State of Rhode Island

Department of Administration
Division of Purchases
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) – BID# 7534367

RFP TO PROVIDE TESTING SERVICES OF CONTRACTOR LICENSES, COMMERCIAL ROOFERS AND HOME INSPECTORS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Tuesday, November 26, 2013 at 10:00 AM (ET)

PRE-BID CONFERENCE: ☒ **NO**
☐ **YES** _____

Mandatory: ☐ **NO**
☐ **YES:** Any vendor who intends to submit a bid proposal in response to this solicitation must have its designated representative attend the mandatory pre-bid conference. The representative must register at the pre-bid conference and disclose the identity of the vendor whom he/she represents. Because attendance at the pre-bid conference is mandatory, a vendor's failure to attend and register at the pre-bid conference shall result in disqualification of the vendor's bid proposal as non-responsive to the solicitation.

Buyer Name: **David A. Cadoret**
Title: **Chief Buyer**

QUESTIONS concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at (bidinfo@purchasing.ri.gov) no later than (Thursday, November 14, 2013, 5:00 PM (ET)). Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the bid number (Bid #7534367) on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Rhode Island Division of Purchases website as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

SURETY REQUIRED: **NO**

BOND REQUIRED: **NO**

DISK BASED BID: ☒ **NO**
☐ **YES:** See attached Disk Based Bidding Information

NOTE TO VENDORS:
Vendors must register on-line at the Rhode Island Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov. Offers received without the completed four-page Rhode Island Vendor Information Program (RIVIP) Generated Bidder Certification Cover Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB) is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide testing services Contractor licenses, as described elsewhere herein, and testing services for commercial roofers, home inspector, Well Drillers and Pump Installers licenses; in accordance with the terms of this Request and the State's General Conditions of Purchases, which is available on the Internet at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
The target start date for the examination (Testing) program would be December 1, 2013.

This is a Request for Proposals, not an Invitation for Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Division of Purchases pursuant to this Request, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

2. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.

3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the vendor. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.

4. Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than 120 days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.

5. All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.

6. Proposals misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Division at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division.

7. It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibility for all

aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered. Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor's proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used is identified in the proposal.

8. All proposals should include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9, downloadable from the Division's website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

9. The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.

10. Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFP will be considered to be Public Records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.

11. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP.

12. Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies to all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Opportunity Office at (401) 222-3090.

13. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the State until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).

14. The vendor should be aware of the State's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State's goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, contact the MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or visit the website www.mbe.ri.gov or contact charles.newton@doa.ri.gov.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) under sections 5-65, 5-65.1, 5-65.2, 5-73 The Contractor Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB) is authorized to test stated contractors herein and establish a License for these contractors and have a computer based examination for each Licenses under the contract that is awarded from this RFP.

GUIDELINES

1. Preferably, licensing examinations should be done on a weekly basis. All of the application fees will be paid to the state, and all of the examination fees will be paid directly to the Vendor by the applicant.

2. The Vendor will prepare all of the letters that are to be sent to the applicants for examination with the time, date and place of the examination to be included.

3. **Security-** The Vendor must maintain the highest level of security/monitoring before and during all aspects of the examination

Specific Requirements

1. Vendor must have ten (10) years of experience in providing and administering a similar examination in order to qualify and administer the examination.
2. Vendor must have positive references from other examination sites who have administered similar testing qualities within the State of Rhode Island or with other states who administer similar examinations.
3. Vendor must be equipped to accept examination credit cards.
4. Must be an approved NASCLA provider.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK

General Scope of Work

The Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board is looking for a vendor that will administer the examinations, conduct reviews of examinations and process the re-examination if the applicant fails the examination. The contract would be written for a period of five (5) years with a renewable clause for annual extensions. The following is an overview of the project. The vendor's security and implementation plans will be the most important criteria in evaluation the proposals.

