



Heron Point; Hancock County, Mississippi

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**PURPOSE: TO SELECT STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN COLLABORATIVE
APPLICATIONS RESEARCH WITH THE
NATIONAL OCEANS AND APPLICATIONS RESEARCH CENTER**

Requesting Organization
National Oceans and Applications Research Center
7250 Stennis Airport Drive
Suite 206
Kiln, MS 39556

Point of Contact; Mr. Quinn Houchin, 228.688.2590, qhouchin@noarc.org

Release Date: 17 December 2018
Due Date: 1 February 2019
No Later Than 5:00 pm CST

The National Oceans and Applications Research Center (NOARC) will accept Statements of Qualifications (SoQ) from qualified firms or individuals for in connection with the NOARC – Planning Assistance award (the “Project”). This project will be funded by the United States Department of the Treasury, through the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, as described in Attachment A: “Advertisement – Request for Qualifications”.

□ **Opportunity**

The National Oceans and Applications Research Center (NOARC) invites interested organizations to submit statements of qualifications that will be used to select a team of strategic partners to collaborate on applications themes focused on Mississippi Gulf Coast restoration objectives. Anticipated applications themes will focus initially on mapping and monitoring coastal wetlands, watersheds, and near-shore benthic habitats.

We expect this RFQ process to result in contracts with strategic partner companies and organizations under the terms and conditions of the NOARC Collaborative Applications Research Agreement. The anticipated collective scope of work for this phase will encompass:

- Selection, integration and testing of advanced unmanned environmental monitoring technologies to address:
 - Cost-effective, near-shore benthic habitat mapping and monitoring
 - Cost-effective, shoreline, wetlands, and barrier island restoration mapping and monitoring.
- Validation of advanced data analysis, distribution, and archival technologies with performance and field tests.

We expect to form collaborative projects designed to utilize the combined skill set and technology base of the project team to rapidly prototype and test new environmental monitoring technologies. These public-private-nonprofit partnerships enable the team members to execute applications systems prototype and test projects that are either too expensive or organizationally complicated to attempt individually. The projects will leverage cash, in-kind resources, and personnel from a variety of partner sources to accomplish project objectives.

The submittal of a SoQ to NOARC does not guarantee funding. Companies or organizations whose qualifications meet our needs for providing, testing, and evaluating environmental monitoring and analytical technologies, will be asked to propose a scope of work for providing their component technologies to our integrated

applications project. The proposed scope of work, costs and schedule will result in a contract with each team member and executed according to the terms and conditions of the NOARC Collaborative Applications Research Agreement. Subsequent announcements, if warranted, will be announced on the NOARC website.

NOARC Mission Statement

As a private, independent, 501 (c)(3) nonprofit development corporation chartered by the State of Mississippi, the National Oceans and Applications Research Center (NOARC) is a unique innovation consortium founded on the precepts of the RESTORE Act to enhance the resilience and economic vitality of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. NOARC has strategic business partnerships with private companies, State of Mississippi and U.S. Government Agencies, Mississippi Research Universities, and Non-Government Organizations (NGO). These partnerships are focused on developing new applications of advanced environmental monitoring technologies deployed on unmanned maritime and airborne systems. By using the Mississippi Sound and adjacent Gulf of Mexico waters as a technology proving ground, NOARC and its partners can rapidly develop, test, and validate new systems for public sector operations and private sector market development. NOARC is located at the John C. Stennis Space Center in Hancock County Mississippi near New Orleans, Louisiana.

For more information about NOARC, please visit our website at www.noarc.org

Applications Research Priority Areas

The outcome of NOARC applications research is to inform public policy development and strategic management decisions that affect coastal habitat restoration and conservation programs. In keeping with NOARC's mission to bring new technologies to bear on coastal restoration and coastal economic resilience issues, we are concentrating our initial efforts in three technology sectors:

- 1. Space-to-sea floor environmental monitoring systems and platforms**
- 2. Geospatial analysis and information development**
- 3. Distributed, software-enabled information delivery systems (cloud-enterprise applications development)**

Qualifications Sought

This RFQ seeks organizations or individuals who can work as independent contractors to NOARC and have proven expertise in the disciplines described below. The selected firm/individual shall complete services in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws, regulations and procedures. NOARC intends to contract with organizations or individuals with demonstrated expertise in:

- Gulf Coast region, forested and non-forested wetlands analysis, delineation, mapping, and monitoring
- Gulf of Mexico region hydrographic surveying and near-shore benthic habitat analysis, delineation, mapping, and monitoring
- Advanced geospatial data processing algorithm development, data processing, analysis, and dissemination associated with hydrographic surveying, airborne remote sensing, and satellite remote sensing
- Space remote sensing satellite systems
- Optionally piloted and/or unmanned airborne systems (UAS)
- Unmanned maritime systems (UMS)
- Autonomous surface vehicles (ASV)
- Autonomous underwater vehicles (AUV)
- Advanced, high-resolution airborne remote sensing instrumentation (e.g.; multispectral, hyperspectral, and LIDAR systems)
- Advanced hydrographic surveying instrumentation
- Analytical techniques associated with ultra-high-resolution data sources (cm scale from airborne and maritime environmental sensing systems)
- Distributed, software-enabled information delivery systems
- Expertise in the development, testing, evaluation, operations, and marketing of new technology applications.
- Experience in rapid prototyping, system design verification and system performance validation under operational test conditions
- Evidence of flexible and resourceful collaboration in a joint project environment.

No company or organization is expected to demonstrate all these elements. Focus attention on your demonstrated strengths with past performance evidence and we will use these inputs to select partners who can participate within an integrated applications team. Subsequent requests for proposed work scope will be sent to those companies selected for contract execution. We reserve the right to keep all responses to this RFQ on file for later program consideration.

□ **Instructions**

1. Address each item in the SoQ content section below.
2. Limit your SoQ to a maximum of five (5) pages. Only attach resumes of key personnel (No more than 2 pages per resume, excluded from page count). No other attachments please.
3. E-mail a Word or PDF version of your SoQ to qhouchin@noarc.org; reference in the subject line Response to RFQ for NOARC Collaborative Applications Research Agreement-Name of Organization
4. Submissions should be e-mailed no later than 5:00 pm CST, 1 February 2019

5. All submissions must be in English and follow these format requirements for written text: The height of the letters must not be smaller than 12-point font. Candara or Arial are the suggested fonts. Type density must be no more than 15 characters per inch (cpi). Page margins, in all directions, must be at least 1/2 inch.

□ **Statement of Qualifications Content**

Your statement describing your organization's qualifications should address the following elements in 5 pages or less:

1. **Contact Information:** Provide a primary point of contact (POC), organization name, address, Phone number, e-mail, web address, and EIN.
2. **Organization mission:** Describe your and/or your organization's mission, demonstrated expertise and experience. Include your geographic service area, time you have been in business, and your average annual revenues.
3. **Organization niche:** Describe your or your organization's special service niche and evidence that shows you are successful in that area. Examine your niche in terms of meeting NOARC stated support requirements. You are not expected to address all stated support requirements. If you respond to more than one discipline, please rank them in order of your preferences and experience.
4. **Key staff:** Provide names and brief biographies of key staff. You may attach resumes of proposed staff as needed (two pages maximum; excluded from RFQ page count).
5. **Past performance:** Describe your experience in providing the type of contracted technical support services being proposed for NOARC. List accomplishments, events, and previous services related to your proposed services for NOARC (< 5 years). Provide Point of Contact information for 3 company references who can discuss examples of your performance.
6. **Performance evaluation:** Describe your methodology for evaluating your services with current clients and how you will evaluate your services offered to NOARC.

Evaluation Criteria

Each SoQ will be evaluated and ranked according to the following evaluation criteria:

- 1. Demonstrated expertise and past performance: 20 points**
 - a. Demonstrated ability to meet customer's project scope, budget, and schedule on previous projects.
- 2. Demonstrated experience in the Gulf Coast region: 20 points**
 - a. Relevant work in the Gulf Coast Region compatible with the NOARC mission of coastal ecosystem mapping and monitoring for meeting coastal restoration objectives.
- 3. Costs of proposed technology or service components: 20 points**
 - a. Costs to deliver technology components or services on an as-needed basis **and**
 - b. Ability to share or discount project costs
- 4. Proximity to Mississippi Gulf Coast: 20 points**
 - a. Primary work locations on Gulf Coast that could improve project planning, logistics, and execution
- 5. Work references: 20 points**
 - a. Previous customer examples/reviews of proposer work

Total Points – 100

General Information

- Commercial organizations and nonprofit organizations in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Region are eligible to apply.
- NOARC reserves the right to reject any responses and reserves the right to request additional information from respondent(s) as deemed necessary for thorough evaluation.
- NOARC is not liable for any cost incurred by participating companies or organizations prior to issuing a contract. The contents of this submittal may be included in contractual obligations if a contract ensues from this RFQ process.
- NOARC reserves the right to:
 - reject any responses,
 - select according to best value proposed,
 - waive technicalities as deemed to be in the best interest of the corporation, and
 - terminate the solicitation with no contract awarded.
- If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFQ, addenda shall be issued, posted on website and emailed to registered firms who have provided an accurate email address.

