

Questions/Answers #5: May 12, 2009

1. For recently announced MDOT research RFPs, would consulting firms need any prequalification to respond?

No. All proposals that meet the RFP and MDOT submission guidelines will be considered.

2. 5100I, 5100D, and 5100G are considered required forms which the proposal guidelines state should be placed in the appendices section. It just seems a little odd to have a form called the Cover Sheet, and to place it anywhere but on top. Can you clarify where you intended these to be placed in our submissions?

The required forms 5100I, 5100D, and 5100G are required by MDOT for all proposals and not specific to these RFPs so shall be placed in the front of the submission package.

The referenced forms in the ORBP RFP Submission Guidelines are in reference to ORBP's required forms, Appendix A: Deliverables, Appendix B: Schedule of Research Activities, Appendix C: Implementation Plan, Appendix D: Proposed Budget. All other appendices that the proposer adds at the proposer discretion are to be placed in the appendix.

3. Does double-sided printing apply to the entire proposal package? ("Package" including cover page, title page, TOC, proposal body, appendices and required forms.)

Double sided printing applies to the body of the proposal (up to 20 pages). The title page, cover page, and TOC are not required to be printed double sided. The required appendices and additional appendices may be printed double sided at proposer discretion.

4. Does the required consecutive page numbering apply to the body of the proposal including the appendices or does this apply to ALL pages in the proposal package?

The required consecutive page numbering applies to the body of the proposal (up to 20 pages) only and should be numbered using 1-20. The cover page, title page, and TOC are not required to be numbered, but may be numbered at the proposer discretion. If the proposer chooses to number the cover page, title page, and TOC, or any of the Appendices, a numbering system that is separate from the 1-20 numbering system used in the body of the proposal shall be used. Required Appendices A-D are not required to be numbered.

5. Are consecutive page numbers required on all pages in the proposal package including the required forms (5100I, G, and D), cover page, title page, TOC, etc.?

No, consecutive page numbers are required for the body of the proposal (up to 20 pages) only, but are acceptable at the proposer's discretion. See Question #4 above for appropriate page numbering criteria for non-proposal body page numbering.

6. Is a heavier stock cover paper required for ink and date stamping. If so, heavy stock on both front and back?

Heavier stock paper is preferred and encouraged for date stamping on the front page, but not required. Heavier stock is not required on the back page.

7. Will responses to the RFP postings fall under contracts or umbrella agreements currently in place between MDOT and the proposer?

No. The selected vendor will operate under a newly executed IDS Research Contract, using the appropriate research indirect cost rate for the individual institution.

8. In review of the Proposal Submission Guidelines for the Research Services RFPs a question was raised regarding travel rates for budgeting and reimbursement if awarded. In consultation with our Sponsored Programs Office we were instructed that it is University policy to use Federal rate guidelines. The justification provided is that University employees are not recognized as State employees by many establishments requiring proof of State employment to secure State rates.

If we declare upfront in our budget narrative that Federal travel rates are standard policy of our University, will our proposals be considered for award or will this eliminate our proposals from further consideration or in anyway jeopardize our opportunity for doing business with MDOT?

Staff from universities receiving state subsidies are, in most cases, granted the state travel rates by hotels and modes of transportation within Michigan. The vendors willing to grant state travel rates should be chosen. All travel expenses paid by the state are by legislative action required to follow the Standardized Travel Regulations for the State of Michigan.

9. The attached guidelines require appendices A through D. Could you please provide the form templates, or let us know where we may download them?

All required forms can either be found at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdotresearch> or http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9625_21540---,00.html.

10. Please clarify which set of guidelines should be used for Research Proposals, what the proposal page limits are and what will happen if a proposal goes over the limit.

All submittals for research proposals will be strictly held to the information provided in the ORBP Research Proposal Guidelines which can be found viewed at http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9625_32842---,00.html.

11. It was noted that some of the RFPs have references to current and past research relating to the specific research topic. If no past research is listed, can we assume that MDOT has not performed research in the past on this topic?

