

**Regional
Procurement
Support
Office –
Florida**

Client Assistance Guide

Contents:

1. Overview of RPSO
2. Basic Procedures, Timelines, Roles & Responsibilities
3. Procurement Requests – What We Need from You
4. Contact Information and Useful Web Sites

Attachments:

- A. Acquisition Plan - Milestones
- B. DS-1970 Procurement Request
- C. Questionnaire for Construction Projects
- D. Questionnaire for Service Contracts
- E. Questionnaire for Supply Contracts

Overview of RPSO

RPSO Florida was created in late 1992 and opened for business on August 23, 1993 to provide operational contracting support for Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) posts and the Florida Regional Center. RPSO's creation reflects the Department's commitment to improve the quality of contracting worldwide and to reduce the administrative burden on overseas posts by providing a source of professional contracting support. Unlike RPSO Germany, RPSO Florida has a very small staff, but it has several contracting officers available to acquire the supplies, services, and construction that you need.

Since we are a Working Capital Fund organization, we must charge for our services. While we would prefer not to charge, in this we have no choice. WCF rates are established by the "A" Bureau of the Department of State.

Our rates are:

Dept. of State Posts/Offices	1%
Other Agencies	4%

(Surcharges apply to all awards and modifications except deobligations and zero dollar modifications. There is no maximum WCF surcharge.)

We believe that the services we provide can benefit post, so the expense is worth the money.

Basic Procedures, Timelines, Roles & Responsibilities

Unlike contracting in the private sector, Government contracting is subject to a myriad of laws, **regulations**, and policies that control how we do business. While private individuals can get by with just a handshake instead of a formal contract, the U.S. Government must put all contracts in writing (except purchase card orders by phone) and follow detailed regulations regarding the planning, award, and administration of contracts and purchase orders. Also, Government contracts are much longer and more complex than commercial contracts in general, because many more clauses are required by Federal law or regulation. Finally, there is a separation of functions in the Government when it comes to responsibility for contracting. That is, the office identifying the need for contractual support is normally not the office awarding the contract.

Not every Federal employee has **contracting authority**. Only specifically designated individuals known as Contracting Officers may sign contracts and purchase orders. Those employees are issued certificates known as “warrants” that give them authority to sign contracts and purchase orders up to any dollar limitation stated on the warrant. Please do **not** make any commitments to contractors regarding the possible award of a contract; only the Contracting Officer may make such commitments.

Procurement (also referred to as “acquisition” or “contracting”, in contrast to the corporate world’s terms such as “purchasing”) can be divided into **two major phases: contract placement and contract administration**. Each acquisition must be planned, publicized, solicited, awarded, and administered.

The basic rules for Government contracting are found in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (**FAR**) and Department of State Acquisition Regulation (DOSAR). These rules mandate competition in contracting (unless an exception exists and is documented and approved) and prescribe the following basic steps:

- Publicizing the upcoming contract (on the Fedbizopps web site, for example)
- Issuing a written solicitation
- Receiving proposals or quotations
- Evaluating proposals or quotations received
- Conducting negotiations, if needed
- Awarding the contract
- Notifying the losing firms
- Administering the contract, including monitoring contractor performance
- Making changes and resolving disputes after the contract is signed
- Paying invoices and closing out the contract when completed

Typical **timelines** for Federal acquisition are approximately 1-4 weeks for simplified acquisitions (up to \$100,000), depending on the nature of the item and its complexity, and 5 months to award contracts above the simplified acquisition threshold. In the attachments to this guide is a chart showing the common milestones in the procurement

process for contracts. For commercial items, the process is somewhat more streamlined, and the law allows us to use simplified procedures up to \$5.5 million. Please **plan ahead**. The worst contracts tend to occur in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year, when planning tends to be ignored. Also, procurement requests submitted too late in the fiscal year may not be acted upon, due to lack of time to award a competitive contract. The earlier you contact RPSO regarding your needs, the better off you will be. Even if you do not have all the necessary details regarding an upcoming contract you require, if you contact RPSO with as much information as you can, we may be able to jump-start the contracting process for you or identify existing contracts (such as GSA schedules or Department of State contracts) that can be used on your behalf.

