

Q&A for RFP 2020-7 Board Governance Consultant.

Q1. Page 1, I-3 - What is driving a need for a Board governance review at this time? When is the last time that a review of this type was performed? Was a report issued at that time? Would this report be made available to the consultant for this Project?

A1. PSERS Board of Trustees desires to stay abreast of current industry best practices regarding governance operations and related documentation. PSERS Board has not had a focused comprehensive review of this kind.

Q2. Page 2, I-11. A - Given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, may the proposal be submitted via email?

A2. Yes. Offerors may submit a complete response to this RFP to the Issuing Office, (cgusler@pa.gov) using the format provided in Section I-11B, providing a single electronic zip file without password or encryption and should be smaller than 30 megabits in total size. Included should be separate files for the Technical Submittal; the Cost Submittal; and the Small Diverse Business and Small Business (SDB/SB) Participation Submittal including related Letter(s) of Intent. The electronic submission must be in Microsoft Office Word or Microsoft Office Word compatible format and any spreadsheets must be in Microsoft Excel. The Offerors may not lock or protect any cells or tabs.

Q3. Page 4, I-15. Prime Contractor Responsibilities - In a situation where there is a partnership of equals among small diverse businesses, is there any flexibility on the percentage of the total contract value to be performed by the prime contractor, who is also a small diverse business?

A3. Regardless of their status as a small diverse business, the selected offeror is expected to perform at least 50% of the work.

Q4. Pages 9 through 11, II - A number of the hyperlinks provided within the document are not functioning when clicked, including all of the links in Part II, Pages 9 through 11, and page 17. Can you please provide this information separately?

A4.

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II-4. Evaluation Criteria.

A. Technical:

<http://www.dgs.pa.gov/Businesses/Materials%20and%20Services%20Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/default.aspx>.

PLEASE USE:

https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

B. Cost:

<http://www.dgs.pa.gov/Businesses/Materials%20and%20Services%20Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/default.aspx>.

PLEASE USE:

https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

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C. Small Diverse Business and Small Business Participation

5. http://www.dgs.pa.gov/Businesses/Materials%20and%20Services%20Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

PLEASE USE:

https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

D. Domestic Workforce Utilization:

http://www.dgs.pa.gov/Businesses/Materials%20and%20Services%20Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

PLEASE USE:

https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

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E. Iran Free Procurement Certification and Disclosure.

<http://www.dgs.pa.gov/businesses/materials%20and%20services%20procurement/procurement-resources/pages/default.aspx#.WDNfJJgo6Ht>

PLEASE USE:

<https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Documents/Procurement%20Forms/IranFreeProcurementCertificationForm.pdf>

PAGE 17 (Information and forms are all found in Appendix 6 of this RFP)

PART V - SMALL DIVERSE BUSINESS AND SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION SUBMITTAL

V-1. Small Diverse Business and Small Business General Information.

<https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Small%20Diverse%20Business%20Program/Pages/default.aspx>

PLEASE USE:

<https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Small%20Diverse%20Business%20Program/Small-Diverse-Business-Verification/Pages/default.aspx>

The Department's directory of self-certified Small Businesses and DGS/BDISBO-verified Small Diverse Businesses can be accessed from: <http://www.dgs.internet.state.pa.us/suppliersearch>

PAGE 18 (Information and forms are all found in Appendix 6 of this RFP)

The following documents are found in this RFP under Appendix 6 and are Addendums to the RFP, posted under RFP 2020-7 on eMarketplace

V.2 Small Diverse Business and Small Business (SDB/SB) Participation Submittal.

Letter of Intent

http://www.dgs.pa.gov/_layouts/download.aspx?SourceUrl=http://www.dgs.pa.gov/Documents/Procurement%20Forms/Small%20Diverse%20Business%20and%20Small%20Business%20Participation%20Submittal.xlsx

PLEASE USE:

<https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Small%20Diverse%20Business%20Program/Small-Diverse-Business-Procurement/Pages/default.aspx>

Q5. Page 12, III - Technical Submittal - If necessary, would select Board consultants also be available for interview?

A.5. Once the contract has been awarded the winning offeror would be permitted to interview existing Board consultants as part of their work plan.

Q6. Page 12, III - Technical Submittal - How many groups does PSERS prefer to include in the review of external stakeholder communication and transparency practices?

A6. PSERS does not have a recommended number of external stakeholders which would need to be included in the review of transparency and communication practices.

Q7. Page 12, III - Technical Submittal - Does PSERS have a specific Board meeting date in mind for the Consultant to review and verify the preliminary conclusions with the Board? Is Consultant also expected to present the final report to the Board?

A7. Assuming a signed contract by October 2020, the preliminary report would be delivered to the Board in August 2021 with a final report due in October 2021. The consultant is expected to present the final report.