No, especially concerning the problem statements that were submitted from external sources. This information was not thoroughly confirmed prior to posting the RFPs.

12. Is a sample copy of the IDS research contract available for review?

There are two different IDS contracts for research projects; one that is specifically for research done at universities, and one for non-university researchers. The draft university IDS for research projects posted at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdotresearch> will be very similar to the non-standardized IDS that would be used for non-university research vendors.

13. Are the budgets provided in the RFPs predefined? i.e. - does the budget dictate scope or does scope dictate budget?

The budget submitted can not exceed the amount of the budget specified in the RFP.

14. Are tab dividers included in the 20 page limit?

No.

15. On page 4 of the MDOT Office of Research & Best Practices Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines, in the third paragraph the guidelines state to "Attach Appendix B to the narrative." Are the forms in Appendix A, B, C, and D of the guidelines that are to be included in the submittal supposed to be included in the main section of the proposal or in an appendix to the proposal? If they are included in the main section of the proposal, are they included in the 20 page limit?

On page 1 of the MDOT Office of Research & Best Practices Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines, in the sixth paragraph, above the bolded Cover Page section, it states, "Proposals are limited to twenty (20) pages in length, excluding the cover page, title page, table of contents, and appendices. All required forms are to be submitted as appendices." The forms in the appendices of the guidelines are required forms and should be included as part of the appendices to all proposals submitted.

16. Will you provide the link to the current travel rate schedule for the State of Michigan?

You may find the current state travel schedule at the following link:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dmb/ttrateJan2009_259895_7.pdf

17. Are resumes constrained to 1.5 line spacing or can they be single spaced?

Single spacing may be used on resumes as they are appendices and not part of the 20 page proposal that is required to have 1.5 line spacing. Note that resumes are limited to 2 pages in length. If a resume is difficult to read or the type is too small to clearly read, it will detract from the overall cleanness of the proposal, so it is suggested to use no less than 10 pt. font on the resume.

18. Is the cover page referred to on page 1 of the MDOT Office of Research & Best Practices Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines the same as the "Request for Cover Page" form or is it necessary to include a separate cover page in the proposal?

The cover page of the proposal that is referenced in the MDOT Office of Research & Best Practices Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines is not the same cover page form 5100D, Request for Proposal Cover Sheet. The 5100D Request for Proposal Cover Sheet is a required form for all RFP submissions. The proposer must submit both the 5100D as well as a cover sheet for the project proposal itself.

19. Are tab dividers included in the 20 page limit?

No. Tab dividers may be included in the proposal and will not count toward the 20 page limit of the narrative.

20. On page 4 of the MDOT Office of Research & Best Practices Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines, the third paragraph the guidelines states to "Attach Appendix B to the narrative." Are the forms in Appendix A, B, C, and D of the guidelines that are to be included in the submittal supposed to be included in the main section of the proposal or in an appendix to the proposal? If they are included in the main section of the proposal, are they included in the 20 page limit?

The Appendices A through D and all other appendices are to be attached to the end of the proposal. None of the appendices are included in the 20 page limit.

21. Can you clarify the addresses for delivery when mailing the proposal Overnight/Express? Currently there are two zip codes listed for the same address.

With confirmation from the mail authorities, the correct zip code for overnight delivery is 48933.

- 22. Appendix A, Final Report Section, under Comments, "See chapter 5 of MDOT's Research and Implementation Manual for standards and submittal requirements for the final report (approximately 800 words)." Is 800 words correct? That is only 2.5 pages, single spaced. I don't find any reference to "number of words" in the "MDOT's Research and Implementation Manual"**

The "approximately 800 words" notation in Appendix A should be viewed as a minimum. There is not a limitation on the number of words or pages of a final report. The primary goal of the final report is to accurately, clearly, concisely and completely document the research, its results, findings and conclusions in a professional manner. The length of the report will be dependant upon the type of research and resultant findings and conclusions.

