall be final.

EXHIBIT 1

SEAGO

Request for Proposal Evaluation Sheet

Name of Applicant			
Date of Rating			
Evaluator Name			
QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF APPLICANT			
		Possible Points	Points Awarded
1. Consultant Profile		10	
2. Contract Manager Experience and Commitment		15	
3. Expertise and Experience of Key Personnel		15	
4. Work Plan and Schedule		40	
5. Cost		10	
6. Local presence in the SEAGO Region		10	
Total		100	
Comments:			



COCHISE COUNTY

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADMINISTRATOR

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

SUBMITTAL:	SEAGO	PROJECT NAME:	Regional Grant Writing Services
COMMENTS BY:	Lisa M. Marra	DOCKET NO:	n/a
COCHISE COUNTY PHONE NO:	520-432-9742	E-MAIL:	lmarra@cochise.az.gov

REVIEW OF THESE DOCUMENTS DOES NOT RELIEVE THE CONTRACTOR OF ANY OBLIGATION TO COMPLETE THEIR SCOPE OF WORK AS CONTRACTED, THE COUNTY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ERRORS, DIMENSIONS OR OMISSIONS.

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
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**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
Date: 9/14/15		<p>Overall I see no issue with the RFP – Although based on how it reads, content, and my past experience, there is only one grant writing company in the region currently that can fulfill all of those requirements. Specifically when it speaks to sharing/combining services which is something the firm I am thinking about has been talking to Randy about for years. Could be a huge benefit to small entities. This is the RPSC addressed on Page 3.</p> <p>There are some logistics that would need to be discussed if this goes into effect – and I’m sure the committee is working on that (IE who takes the lead to accept funds if it’s a grant with several agencies, etc – maybe SEAGO is the actual applicant? That can’t really be because many times it has to be a form of gov’t and although quasi, they are a 501c3. We get into audit challenges if we don’t control the funds but that can probably be overcome) Cost is also a consideration. How much is this costing each agency for the service or is it just part of the existing dues structure? Does the consultant bill SEAGO and they bill members and if so will they charge a surcharge on top of the consultant fee? Probably.</p>	<p>The RFP wasn’t written with any particular grant writer in mind. But the idea of the RPSC was definitely put forth by a local grant writer and it generated a lot of interest during our strategic planning process.</p> <p>Who takes the lead on a particular grant will depend on who the ‘involved agencies or communities’ are. For example, if a grant was identified for funding the RPSC, the lead would be SEAGO. If a grant meeting the needs of say Thatcher and Safford was identified, who the lead agency is would be negotiated between the parties. With a grant benefiting only one agency, that agency would be the lead.</p> <p>In addition to our non-profit status, SEAGO is also considered a local government under 2 CFR Part 200. The cost for these consulting services in the first contract year will be paid for from SEAGO reserves with the option of them being reimbursed through the assessment structure in the next fiscal year. The consultant will bill SEAGO for the services delivered under the RFP. If the consultant identifies a funding opportunity for a regional program, SEAGO will enter into a separate contract for the consultant to write the grant. If a funding opportunity for a SEAGO member entity is identified, that member entity will negotiate a separate contract with the consultant to write the grant. <u>There will be no surcharge from SEAGO.</u></p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
1.	N/A	There is no mention of CDBG Service they currently provide which we have to pay for in order to receive funds. Clarification that the CDBG program stands as it is now and this does not impact that?	This RFP has nothing to do with CDBG services. SEAGO will continue to assist our member entities with technical assistance and application preparation as always, and will contract with any of our member entities to administer their CDBG grants if they are in need of this service.
2.	Page 1	Last Paragraph: ...grant writing and management services. I see a lot of info about seeking grants, writing applications, etc but not managing. Is there a section on what that entails? Realizing it is very grant specific, that is a huge area for people when it comes to compliance. Writing it is one thing, managing is another. That warrants consideration as they select a consultant. Would they manage the grant or the entities would manage? Perhaps there is a periodic audit by the consultant if the entity is managing? Or training of staff so they can manage the grants? Many of the SEAGO members have very few staff members and compliance is a huge concern. Federal findings = audit issues = paying funds back = not getting future funds.	Managing the grants is not included in the Scope of Services for this RFP. As you know, SEAGO has considerable experience and success in managing grants. Member entities without the capacity to manage grants written by the consultant could request SEAGO to administer the grant for them as we do for CDBG and other grants when requested.
3.	Page 2	Scope of Services – 1 st sentence. It speaks of a pilot program and monitored and measured but I am not clear on what the measurement is? Is that all included under deliverables on Page 5? What is the means of measurement?	Performance measurements will of course include timely and professional quality deliverables. But ultimately, it will be up to the Administrative Council and Executive Board to decide if the program is bringing the results and value they want to the region, whether or not they want to continue it in the next year, and ultimately, how they wish to fund it (assessments or use of SEAGO reserves).