If you are in need of contracting support, chances are you will serve as the Contracting Officer's Representative (**COR**). This means that you will be the technical advisor to the Contracting Officer and play a significant role in defining the Government's requirements, evaluating the proposals received, and monitoring the contractor's performance. Training is required to serve as a COR, and it is available on-line through FSI or the Federal Acquisition Institute (www.fai.gov). The Contracting Officer will seek your advice on technical issues, although ultimately only he or she is allowed to make contractual commitments. The COR Handbook (14 FAH-2) is a useful tool for preparing for your role as COR. In addition, there is a "COR Toolkit" available at http://aoepd.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=57&menu_id=58.

Please note that there are standards of conduct restrictions affecting Government employees and contractors (found at 5 CFR 2635 and FAR Part 3). Government employees involved in contracting are prohibited from having a personal stake in the outcome of a contract, as there are strict rules against conflicts of interest.

Contracting is a "team sport" involving **several players**, including legal counsel, small business specialists, post personnel, and others. The Department of State, just as every other Federal agency, has goals established for promoting business opportunities for small businesses. In addition, there are various other "socioeconomic" programs that we must follow, all of which make contracting a difficult business. This is all the more reason to come to RPSO for contracting support, as we can work with you to find the right contracting solution for your operational needs.

Procurement Requests – What We Need from You

The best way to get great contracting support is to plan ahead. As noted previously, contracting takes time, normally more time than contracting in the private sector. In addition, the rules we must follow impose many administrative burdens. While we can provide you a roadmap to get through the contracting process, the most important ingredient for good contracting is allowing enough time for a competitive process that will produce the quality you need at a price you can afford.

Please be advised that the standard in Government contracting is competition, and we seek to promote that goal whenever possible by soliciting multiple firms in the marketplace who are willing to compete to meet our needs.

Form DS-1970, included as Attachment B to this guide, provides a good list of the items we need to contract on your behalf. The most important things you will need to provide for us to get started are the following:

- Statement of work
- Performance period (required delivery date for supplies, start and end date for services)
- Cost estimate, including whether the funds are expiring or no-year
- Suggested list of local or other firms capable of doing the job (with points of contact)

The attachments to this guide include more detailed, separate questionnaires for construction, service, and supply contracts. Please read through the questionnaire that applies to you, as it will help you prepare a procurement request that RPSO can act on when it is received. Much of the time it takes to award a contract is the result of delays in properly planning and defining requirements. The more work you can do up front to provide a complete procurement request, the better the contracting process will work for you. The more we as buyers know and understand about what you want us to buy for you, the better we will be able to do our job.

Note: Most of the work we do is unclassified. If you have classified requirements, please contact us (see the next section of this guide for points of contact at RPSO) to discuss the matter.

Contact Information and Useful Web Sites

RPSO Staff:

Rob Lloyd – (954) 630-1146, lloydre@state.gov

Mark Toler – (954) 630-1166, tolermj@state.gov

Rob Lindquist – (954) 630-1164, lindquistra@state.gov

Lisa Goodwine – (954) 630-1283, goodwinelc@state.gov

Juan Fernandez – (954) 630-1132, fernandezjm@state.gov

Leslie Rush – (703) 875-5855, rushle@state.gov

Office Fax: (954) 630-1165

Internet address: <http://www.statebuy.state.gov/org/org.htm>

FAR:

<http://www.acqnet.gov/far/>

DOSAR:

http://aope.a.state.gov/dosar/fullscreen.asp?menu_id=40

Statebuy web site (compendium of useful links and documents):

Intranet: <http://aope.a.state.gov>

Internet: <http://www.statebuy.state.gov>

Fedbizopps (to see solicitations issued by RPSO and other offices):

www.fedbizopps.gov

Federal Acquisition Institute:

www.fai.gov

COR Handbook:

<http://arpsdir.a.state.gov/fam/14fah02.html>

Attachment A:

Acquisition Plan – Milestones for Contract above the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (\$100,000)

Action	Est. # days to complete	Date Planned	Revised Date	Comments
Procurement request received				
A/SDBU clearance DS-1910	5			
Fedbizopps notice and local ad, if needed	5			
Solicitation prepared	21			
Legal review	5			
Solicitation issued	3			
Pre-proposal conference and/or site visit	3			
Questions & answers, amendments	7			
Proposals/quotations due	30			
Technical evaluation completed	14			
Award determination or competitive range/ pre-negotiation memo	5			
Negotiations, if needed	7			
Revised proposals/ quotations due, if needed	14			
Final technical evaluation	7			
Price negotiation memo	5			
Legal review (over \$1 million)	5			
Contract/order award	5			
Post-award conference, if needed	3			
Construction completed/ performance period/ delivery date				