Q8. Page 12, III - Technical Submittal - Does PSERS anticipate any project impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

A8. None at this time.

Q9. Page 13, III-3 - Training is called out separately from the project overview provided on page 12. How is PSERS envisioning this section to fit within the overall project scope (i.e., is it connected to the comparison of current Board education practices?).

A9. This is a standard provision on all PSERS RFPs. It is included in the event an offeror anticipates there will be a need to train PSERS staff in order to deliver the services requested in the RFP. It is not expected there will be a staff training requirement for this RFP.

Q10. Page 15, III-6. Reports and Project Control. Status Report - What is the preferred period by which PSERS would like to receive project progress reports?

A10. It is left to the judgement of the offeror to identify the best cycle for reports based on their work plan.

Q11. Page 15, III-6A. Problem Identification Report - What anticipated problems should the Problem Identification Report address? Are the problems anticipated to relate to the project plan or the scope of work?

A11. We do not anticipate any problems. Unanticipated problems could be related to either scope of work or the project plan. If a problem does arise we expect it to be communicated using this report.

Q12. Page 15, III-6B. Final Report - The project overview on page 12 refers to one final report of conclusions and recommendations. This section refers to multiple final reports for each task area. Please clarify PSERS' expectation.

A12. PSERS expects one final report.

Q13. Page 30, Appendix 2 - Domestic Workforce Utilization Certification - Is the expectation that this form is notarized?

A13. No.

Q14. Is the goal of this assessment to assist PSERS in becoming an industry leader in North America on board governance?

A14. The goal is to assess PSERS Board of Trustees governance and how they compare with their peer group.

Q15. Can you please provide additional background on the driver for conducting this assessment?

A15. PSERS Board of Trustees desires to stay abreast of current industry best practices regarding governance operations and related documentation.

Q16. Due to recent events our offices are closed for physical access until further notice, is it possible to submit the RFP response and SDB/DB participation submittal in pdf. format via e-mail in lieu of the ten (10) paper copies [one marked "ORIGINAL"] of the Technical Submittal and one (1) paper copy of the Cost Submittal and two (2) paper copies of the Small Diverse Business and Small Business (SDB/SB) Participation Submittal including related Letter(s) of Intent. In addition to the paper copies of the proposal, Offerors shall submit one complete and exact copy of the entire proposal (Technical, Cost and SDB/SB submittals, along with all requested documents) on CD-ROM or Flash drive in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office compatible format.

A16. Yes. See answer to Question 2.

Q17. Is the investment due diligence process considered to be in scope for this review?

A17. This review is focused on the actions and oversight of the Board, not the Investment Office. To the degree that investment due diligence is part of the Board's governance process, it could be considered within the scope.

Q18. Will the selected consultant be able to interview key external service providers, such as the investment consultants, the external auditor, the actuary, etc., as part of this review?

A18. Yes.

Q19. When was the last time PSERS had a governance review conducted? Assuming there was one, is the final report from that review available to bidders? See Question 1. PSERS Board has not had a focused comprehensive review of this kind.

Q20. Have any independent outside reviews of PSERS been conducted in recent years? If so, are they available to bidders?

A20. The Pennsylvania Auditor General conducted a performance audit of PSERS in May 2017. The results can be found on the Auditor's General website.

Q21. Has PSERS participated in any investment benchmarking studies in recent years, for example, with CEM Benchmarking? If so, will the selected consultant have access to the reports?

A21. PSERS will be participating this year. We had summary reports in previous years. The selected consultant may have access to the reports when they are completed.

Q22. Has PSERS participated in any pension administration benchmarking studies in recent years, for example, with CEM Benchmarking? If so, will the selected consultant have access to the reports?

A22. PSERS does participate in the CEM Benchmarking Services. Yes, the reports would be available. They may, however, be of limited value since the focus of this RFP is the Board of Trustees governance process. (e.g. Board policies, Board communications, Board education, Board operations, etc.)

Q23. If Offeror currently provides governance services to PSERS under another contract, may Offeror bid on this current RFP? If so, if Offeror were to win the bid for this proposal, can Offeror no longer provide services under the current contract?

A23. If the offeror provides services under another contract they may also bid on this contract. If the offeror is selected they would still be permitted to provide services under both contracts.

Q24. Can you provide more background on Part III-3 Training on page 13 of the RFP. Is the training of "agency personnel" referring to the Offeror's personnel, or to PSERS' personnel?

A24. See answer to Q9.

Q25. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Offeror has established a remote, work from home policy for the safety of our colleagues and clients. Due to this situation, it is administratively very difficult to obtain original signatures at this time. May Offeror submit a bid with a copy of an electronic signature?

A25. Yes, the bid may be submitted with an electronic signature.