- 23. In the ORBP Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines document it states in the fourth paragraph on page #14 that a start date should not be specified. However, due dates for reports/deliverables are required to be input in the Deliverable Table. Can you please advise how this should be handled?**

You can use a proposed start date and suggest due dates accordingly or you can use month designations. For example, for an 18 month project, a draft of the final report will be due to MDOT by the end of the 15th month of the project.

Questions/Answers #6: May 14, 2009

- 24. Could you please verify whether the RFPs are considered to be Tier II or Tier III selections?**

Per the Request for Proposal Cover Sheet, "This is Best Value Selection which means the budget amount submitted with the proposal is a component of the proposal score, not the determining factor of the selection."

The Research Requests for Proposals are Best Value, not a Tier II or III, proposals.

- 25. What are the dates of Michigan's fiscal year?**

October 1 through September 30. Accordingly, fiscal year 2010 begins October 1, 2009.

- 26. If we, a corporation, are utilizing a university as a subconsultant, should we prepare our itemized budget using the Priced Proposal Guidelines, dated December 2008, and add the university's cost as a subcontractor line item? Or should we prepare our costs separately, with us using the Priced Proposal Guidelines, and the university using the Proposed Budget form Appendix D?**

All non-universities must submit a budget according to the MDOT Priced Proposal Guidelines found on the Vendor/Consultant Web Page at: http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9625_21540---,00.html (Scroll down the page to the Priced Proposal Guidelines. Forms are contained within the guidelines.)

All subconsultants will appear as a line item on this budget. If this proposal is selected for funding, then MDOT will require a detailed budget submitted from the subconsultant as well. If the subconsultant is a university, then they will need to use the ORBP budget form described as Appendix D of the Research Proposal Submission Guidelines.

Questions/Answers #7: May 18, 2009

- 27. The ORBP research proposal formatting and submission guidelines state "All proposals must contain the following sections:" and includes Article for ORBP Newsletter, Participation in Project Kick-Off Meeting, Participation in Project Review Session, and Participation in Project Wrap-Up Meeting. Should those sections be included in the proposal or are they simply required elements of the project?**

All of these elements must be considered and addressed in your proposal. These elements must be part of the project's work plan and reflected appropriately in all other applicable appendices.

- 28. The ORBP research proposal formatting and submission guidelines require Appendix A-D, but on page five of guidelines, it also says the following sections must be submitted as appendices:**

- * Facilities
- * Qualifications of Research Team
- * Other Commitments of the Research Team

Do these need to be in any particular order, and should they be placed after the required Appendix A-D?

The additional appendices should be included in the order described in the Research Proposal Submission Guidelines, or to support a logical and clear flow of information.

29. Is the Deadline 5/26 for post mark date or Received date? As you know 5/25 is holiday & FedEX, & UPS is not working. can this deadline be extend it?

The deadline of Tuesday, May 26, was derived with the knowledge that Monday, May 25, is a holiday. This does not change the requirement that all submittals must be received by ORBP no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2009.

30. What is JN#? We know OR #. Can we use OR #?

JN normally stands for job number. This number is usually generated by the state's accounting system and not ORBP. If the form in question does not have a field for the OR number, you can use the OR number when and where the "JN#" is requested (5100G and 5100I). If the form does have a field for the OR number, please leave the JN# blank.

31. Can we pay students Tuition and Salary as we used to do for any other funded projects.

No, you can not.

32. Does everyone (including PI & Co-PI) need to fill out and sign forms (5100G & 5100I)? Or just the consultants?

In most situations these terms are interchangeable and the PI would be considered the consultant. Any entity submitting a proposal will be required to submit both the 5100G and 5100I forms.

33. Can we use percentage of time instead of number of hours in the Budget?

All projects must be invoiced for actual hours. There will be a set duration, in months, for the project. Therefore, an estimate of the number of hours will be required on the budget.

34. In the Cover Sheet, who is the Prime Consultant in the Cover sheet? The University who is submitting the proposal?

The Prime Consultant is the entity submitting the proposal compared to any proposed subcontracting entities. If a university or university staff submits a proposal, they will be the Prime Consultant.