- Firms/individuals proposals are solely responsible for meeting submittal deadlines.
- Proposals may be held by NOARC for a period of not to exceed ninety (90) days from the date of opening of statements for reviewing the proposal content and investigating qualifications of the applicants prior to awarding.
- Proposals are being requested in accordance with Item (d)(5) of 2. C. F. R. §200.320 “Methods of procurement.”
- NOARC is an equal opportunity employer.
- Any firm or individual awarded a contract as a result of this solicitation must comply with the Minority Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise contracting requirements outlined in “Attachment B” to this solicitation. MBE and/or WBE individuals/firms are encouraged to respond to this solicitation.

□ **Insurance Requirements**

Commercial General Liability, Business Automobile Liability, Workers’ Compensation, and Professional Liability Insurance are required from firms that enter into a project with NOARC.

□ **Conflict of Interest**

Organizations applying to this RFQ confirm:

1. that I do not have any conflict of interest in connection to the agreement. A conflict of interest may arise in particular because of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties, or any other relevant connection or shared interest;
2. that I will inform the contracting authority, without delay, of any situation constituting a conflict of interest or could give rise to a conflict of interest;
3. that I have not made, and will not to make, any offer of any type whatsoever from which an advantage can be derived under the agreement;
4. that I have not granted, sought, attempted to obtain or accepted and will not grant, seek, attempt to obtain, or accept any advantage, financial or in kind, to or from any party whatsoever, constituting an illegal or corrupt practice, either directly or indirectly, as an incentive or reward relating to the award of projects that might follow the agreement.

□ **Warranties**

By applying to this RFQ, the applicant warrants and represents that it is eligible for contract award resulting from this solicitation and that it is not subject to any of the following circumstances:

1. Has any unpaid Federal tax liability for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted.
2. Had an officer or agent of the company acting on behalf of the company convicted of any felony criminal violation under any Federal or State law within the past 24 months.
3. Is listed on the General Services Administration's, government-wide System for Award Management Exclusions (SAM exclusions). The SAM Exclusions can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

**NOARC
7250 STENNIS AIRPORT DRIVE
SUITE 206
KILN, MS 39556
STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS ARE DUE
1 FEBRUARY 2019
No later than 5:00 pm CST
RFQ TIMETABLE**

- 21 December 2018 Applicants should submit questions about this RFQ via email to Quinn Houchin (qhouchin@noarc.org). NOARC will post the questions and responses on the NOARC website "Bulletin Board" so that all applicants will have access to the information. Please submit your questions no later than 5:00 pm CST, December 21, 2018.
- 1 February 2019 Statements of qualifications must be received electronically as an e-mail attachment by Quinn Houchin (qhouchin@noarc.org) no later than 5:00 pm CST, February 1, 2019. (Reminder: Statements of qualifications should be provided in Word or PDF format.)
- 1 March 2019 NOARC will notify all RFQ applicants of their acceptance or rejection for inclusion in the pre-qualified contractor pool on or before March 1, 2019. Requests for service quotation for task agreement or proposal may be issued from this RFQ process based on approved funding for program content.

Attachment A: Newspaper Advertisement
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

TO SELECT STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN COLLABORATIVE APPLICATIONS RESEARCH WITH THE
NATIONAL OCEANS AND APPLICATIONS RESEARCH CENTER

Requesting Organization

National Oceans and Applications Research Center (NOARC)
7250 Stennis Airport Drive
Suite 206
Kiln, MS 39556

Point of Contact; Mr. Quinn Houchin, 228.688.2590, qhouchin@noarc.org

Release Date: 17 December 2018

RFQ Response; 1 February 2019

No later than 5:00 pm CST

The National Oceans and Applications Research Center (NOARC) will accept Statements of Qualifications from qualified firms interested in conducting collaborative applications development in connection with the NOARC – Planning Assistance award (the “Project”). This project will be funded by the United States Department of the Treasury, through the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. The detailed requirements for the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) can be found on the NOARC website at www.noarc.org.

We expect this RFQ process to result in contracts with strategic partner companies and organizations under the terms and conditions of the NOARC Collaborative Applications Research Agreement. The anticipated collective scope of work for this phase will encompass:

- Selection, integration and testing of advanced unmanned environmental monitoring technologies to address:
- Cost-effective, near-shore benthic habitat mapping and monitoring
- Cost-effective, shoreline, wetlands, and barrier island restoration mapping and monitoring.
- Validation of advanced data analysis, distribution, and archival technologies.

We expect to use the responses to this RFQ to form collaborative projects designed to utilize the combined skill set and technology base of the project team to rapidly prototype and test new environmental monitoring technologies. These public-private-nonprofit partnerships will enable the team members to execute applications systems

prototype and test projects that are either too expensive or organizationally complicated to attempt individually. The projects will leverage cash, in-kind resources, and personnel from a variety of partner sources to accomplish project objectives that center around validating RESTORE MS requirements for long-duration monitoring of coastal restoration projects.

