

What's in a typical Federal Government RFP?

Federal Government RFP format and composition is mandated by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). They are typically broken down into sections that are identified by letter. Here is a list of what is in each section:

Section A. Information to Offerors or Quoters

Identifies the title of the procurement, procurement number, point of contact (POC), how to acknowledge amendments and how to indicate “No Response” if you decide not to bid. Section A often appears as a one page form.

Section B. Supplies or Services and Price/Costs

This is where you provide your pricing. It defines the type of contract, identifies Contract Line Items (CLINs), and Subcontract Line Items (SLINs) that identify billable items, describes the period of performance, identifies option periods (if any), and provides cost and pricing guidelines. This section is often presented and responded to in tabular form.

Section C. Statement of Work (SOW)

Describes what the Government wants you to do or supply. Outside of your pricing, most of your proposal will be responding to this section, tell them how you will deliver what they need. Sometimes this section is contained in a separate appendix and is frequently associated with other appendices in Section J with other details to enable the bidder to understand the nature and scope of the tasks requested in Section C.

Section D. Packages and Marking

Defines how all contract deliverables such as reports and material will be packaged and shipped. This information is important as these instructions may effect costs and raise logistics issues.

Section E. Inspection and Acceptance

Describes the process by which the Government will officially accept deliverables and what to do if the work is not accepted. This can also affect costs and identifies tasks you must be prepared to undertake.

Section F. Deliveries or Performance

Defines how the Government Contracting Officer will control the work performed and how you will deliver certain contract items.

Section G. Contract Administrative Data

Describes how the Government Contracting Officer and your firm will interact and how information will be exchanged in administration of the contract to ensure both performance and prompt payment.

Section H. Special Contract Requirements

Contains a range of special contract requirements important to this particular procurement, such as procedures for managing changes to the original terms of the contract, government furnished equipment (GFE) requirements, and government furnished property (GFP) requirements.

Section I. Contract Clauses/General Provisions

Identifies the contract clauses incorporated by reference in the RFP. These clauses will be incorporated into the contract. While it doesn't require a separate response, it's terms will be binding.

Section J. Attachments, Exhibits

Lists the appendices to the RFP. These attachments can cover a wide range of subjects ranging from technical specifications through lists of GFE. It generally is used to provide data you need in order to respond to the Statement of Work.

Section K. Representations/Certifications and Statements of Offerors

Contains things that you must certify to bid on this contract. These can include things such as certification that you have acted according to procurement integrity regulations, your taxpayer identification, the status of personnel, ownership of your firm, type of business organization, authorized negotiators, that your facilities are not segregated, that you comply with affirmative action guidelines, whether you qualify as a small business, disadvantaged business, and/or women owned business, etc.

Section L. Proposal Preparation Instructions and Other

Provides instructions for preparing your proposal. These include any formatting requirements, how they want the material organized/outlined, how to submit questions regarding the RFP or procurement, how the proposal is to be delivered, and sometimes notices, conditions, or other instructions.

Section M. Evaluation Criteria

Defines the factor, subfactors, and elements used to "grade" the proposal. Proposals are graded and then cost is considered to determine who wins the award and gets the contract.