Estimated minimal time to award: 5 months (assuming optimal conditions)

Attachment B:

U.S. Department of State Procurement Request Form (Abroad)		
1.a. Project Title/Description	1.b. Requisition No.	1.c. Date of Request
2. Type of Action a. New: <input type="checkbox"/> Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery/task order no. _____ to contract no. _____		2.b. Modification to: <input type="checkbox"/> Contract no. _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery/task order no. _____ to contract no. _____
3.a. Estimated Amount of This Action (include basic contract period and any option periods, if a new contract)		3.b. Amount of Funds Provided at This Time
4.a. Period of Performance of Basic Contract or Modification _____ years _____ months		4.b. Indicate Number of Option Periods (if any) and Performance Period of Each _____ option periods _____ years _____ months
5.a. Funds Cite (if not provided on a separate document)		
5.b. Certification of Funds Availability (if not provided on a separate document)		
_____ Signature _____ Date _____		
6. Name/Office/Division/Telephone No. of Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)		
7. Is this Action Included in the Current Fiscal Year Advance Acquisition Plan (AAP)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, provide AAP Number (if one was assigned) _____ If no, indicate which action is displaced, if any, and/or any other changes in the plan.		
8. Requirements Office - Concurrences/Approvals		
a. Requestor Name/Title/Office/Signature/Date		b. Approving Official Name/Title/Office/Signature/Date
9. List of Attachments (as required) <input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Work/Specifications/Changes to SOW for modifications <input type="checkbox"/> Inherently Governmental Function Determination <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Government Cost Estimate <input type="checkbox"/> Funding/Requisition Document <input type="checkbox"/> Necessary Approvals <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Evaluation Criteria and Technical Evaluation Plan <input type="checkbox"/> List of Recommended Technical Evaluation Panel Members <input type="checkbox"/> Justification for Other Than Full and Open Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Source List <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)		

Instructions for Completing the Form DS-1970

- Block 1a. Provide a brief description of the supplies or services
- Block 1b. Enter the requisition number, if the requirements office assigns one in order to track the action. Otherwise, enter "N/A".
- Block 1c. Enter the date the form was prepared.
- Block 2a. If the action is for a new contract or delivery/task order under an existing contract, check the appropriate block.
- Block 2b. If the action is a modification to an existing contract or delivery/task order, check the appropriate block and enter the contract number and delivery/task order number (if applicable)
- Block 3a. Provide an estimate of the total dollar amount of the contract, including any option periods.
- Block 3b. Enter the dollar amount of the funding which is being provided at this time.
- Block 4a. Enter the period of performance that the basic contract or modification will cover, e.g., 1 year, if the action is for a new contract or the modification extends the period of performance.
- Block 4b. If the contract will have option periods, indicate how many (e.g., 4) and the period of performance of each (e.g., 1 year each).
- Block 5a. Enter the funds cite for the amount of funding provided at this time. If the requirements office or contracting activity uses a separate document to provide this information, enter "N/A".
- Block 5b. Provide the signature of the individual who is authorized to certify that funds are available. If the requirements office or contracting activity uses a separate document to provide this information, enter "N/A".
- Block 6. Enter the name, office, division, and telephone number of the Contracting Officer's Representative. If the COR will not be formally named until the contract is awarded, indicate "will be designated at the time of contract award."
- Block 7. Indicate if this action was included in the Advance Acquisition Plan (AAP). If so, provide the AAP Number, if the contracting activity assigned one. If the action was not included in the AAP, indicate which

acquisition action this action will displace, if any, and/or any other changes in the AAP.

Block 8. Provide the names, titles, offices, and signatures of the appropriate requesting official and the approving official. If the requesting and approving official are the same individual, then only complete the information in the “Approving Official” block.

Block 9. Check the appropriate block(s) to indicate which attachments are included.