Specific Activities / Tasks

EXAM SITE

1. The Vendor must be able to give examinations five days a week (if needed), and one or two nights. This would depend upon the applicants' availability.
2. There should be no more than 25 candidates taking the examination at one time.
3. A proctor must be in the examination room to monitor the candidates at all times during the examination period.
4. There shall be appropriate spacing between the candidates while they are taking the examination.
5. If more than one examination is given for a license at the same time, the examination must be scrambled to prevent cheating.
6. There should be an accessible restroom near the examination room.
7. There should be fire exits in and near the examination room.
8. Examination site/examination room must be handicap accessible.
9. The primary examination site must be within The State of Rhode Island and within 20 miles of One Capitol Hill Providence, RI 02908

EXAMS

1. Vendor will be responsible for the testing brochures/materials, and the vendor will be responsible for printing the examinations after they have been approved by Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board.
2. Test Questions- The Vendor must work with the Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board in reviewing the process of making up the examination questions that are to be entered into the computer. All examinations vary between 25-60 questions depending on the category for which an applicant is being tested. The Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board will work with the Vendor in pooling questions for the examination.
3. The examination results will be sent electronically to the applicant at the completion of the testing.
4. All examination communication (CRLB) shall be sent electronically.
5. Listed below are License and the number of categories within each trade to be examined:
    a. Home Inspector License and Associate 2 categories
    b. Commercial Roofers
    c. Well Drillers 4 categories
    d. Pump Installers
    e. Filtration Systems
    f. Combination Well Driller/ Pump Install

FEES

1. The vendor will charge the applicant a fee for review of the examination, any re-examination, oral examination and interpreters required for the examination (This is to be approved by the CRLB).
2. There will be no exchange of money between the State of Rhode Island and the Vendor. The Vendor must charge an examination fee that is that is approved by the (CRLB).

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Narrative and format: The separate technical proposal should address specifically each of the required elements:

1. Service Providers Understanding of the Requirements

2. Work plan - Please describe in detail.

3. Staff Qualifications – Provide staff resumes/CV and describe qualifications and experience of key staff who will be involved in this project.

4. Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications of the Offeror - Please provide a detailed description of the Vendor's experience.

5. Approach/Methodology – Define the methodology to be used for the process for accurate and time examinations.

6. Security- How will provider insure that the exam procedure and environment met

SECTION 5: COST PROPOSAL

Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative:

Provide a proposal for fees charged for each exam classification under exam section (a-f) in this document.

Sections (a-f) will be totaled and an average fee determined for selection of vender the State is looking to get the best value for each of license examinations

SECTION 6: EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Review Committee comprised of staff from state agencies. To advance to the Cost Evaluation phase, the Technical Proposal must receive a minimum of 60 out of a maximum of 70 technical points. Any technical proposals scoring

less than 60 points will not have the cost component opened and evaluated. The proposal will be dropped from further consideration.

Proposals scoring 60 technical points or higher will be evaluated for cost and assigned up to a maximum of 30 points in cost category, bringing the potential maximum score to 100 points.

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based upon the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Service Providers	10 Points
Work plan	20 Points
Staff Qualifications	10 Points
Capability	10 Points
Approach/Methodology	10 Points
Security	10 Points
Total Possible Technical Points	**70 Points**
Cost calculated as lowest responsive cost proposal divided by (this cost proposal) times 30 points *	30 Points
Total Possible Points	**100 Points**

Cost will be determined by avenging the six exam fees to produce an average fee.

*The Low bidder will receive one hundred percent (100%) of the available points for cost. All other bidders will be awarded cost points based upon the following formula:

(low bid / vendors bid) * available points

For example: If the low bidder (Vendor A) bids $65,000 and Vendor B bids $100,000 for monthly cost and service fee and the total points available are Thirty (30), vendor B's cost points are calculated as follows:

$65,000 / $100,000 * 30= 19.5

The Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board reserves the exclusive right to select the individual(s) or firm (vendor) that it deems to be in its best interest to accomplish the project as specified herein; and conversely, reserves the right not to fund any proposal(s).

Points will be assigned based on the offeror's clear demonstration of his/her abilities to complete the work, apply appropriate methods to complete the work, create innovative solutions and quality of past performance in similar projects.

Applicants may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the technical review committee to clarify statements made in their proposal. Applicants may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the Technical Review Committee to clarify statements made in their proposal.

SECTION 7: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by this Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

Responses **(an original plus four (4) copies)** should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked RFP #7534367 to:

RI Dept. of Administration
Division of Purchases, 2nd floor
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5855

NOTE: Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed, or emailed, to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

RESPONSE CONTENTS
Responses shall include the following:

1. A completed and signed four-page R.I.V.I.P generated bidder certification cover sheet downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

2. A completed and signed W-9 downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

3. **A separate Technical Proposal** describing the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with and for similar projects, and all information described earlier in this solicitation. The Technical Proposal is limited to six (6) pages (this excludes any appendices). As appropriate, resumes of key staff that will provide services covered by this request.