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
4.	Page 4	Task 5: consultant is required to manage a minimum of 2 applications while maintaining ability to search for other funds. That is a very reasonable expectation – I just wonder if it is a low number considering the huge region and number of members and the large amount of their need? Should the minimum be raised?	<p>I did not wish to discourage small firms from responding to the RFP and we will consider the adequacy of a consultant’s capacity during the selection process. I could add in something that states a firm’s capacity to manage more than 2 applications will be weighed against the proposed cost in the evaluation process. Or I could raise it to 3 or 4 applications. Open to suggestions here.</p> <p>LMM- you could leave as is and then up it next year depending on outcome. I agree you don’t want to discourage small firms, but the number is low I think.....I am always of the opinion to raise the bar high when it comes to standards! Split the difference with min of 3??</p> <p>RH – I will go with a minimum of 3, which I don’t consider unreasonable. (See Page 4, Task 5 revisions)</p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
5.	Page 4	<p>Task 6: First Paragraph - The consultant will work with the agencies or communities under a signed contract. Is that a SEAGO signed contract or with the specific members? From a procurement standpoint is that an issue with us for sole sourcing or not sending out our own RFQ? A consideration is how much work is involved on the consultant end vs the agency when it comes to gathering information. Laying the groundwork and fact finding is quite a task on a large grant – make sure the consultant is not relying on the entities (small) to do all that work for them. This raises a flag for me for cost as I've worked with consultants – the bulk of the work is still on the entity to provide them with the information they request.</p>	<p>As indicated above, the involved agencies or communities will negotiate separate, individual contracts with the consultant. Professional services don't always require competitive procurement – that would be up to each individual agency's procurement code and might require a legal opinion from their attorney. The member entity might also piggy back on our procurement process, but this would also probably require a legal opinion. Since the last version of the RFP I sent you, I've specified that the contracts with consultant will define each party's responsibilities to provide data and information necessary to write the application. The capacity of each community varies, so that may impact the cost of the contract. Cochise County could probably do most of the work themselves or may need nothing more than to be notified of the opportunity to apply for funding, whereas Duncan would probably need to rely more heavily on the grant writer and pay a bit more due to their limited capacity and staffing. Regardless, those expectations should be negotiated and expressed in the contracts.</p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
6.	Page 4	<p>Task 6: Second Paragraph – the consultant is responsible for submitting and tracking the applications. Each grant has its own format for that – is there a built in safeguard to ensure there is a backup if the consultant is a one person office and something happens to them?</p> <p>Same with reimbursement for grants. Would the consultant do that as well for the entity – that is probably going to be spelled out in the contract with the entity. And at additional cost to be split between applicants.</p>	<p>This is something that will need to be weighed in the evaluation of proposals. If it's a one person shop, we might want to hold interviews with the consultant and ask this and other questions that the evaluation team might have.</p> <p>Not sure what you mean in part 2 of this question, but happy to discuss it with you. LMM – this just means who submits on the entities behalf to get reimbursed? Again, may depend on a Duncan vs Cochise County size agency. If the grant is to SEAGO they would manage and track all funds and get the payments. This is based on most grants being reimbursed so you have to pay first and get the money back. What I was going for was many systems require an online reimbursement system and there are many different ones in the Fed system. The consultant would have to be able to create and manage logins for all those systems if they do it – or the agency would if they are the ones responsible. This is the same thing with applying for grants – ie most federal are done with grants.gov so whoever applies has to be in the system. Not a critical point but something to surely cover in contract and/or interview process. RH – I think it would be the individual agencies who would submit reimbursement requests, unless they were to hire SEAGO to administer the grant.</p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