35. Is the reference section counted as part of the 20 pages? Please advise.

If you are referring to the appendices section as the reference section, then no, the appendices section will not be counted as part of the 20 pages. If you are referring to information other than what has been specified to be included as an appendix, please use the terminology in the Research Proposal Submission Guidelines for clarification.

36. Do the two page resumes need to be in a particular MDOT-specified format?

No, they do not.

37. Based on what I've read, to be compliant, it will be a combination of using the Office of Research & Best Practices SPR, Part II, Program RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORMATTING AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES (is there a "part I" to this?) and the Guidelines for the Preparation of Priced Proposals?

Yes, for non-university entities submitting proposals, both the Office of Research & Best Practices SPR, Part II, Program Research Proposal Formatting and Submission Guidelines and the Guidelines for the Preparation of Priced Proposals must be followed. Part II refers to the research part of the Statewide Planning and Research Federal Program. Part I would refer to the planning portion of this program.

38. On the MDOT Schedule of Research Activities form, the note states: "A Technical Memo will be submitted to the PM & RM at the end of each non-deliverable task." Can you define RM? I assume it is Research Manager, but would like verification.

Yes, RM stands for Research Manager. You can read more about a Research Manager's role and responsibilities on page 25, Section 4.3.3.2, of MDOT's Research and Implementation Manual found on ORBP's Web site <http://www.michigan.gov/mdotresearch>, as well as on other pages of the manual.

Questions/Answers #8: May 19, 2009

39. So to clarify, put the subconsultant as a line item and after the project is awarded, MDOT will require a detailed budget be submitted? (References question 26.)

Yes, you must put your cost for the subconsultant as a line item on your detailed budget that you submit with your proposal. If your proposal to MDOT is chosen for funding, MDOT must approve your agreement with the subconsultant for the project, including their budget and work plan for this project.

40. What are the eligibility requirements? The individual planning to submit the proposal is a faculty member in the Civil Engineering and Construction Department at a private not-for-profit institution of higher education. I just wanted to confirm that this fits within the eligibility criteria.

There is not a prequalification or eligibility requirement to submit a proposal.

- 41. Are funds provided to support this program provided via The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)? This information will just help our Controller's office in determining the reporting mechanism, etc. should the proposal receive funding.**

None of the research RFPs posted on MDOT's Request for Proposals Web site will utilize ARRA funds. It is a requirement that all of our postings include the ARRA information sheet, but none of these proposals qualify for these funds. The research proposals listed under Research Services are for Federal Statewide Planning and Research, Part II, research dollars.

- 42. On projects that have a one year period of performance, can the schedule of research activities be shortened to one FY (i.e. only show 2010)? The guidelines state that forms cannot be "manipulated," and if this is the case I will leave the two years in, but blank.**

Please leave any of the areas that do not pertain to your proposal blank. Do not delete or manipulate the layout of any of the forms. Thank you.

- 43. There is a note in the guidelines (p 4) that specifies that the work time cost could be an appendix and not part of the 20 page overall narrative limit. However, are the implementation form and budget form considered part of the 20 page limit, as they are to be inserted in the narrative?**

None of the required forms are to be considered as part of the 20 page limited narrative.

- 44. Can you define the term partnering agency as used on page 4 of the Submission Guidelines? Does this include subcontractors and subconsultants?**

The terms "partnering agency," "subcontractor" and "subconsultant" are interchangeable.

- 45. On Page 4 of the Submission Guidelines it specifies the need for a partnering agency agreement. Are partnering agreements required for ALL MDOT submission? If not, can we disregard these instructions if we do not have a partnering agency?**

Correct, if you are not utilizing or proposing the use of a "partnering agency," "subcontractor" or "subconsultant" than a partnering agreement is not required.

- 46. I was asking about the references that are cited for the lit review for the main part of the proposal? Should these pages that include the cited references are part of the 20 pages. (References question 35.)**

References cited for the literature reviews will be considered as part of the 20 page limited narrative.