Attachment C:

Questionnaire for Construction Projects

1. What is the customary business practice in the country with regard to Performance and Guarantee Bonds and Payment Bonds? *For this type of work, RPSO normally requires that the contractor provide a Performance and Guarantee Bond in an amount ranging between 20% to 50% of the contract amount, which is converted to a 10% Guarantee Bond for a one year period after Final Acceptance. RPSO also normally requires a Payment Bond in an amount ranging between 10% to 40% of the contract amount. However, if an alternative form of security is used instead of a Performance & Guarantee Bond or the Payment Bond (such as a letter of credit), RPSO normally requires that the security be in the amount of 20% for performance during construction (10% during the guarantee period) and 20% for payment. Normal business practices in the country of performance are taken into consideration in determining the appropriate types of instruments to require, and in what amounts.*

2. The Contracting Officer has deemed it appropriate to include liquidated damages in the solicitation and will need to establish the amount of liquidated damages. The amount of liquidated damages is usually based on an analysis of the costs that will be incurred by the Government if the facility is not completed on time. Examples of the type of costs (damages) the Government could incur include, but are not limited to: rent of temporary facility, OBO on-site staff costs, Post staff costs, daily cost of inspection and superintendency, daily cost for the provision of substitute facility, daily cost for temporary storage of equipment, etc. Liquidated damages should be calculated as a daily rate. Following is an example calculation of liquidated damages:

Note: Example is based on a project with a six month period of performance, then the total is converted into a daily rate for liquidated damages.

- a) Estimated Cost of Renting Temporary Facility: Example \$100/month (\$50/month rent + \$50/month electric) x 6 months = \$600.00
- b) Estimated on-site staff costs (Direct Labor, Housing, etc.):
\$ _____ (no on site staff considered for this example)
- c) Estimated Post staff costs (GSO, Facility Maintenance Mgr, etc.):
Example \$26/hr OT x 10 OT hrs/wk x 2 (GSO & Facility Maintenance Mgr.) x 26 wks (6 months) + \$2.50/hr OT x 10 ot/wk x 2 electricians X 26 wks = \$14,820.00
- d) Other Direct Costs (cost of rescheduling other Contractors, etc.):
\$ _____ (none used for this example)

Total: \$15,420.00

Total of amount above divided by 180 (number of calendar days for the period of performance) = \$85.67 for the Daily Rate of Liquidated Damages.

Please provide a daily amount for liquidated damages, including the supporting rationale for the daily amount.

3. What are the customary insurance requirements for construction projects in the country? *Normally, RPSO requires whatever insurance is legally necessary in the country, as well as the following minimum insurance:*

General Liability (includes premises/operations, collapse hazard, products, completed operations, contractual, independent contractors, broad form property damage, personal injury):

a) Bodily Injury on or off the site stated in US Dollars:

Per Occurrence	\$100,000
Cumulative	\$200,000

b) Property Damage on or off the site in US Dollars:

Per Occurrence	\$300,000
Cumulative	\$600,000

Normal business practices in the country of performance are taken into consideration in determining the appropriate types of instruments to require, and in what amounts.

4. Are there any special time or other considerations that should be taken into consideration in terms of obtaining the required zoning approvals and permits?
5. Provide a detailed Government cost estimate for the project. Do you have expiring funds or no-year money?
6. Do any of the “end products” or construction materials exceed \$100,000? “End product” is defined as a specific piece of equipment or supply item, such as chillers, windows, generators, etc., needed for the construction project. To the best of your knowledge, can any of the “end products” or construction material exceeding \$100,000 be purchased outside of the U.S. with at least 50% savings? If so, identify each “end product” or construction material and explain what information the pricing is based on.
7. What utilities and/or facilities, if any, will be provided by the Government? Examples may include such things as electricity, water, staging areas, etc.

In most cases contractors are required to construct any temporary facilities which might be needed, such as offices or storage areas, and the contractors are required to remove these temporary facilities at the completion of the project. Also, in most cases,

contractors are responsible for taking care of any temporary utility hook ups, such as water or electricity, and having these removed at project completion.

8. What is the access at the project site to water, electricity, and telephone?
9. Will there be any Government furnished equipment? If so, please identify.
10. Are there any access restrictions and/or limitations (e.g. security checks)?
11. What must be provided by the contractor for clearance of personnel? How long does the clearance process take?
12. What will be the acceptable working hours, and usual workdays?
13. I have identified below the local holidays which might fall within the anticipated construction performance period. Please check the list to make sure that it is accurate, and also provide the correct dates. You should also add to or delete from the list as necessary. For example, the list should include only the local holidays which are recognized by the U.S. Government as official days off for the Embassy, and which fall within the anticipated performance period of October 2003 through March 2004:

Holiday	<u>Date</u>
All Souls' Day	_____, 2003
Holy Thursday	_____, 2004
Good Friday	_____, 2004
Easter Saturday	_____, 2004