7.	Page 5	<p>Deliverables – Presuming this is the same as what will be measured. Last bullet point states at least 4 applications requesting a minimum of \$250K the first year. Is that 250K total for the year or per each of the 4 applications for an amount of \$1 million. A million would be a lofty goal (unrealistic to some extent knowing how limited grants are now) \$250K seems low again in comparison to the need of the 4 county region.</p>	<p>I was thinking of 4 applications totaling \$250K. Again, I didn't want to set the bar too high but wanted to establish some kind of benchmark. And \$250K seemed like a good place to start without discouraging smaller firms from submitting a proposal. LMM Understood, and it's a good benchmark, but again very low with the huge need of the 4 counties. I always weigh the amount of the grant vs the amount to manage it. For instance, 20K is a great amount if it's not a federal grant with time tracking to manage – once you factor in costs it really costs you more to get that amount than it's worth. My mind is going to the need for infrastructure and huge \$\$\$ RH – I think I'll leave this item as it is and if the Admin Council and Board want to increase it, it will be easy to make that adjustment if desired.</p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
8.	Page 6	<p>Selection Process – Qualification based is a good measurement vs price alone. This will be interesting as grant writers charge hourly or a lump sum amount based on the proposal. Usually in these types of PSA proposals they would give an hourly rate and that would be handled individually each time an entity enters into a specific contract? My concern is this may not be all that cost effective to entities when it’s all said and done, but it is easier than them finding, writing, managing grants. In our case, we could hire a consultant ourselves for roughly \$65 per hour. I would encourage outside grant experts be on the selection panel as well as SEAGO members.</p>	<p>This contract would be a not to exceed sum. I had originally included the budgeted not-to-exceed amount in the SCHEDULE AND COMPENSATION section but removed it so consultants wouldn’t have a target. I will put something back in there to indicate the price shall be a not-to-exceed cost. I don’t think hourly is the best way to go. RH – See Page 7 Revisions under SCHEDULE AND COMPENSATION. Also see Page 10, Revisions under INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT, DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION, Paragraph C.</p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
9.	Page 7	<p>Schedule and Compensation: Invoices – makes mention of all that is required of the consultant including W9. I would require the consultant have a DNB number as well as be registered in SAM.Gov as an extra checks and balance. Both of those are required for federal grants.</p>	<p>SEAGO or each member entity would be the applicants, not the consultant. The consultant will be neither the applicant nor the recipient of the funding. Since each community will have its own DNB number and SAM.gov registration, I don't see the need for the consultant to also have DNB or SAM.gov registration. LMM – I see the need for both in the event down the road the consultant gets paid for managing the grant? It's a good checks and balance system in that anyone who gets federal dollars must be in both systems. I doubt you'll have an issue – BUT it wouldn't be the first time a gov't agency (SEAGO in this case) is paying a consultant who is disbarred. That would not look good and it's really easy to do. Again, holds the standards bar high.</p> <p>RH – You make a good point about debarment. I think I can mitigate this risk with a debarment certification in the RFP and in the contract used to engage the consultant. I can also ask that they provide their DUNS and encourage them to register on SAM within the RFP. If the member entities want to require this, they can do so in their individual contracts with the consultant. (See Page 8 Revisions at the top of the page, and also under SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS, and Page 9 Revisions for debarment certification. A similar debarment certification has also been added to the contract that will be used to engage the consultant.)</p>