Additional information regarding the scope of work for this solicitation may also be examined at the following locations:

A. Mississippi Procurement Technical Assistance Program (MPTAP)

Mississippi Development Authority, Minority & Small Business Development
Woolfolk Building
501 North West Street
Suite B 01
Jackson, MS 39201

B. South MS Contract Procurement Center

1636 Popp's Ferry Road, Suite 203
Biloxi, MS 39532
Phone (228) 396-1288

Opportunity

The National Oceans and Applications Research Center (NOARC) invites interested organizations to submit statements of qualifications that will be used to select a team of strategic partners to collaborate on applications themes focused on Mississippi Gulf Coast restoration objectives. Anticipated applications themes will focus initially on mapping and monitoring coastal wetlands, watersheds, and near-shore benthic habitats.

Any contract awarded under this solicitation may be paid for in whole or in part with grant funding from the Department of the Treasury and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality under the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act). Any contract resulting from this solicitation will be subject to the terms and conditions of said funding award, the RESTORE Act Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and Program-Specific Terms and Conditions, the Standard Sub-Award Terms and Conditions, the RESTORE Act, 33 U. S. C. 1321(t), Treasury Regulations 31 C. F. R. § 34 et seq., including 31 C. F. R. §§ 34, Subpart D, all applicable terms and conditions in 2 C. F. R. Part 200 (including Appendix II to Part 200), and all other OMB circulars, executive orders or other federal laws or regulations, as applicable. The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the United States, or any of its departments, agencies or employees is not and will not be a party to this solicitation or any resulting contract.

Minority and women's business enterprises are solicited to submit a statement of qualifications and are encouraged to make inquiries regarding potential subcontracting opportunities. When subcontracting, all potential contractors must make positive efforts to use small and minority owned business and women business enterprises. See 2. C. F. R. §200.321.

**ATTACHMENT B: CONTRACTING WITH SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESSES,
WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, AND LABOR SURPLUS AREA FIRMS**

Documentation of compliance with the following requirements is a matter of contractor responsibility. When Subcontracting, the contractor must submit the documentation of good faith efforts to meet the project's MBE/WBE requirements before contracted work can commence. (MBE/WBE requirements are outlined below and can be found at 2 C.F.R. §200.321.) Failure on the part of the contractor to submit proper documentation may cause the Owner not to execute or to terminate the contract.

(a) The prime contractor must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

(b) Affirmative steps must include:

(1) Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;

(2) Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;

(3) Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises;

(4) Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises; and,

(5) Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce.

The prime contractor should note that this requirement mandates two responsibilities. Separate solicitations must be made of minority **and** women's business enterprises.

**SUBMITTAL OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE AND
WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (MBE/WBE) DOCUMENTATION**

Prior to contract execution, the prime contractor must submit:

- A written certification that no subcontracts will be issued.
- OR -
- The Subcontractor Listing Form detailing all subcontractors from whom quotes were received including name, contact person, address, phone, and status (MBE, WBE or Non).

If subcontractors will be utilized, the prime contractor must submit the following for subcontracts proposed to be awarded to MBE/WBE enterprises:

- A certification from each MBE and/or WBE firm declaring its status as an MBE or WBE firm. This can be an MDOT, SBA or MDA certification. A self-certification is acceptable, if the certification specifies the basis for MBE/WBE designation (e.g., the business is 51% owned and daily operation is controlled by one or more women or minority owners).

If subcontractors will be utilized, the prime contractor must submit the following for subcontracts proposed to be awarded to Non-MBE/WBE:

- For all subcontracts for which there are capable certified MBE/WBE firms existing to potentially perform the work, letters transmitted to MBE and WBE firms requesting quotes or proposals for specific subcontracting opportunities and encouraging inquiries for further details. Solicitations should have been sent in a timely manner, including allowed response time. (See “Sample Letter from Contractor to MBE/WBE Firms” below.)
- A listing of certified MBE and WBE firms from whom quotes, or proposals were received, if any, who were not awarded subcontracts.
- Evidence that each Non-MBE/WBE subcontractor selected for the scope of work, was lower in price than each MBE/WBE proposal (or that there is some other acceptable reason to select the Non-MBE/WBE) and that the scope of work was the same for both the MBE/WBE and Non-MBE/WBE.

The contractor may utilize the following resources to assist in MBE/WBE affirmative outreach:

-MDOT Disadvantaged Business Entity (DBE) Website:

<http://sp.mdot.ms.gov/Civil%20Rights/Pages/DBE.aspx>

-MDA Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) Directory:

<https://minority.mississippi.org/MinorityBusinessDirectory.aspx>

Should the Prime Contractor intend to later issue a subcontract, the above affirmative steps must be followed and documentation of such submitted to the Owner for review as described under this section.