14. Will the requirement be subject to a local tax or taxes (e.g., VAT or local construction tax)? If so, what is the rate? Is it necessary to include funds to cover the tax in the contract? Or can the VAT be recovered, and if so, what is the procedure?
15. What is the period of performance in calendar days?
16. Provide a brief description of the requirement (1/2 page or less) for the pre-solicitation notice.
17. Provide the name, address, point of contact, telephone and fax number and e-mail address for any construction company or companies you wish to place on the pre-solicitation mailing list. ***(Please inform RPSO whether it would make sense to advertise this requirement locally (at Post), RPSO would prefer to receive a mailing list as this would hopefully only include responsible sources.)***

18. Will the work involve scaffolding or other work at heights above 2 meters, trenches or other excavation greater than 1 meter, earth moving equipment, electrical hazards, work in confined spaces (limited exits, potential for oxygen less than 19.5%, toxic or combustible atmosphere, potential for solid or liquid engulfment, or other hazards considered to be immediately dangerous to life or health such as water tanks, transformer vaults, sewers, cisterns, etc.), or hazardous material (especially those used indoors, e.g. paints, solvents, etc.)? If so, specify the requirements regarding safety.
19. How should materials, packages and shipping documents be marked to facilitate customs clearance, if required?
20. How much advance notice is required for post to be able to take care of clearing items through customs if necessary?
21. Which OBO or NAS office will approve the final drawings and specifications prepared by the A&E firm?
22. Who at OBO or NAS is going to perform the technical evaluation of the offers received? ***(Should post opt to use the A&E contractor to help in this evaluation a Government Employee from OBO or NAS must certify the evaluation.)***
23. The Pre-Proposal Conference will be conducted in English. Will post be able to make arrangements for or contract with a professional translator who can be used during the conference for participants who may only know the local language?
24. The solicitation will require that contractors must submit proposals to RPSO in Florida. Would post like to be included as an alternative location for contractors to either mail or hand deliver proposals? If so, please provide the appropriate mailing address and any other appropriate instructions for marking proposals. If post wants to allow hand deliveries of proposals, please provide any procedures that should be followed for contractors dropping off proposals at the Embassy. Also, please provide any special marking instructions for hand delivered proposals. For example, Packages shall be marked with "Proposal Enclosed for Container Inspection Facility Project – ATTN: General Services Office." Whether or not the Embassy wishes to be an alternative place for proposal submissions is completely up to the Embassy.
25. Can the Embassy obtain tax/duty exemptions for any construction materials that the contractor may have to have shipped into the country?
26. Were the drawings done in AutoCAD, and if so, what version was used?

Attachment D:

Questionnaire for Service Contracts

1. What is the period of performance needed for these services? Should the contract include annual renewal options? (We can go up to 5 years including options, and occasionally even longer.)
2. Provide a brief description of the requirement (1/2 page or less) for the pre-solicitation notice. This is needed to begin the contracting process. A more detailed performance work statement will be required when the solicitation is prepared.
3. Are the services you need truly “non-personal” in nature? (Please be advised that RPSO cannot award contracts for personal services, in which there is an employer-employee relationship between the Government and the contractor.)
4. Provide a detailed Government cost estimate for the project. If the USG has purchased these supplies before, please provide recent history, prices paid, etc. Do you have expiring funds or no-year money?
5. Have you considered mandatory sources, such as JWOD organizations, etc., to meet your needs?
6. There is a U.S. Government-wide policy of promoting the use of performance-based contracts. A performance-based contract includes the following:
 - Description of results to be achieved rather than methods of doing so
 - Measurable performance standards
 - Quality assurance plan
 - Positive or negative incentives, if feasible
 Can you identify the standards that a contractor must meet to be successful?
 Are there any incentives we can offer, including deductions for poor or unacceptable performance (for fixed price contracts)?
7. What are the customary insurance requirements for services in the country?
Normally, RPSO requires whatever insurance is legally necessary in the country, as well as the following minimum insurance:

General Liability (includes premises/operations, products, completed operations, contractual, independent contractors, broad form property damage, personal injury):

a. Bodily Injury on or off the site stated in US Dollars:

Per Occurrence	\$100,000
Cumulative	\$200,000

b. Property Damage on or off the site in US Dollars:

Per Occurrence **\$300,000**
 Cumulative **\$600,000**

Normal business practices in the country of performance are taken into consideration in determining the appropriate types of instruments to require, and in what amounts.