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
10.	Page 8	Federal Fund Usage: What if it's a federal grant? If you are the agency that receives a federal grant under this consultant agreement, can you not charge a portion or all of their cost to manage the grant? I think I see where Randy is going with this – sort of like not using federal funds for lobbying or doing business with Iraq or Sudan but this should be clarified.	The funds used to contract with the consultant are unrestricted (either SEAGO reserves or assessments as explained above). If a grant is awarded, the recipient can self administer the grant or they may enter into a contract with SEAGO to do so.
11.	Page 9	Disadvantages Business Enterprise: Many consultants are listed with the State for MBE/WBE/DBE contractors. This is important for some grant requirements. Is any point preference being given for that criteria? This is crucial for DOT/transportation related grants – maybe they should get preference (most federal contracts require that)	Since the funds used under this contract are unrestricted, MBE/WBE/DBE preference is not required. This section is simply a statement that these groups will be given equal opportunity under the solicitation. If a federal grant is awarded to SEAGO or a community to perform work requiring additional procurement activities (construction or professional services) this is where MBE/WBE/DBE status would need to be given preference.

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
12.	Page 9	Insurance – No requirement for Errors and Emissions insurance – just standard liability and workers comp?	I tried hard to imagine how much liability would be incurred under this contract or a contract arising out of this contract. I couldn't imagine anyone paying more than say \$5,000 to have their application prepared, submitted, and tracked. So they screw up someone's application. The affected party would probably still need to recover their costs in court – insurance or no insurance. And if SEAGO is dissatisfied with the consultant, we could cancel the contract, thereby limiting the damage, or simply not renew the following year. Again, I was thinking of not discouraging small mom and pop shops from applying, but if anyone can think of an exposure I'm not aware of, I can certainly add in a requirement for professional liability insurance.
13.	Page 10	C – Cost – As a note when you discuss travel. Since all entities are in Arizona, is the State of Arizona travel policy going to be referenced? I mention this because when we entered into our contract for an airport consultant, ADOT required us to reference that travel policy (since the airports are in AZ) We can pay the consultant more, BUT ADOT will NOT reimburse travel or OH costs above their policy. This could be nitpicky, but the take away is that if it's a state grant, only a portion of that will be reimbursed and SEAGO or the entity will have to pay the difference. Since this is a government contract, perhaps that State travel policy gets referenced to control cost???	All travel costs are to be included in the not-to-exceed amount. The consultant will need to estimate the amount of travel involved and include those costs in their proposal. I personally think an awful lot of the work can be accomplished telephonically or by video conferencing. Regardless, we won't be reimbursing travel expenses separately as that compromises the independent contractor status under IRS regulations.

**REVIEW COMMENTS
(CONTINUED)**

ITEM NO.	DWG, SHT, PAGE NO.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
14.	N/A	Where and how is the RFQ going to be posted? Just on the SEAGO website or is it going through the State or??	We will post it to our website, and our procurement regulations require region wide solicitations to be published in a newspaper in each county seat on two consecutive Wednesdays.
15.	N/A	No mention of cost to prepare this proposal? Normally there is a standard clause that no portion of the cost to prepare the RFQ would be reimbursed? This should be understood, but if it's not specifically mentioned (and he mentioned ALL the other stuff) we don't want to award the contract and have the first invoice be their hours to prepare the bid!	This is addressed in the SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS section. "Any costs incurred by Applicant in preparing the Proposal or incurred in any manner in responding to this document, may not be charged to SEAGO." I think it's also in our draft contract that will be used to engage the consultant, but will double check to make sure. RH – Also under SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS: "SEAGO assumes no obligations of any kind for expenses incurred by any response to this solicitation." I double checked the contract and it incorporates the RFP as part of the contract documents, so I think we're covered.