4. **A separate, signed and sealed Cost Proposal** reflecting the hourly rate, or other fee structure, proposed to complete all of the requirements of this project.

5. In addition to the multiple hard copies of proposals required, Respondents are requested to provide their proposal in **electronic format (CD-Rom, disc, or flash drive)**. Microsoft Word / Excel OR PDF format is preferable. Only 1 electronic copy is requested and it should be placed in the proposal marked "original".

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in its best interest.

Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.

The State may, at its sole option, elect to require presentation(s) by offerors clearly in consideration for award.

The State's General Conditions of Purchase contain the specific contract terms, stipulations and affirmations to be utilized for the contract awarded to the RFP. The State's General Conditions of Purchases/General Terms and Conditions can be found at the following URL: https://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/publicdocuments/ATTA.pdf

SECTION 8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/CLARIFICATION

The following clarifies certain items within the bid documents.

(A)

1. p. 3, Introduction. Please clarify the start date of December 1, 2013. Does this refer to the start of the contract period or the start of test administration? Implementation activities for new contracts, including examination development for all test categories and test center selection, can typically require up to six months of start-up time.

* The Board wanted to be able to have a test in place so they could begin to License Home Inspectors, Commercial Roofers, and Well / Pump installers by January 1, 2014; however, if need be, could delay process until a test is established but hope it could be developed soon. Hoping that test center could be utilized that provides other professional examinations and development of examination would be similar to others provided in neighboring states.

2. p. 5, General Scope of Work. Please describe the requirements for examination reviews.

* Board has not established any specific requirements for review in we have never had a testing element to deal with and would work with vendor in this regard.

3. p. 6, Exams, #5. Does CRLB plan to add additional examination categories to this contract, such as Mechanical, Hoisting Engineers, Plumbing/Irrigators, Electrical, Telecommunications, or Elevators?

* Not at this time in that those programs are regulated by another state department. We do hope to consider moving from a registration requirement for builders to a license in the future. Currently only Home Inspectors, Commercial Roofers and Well / Pump installers are required to be part of this proposal.

4. p. 6, Exams. Please provide candidate volumes for the most recent year by test category.

* We do not know the volume of those that need to be licensed in that we have never licensed these categories before, but believe it would be in the range of 150 per category. Currently we only register commercial roofers and have 143.

5. p. 6, Exams. Please provide the time allowed and number of questions for each exam.

* The Board would follow vendors suggestion in regard to time allocation and questions as long as sufficient to provide minimum requirements for theses disciplines.

6. p. 6, Exams. Are there multiple required portions for any exam categories?

* Yes, may involve other disciplines.

7. p. 6, Exams. Does CRLB have rules regarding retakes?

* Not yet established. Would take recommendations and work with vendor in this regard.

8. p. 6, Exams. Does CRLB own the current bank of test questions? How many questions are in the bank for each exam category? Will the current test questions be made available to the successful vendor, and in what format? What kind of statistics will be available to the vendor?

*Currently have not tested any contractors, only register them. No question bank or statistics are available.

9. p. 7, Fees. Are there any statutory fee caps associated with the services required by this RFP?

* No. Would like to keep costs to contractors or inspectors reasonable.

10. p. 7, Fees. Please list all current fees paid by candidates, including examination, review, retake, oral exam, and interpreter fees, as well as any other applicable fees.

* None. Only fee we get is the registration fee which would be separate and not part of test. Vendor would establish fee schedule and Board would have approvals.

11. p. 7, Fees. Are oral examinations for ADA candidates only? Or can any candidate request an oral examination?

* ADA candidates only as needed.

(B)

1. p.4, #14. The MBE requirements referenced here are not included in the proposal format and submission sections found later in the RFP. Should vendors submit an MBE subcontracting plan with their proposals?

* Yes. Plan called utilization can be downloaded if necessary from MBE website.

2. p. 7, Technical Proposal, #5. "Approach/Methodology - Define the methodology to be used for the process for accurate and time examinations." Please clarify and provide additional details on this requirement.

* Depending on the nature of the questions being asked or calculations required would determine the allocation of sufficient time needed which should be vendor's responsibility. Board would rely on expertise of professional test provider.

3. p. 9, Response Contents, #3. "The Technical Proposal is limited to six (6) pages (this excludes any appendices)." The type and extent of information required by Section 4: Technical Proposal on page 7 seems to conflict with the six-page limit. Please confirm whether or not vendors should conform to this page limit.

* Not Limited.