8. What are the key factors that we should evaluate in proposals to determine whether a firm is likely to succeed or fail? The solicitation must state the factors to be used in the evaluation process (such as experience and past performance, etc.).
9. Will you be able to conduct a technical evaluation of proposals received?
10. The Government is urged to buy supplies and equipment based on performance or functional requirements, rather than design specifications telling the contractor how to build the item. Can you identify the performance features you need? Also, if necessary, we can contract on a “brand name or equal” basis, but you must identify the salient characteristics of the item so that we can seek competition among potential suppliers.
11. Are there any special time or other considerations that should be taken into consideration in terms of obtaining any required permits to do business (especially if a U.S. firm were to get the contract)?
12. The solicitation will require that contractors must submit proposals to RPSO in Florida. Would post like to be included as an alternative location for contractors to either mail or hand deliver proposals? If so, please provide the appropriate mailing address and any other appropriate instructions for marking proposals. If post wants to allow hand deliveries of proposals, please provide any procedures that should be followed for contractors dropping off proposals at the Embassy. Also, please provide any special marking instructions for hand delivered proposals. For example, Packages shall be marked with “Proposal Enclosed for Inspection Services Project – ATTN: General Services Office.” Whether or not the Embassy wishes to be an alternative place for proposal submissions is completely up to the Embassy.
13. Is a site visit or pre-proposal conference for interested firms needed? Any pre-proposal conference that may be needed will be conducted in English. Will post be able to make arrangements for or contract with a professional translator who can be used during the conference for participants who may only know the local language?
14. Will the requirement be subject to a local tax or taxes (e.g., VAT or other local tax)? If so, what is the rate? Is it necessary to include funds to cover the tax in the contract? Or can the VAT be recovered, and if so, what is the procedure?

Attachment E:

Questionnaire for Supply Contracts

1. Is this a one-time need or a recurring need for the supplies or equipment? If recurring, what is the period of performance needed? Should the contract include annual renewal options? (We can go up to 5 years including options, and occasionally even longer.)
2. Provide a brief description of the requirement (1/2 page or less) for the pre-solicitation notice. This is needed to begin the contracting process. A more detailed specification will be required when the solicitation is prepared. You should provide a description in terms of performance required or functional specifications rather than design specifications (how to build it), if possible. Are there compatibility requirements regarding other related equipment or systems?
3. Provide a detailed Government cost estimate for the project. If the USG has purchased these supplies before, please provide recent history, prices paid, etc. Do you have expiring funds or no-year money?
4. Have you considered mandatory sources of supply, such as JWOD organizations, etc., to meet your needs?
5. What are the key factors that we should evaluate in proposals to determine whether a firm is likely to succeed or fail? The solicitation must state the factors to be used in the evaluation process (such as experience and past performance, etc.).
6. Will you be able to conduct a technical evaluation of proposals received?
7. The solicitation will require that contractors must submit proposals to RPSO in Florida. Would post like to be included as an alternative location for contractors to either mail or hand deliver proposals? If so, please provide the appropriate mailing address and any other appropriate instructions for marking proposals. If post wants to allow hand deliveries of proposals, please provide any procedures that should be followed for contractors dropping off proposals at the Embassy. Also, please provide any special marking instructions for hand delivered proposals. For example, Packages shall be marked with "Proposal Enclosed for Inspection Services Project – ATTN: General Services Office." Whether or not the Embassy wishes to be an alternative place for proposal submissions is completely up to the Embassy.
8. Is a site visit or pre-proposal conference for interested firms needed? Any pre-proposal conference that may be needed will be conducted in English. Will post be able to make arrangements for or contract with a professional translator who

- can be used during the conference for participants who may only know the local language?
9. Do you have a firm quantity of items needed, or is the quantity variable? (We can award an indefinite quantity contract or blanket purchase agreement if you are unsure, but we will need a minimum, estimated, and maximum quantity.)
 10. Is there any advantage to leasing the equipment rather than purchasing it outright?
 11. Is used or reconditioned equipment sufficient, or is only new equipment acceptable?
 12. Do you know of any economic ordering quantity where price breaks may occur, so that we can save money for bulk orders?
 13. Is a demonstration of the equipment needed as part of the evaluation process?
 14. Will the requirement be subject to a local tax or taxes (e.g., VAT or other local tax)? If so, what is the rate? Is it necessary to include funds to cover the tax in the contract? Or can the VAT be recovered, and if so, what is the procedure?
 15. Is a warranty required (basic period such as one year, or extended)?