

Source Selection Statement for the Software Engineering Services II
Solicitation Number NNG15498942R

On August 21, 2015, I, along with other senior officials from the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) met with the Source Evaluation Board (SEB) appointed to evaluate proposals in connection with the Software Engineering Services II (SES II) procurement.

Procurement Description

The purpose of this procurement is to provide the Software Engineering Division (SED) needed services and support for the engineering of software systems through all phases (formulation through on-orbit operations/decommissioning) of NASA programs and projects. These products and services include: flight, ground and science data systems and technologies; mission environments, software engineering, software systems engineering, software/data systems project management, mission operations and mission validation capabilities. SED focuses on the development of reusable flight and ground architectures and frameworks to reduce mission cost, decrease development time, minimize customer risk, and increase the scientific value of information products. The contractor shall provide on/off-site services that include the personnel, facilities, and materials (unless otherwise provided by the Government) to accomplish the task.

The SES II Request for Proposal (RFP) was released on January 26, 2015. Two amendments were issued. Among other things, the amendment provided the following:

- Amendment 1 revised Section B.8, Non-Proposed Costs to correct the travel number; updated Section L.22, Proposal Preparation and General Instructions, to include ‘Staffing Plan’ (no page count); revised Section L.25, Cost Volume Instructions, to update the cost instructions; updated Section L.28, Proposal Marking and Delivery; amended Enclosure 3, Incumbents Rates; revised Attachment B, IDIQ Cost Type Rate Matrix; and amended Cost Exhibits 6 & 9.
- Amendment 2 removed clause H.16.

The contract is a Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF), Core and Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract. The IDIQ portion of the contract has an effective ordering period of 5 years from the effective date of the contract with no options. The Core portion of the contract runs in conjunction with the IDIQ portion with a base year period of performance of 22 months and two option periods, one being 24 months and one being 14 months. A separate contractual vehicle for a 60 day phase-in period is anticipated.

This procurement was conducted as an 8(a) Set-Aside under NAICS Code 541712: Research and Development in the Physical Engineering, and Life Sciences. Small business size standard is 1,000 employees.

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Proposals Submitted

On February 25, 2015, NASA received timely proposals from the following four companies:

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| Arctic Slope Technical Services, Inc. (ASTS) |
| Mission Solutions Partners, LLC (MSP) |
| System Engineering Partners (SEP) |
| Ventech Solutions (Ventech) |

Evaluation Procedures

The SEB evaluated proposals in accordance with the source selection procedures identified in Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) part 15.3 "Source Selection," and NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) 1815.3. The Source Evaluation Board procedures at NFS 1815.370, NASA Source Evaluation Boards, were applied.

The RFP listed three evaluation factors, Mission Suitability, Cost, and Past Performance. The RFP specified the relative order of importance of these factors as follows:

- The Cost Factor is significantly less important than the combined importance of the Mission Suitability Factor and the Past Performance Factor.
- As individual Factors, the Cost Factor is less important than the Mission Suitability Factor but more important than the Past Performance Factor.

Mission Suitability has three Subfactors as follows:

- Subfactor A, Technical Approach to the Sample Problem
- Subfactor B, Core Requirements
- Subfactor C, Management Plan

The available points for each Subfactor are set forth below:

| Subfactor | Points |
|--|---------------|
| A - Technical Approach to the Sample Problem | 400 |
| B - Core Requirements | 150 |
| C - Management Plan | 450 |
| Total Points | 1,000 |

The Mission Suitability Subfactors and the total Mission Suitability factor were evaluated using the adjectival ratings, definitions and percentile ranges NFS 1815.305(a)(3)(A). The maximum point value available for each Subfactor was multiplied by the assessed percent for each Subfactor to derive the score for the particular Subfactor.

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The proposed costs of the Core and the Government Pricing Model, and the rates proposed in Attachment B, Direct Labor Rates, Indirect Rates and Award Matrices, were assessed to determine reasonableness and cost realism. The cost evaluation was conducted in accordance with FAR 15.305(a)(1) and NFS 1815.305(a)(1)(B). The Offerors were referred to FAR 2.101(b) for a definition of "cost realism" and to FAR 15.404-1(d) for a discussion of "Cost realism analysis" and "probable cost." Both the "proposed and probable cost" reflected the Offeror's proposed fee amount. Proposed fee was not adjusted in the probable cost assessment.

Past Performance evaluations were based on FAR Part 15 and were conducted in accordance with provision M.5 of the solicitation. As stated in provision L.26 all past performance references must meet the "recent" and minimum average annual cost/fee expenditures criteria provided below for both prime contractor references and significant subcontractor references in order to be evaluated. An Offeror's past performance record indicates the relevant quantitative and qualitative aspects of performing services or delivering products similar in size and content to the requirements of this acquisition.

An Offeror's Past Performance was assigned an overall confidence rating that reflects a subjective evaluation of the information contained in the written narrative; past performance evaluation input provided through customer questionnaires; and other references. As set forth and described in Section M.5 of the RFP, the applicable level of confidence ratings were: Very High, High, Moderate, Low, Very Low, and Neutral.

For purposes of past performance, the term "Offeror" refers to a prime contractor and significant subcontractors. Accordingly, the past performance of significant subcontractor(s) was also evaluated and attributed to the Offeror. The past performance of a significant subcontractor was compared to the work proposed to be performed by that subcontractor, and weighted accordingly in assigning the overall past performance adjectival rating to the Offeror. The past performance of the prime contractor was weighted more heavily than any significant subcontractor or combination of significant subcontractors in the overall past performance evaluation.

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Detailed Results of the Evaluation

As a result of the evaluation process, the Mission Suitability Subfactor ratings and Total Score are summarized below:

| Offerors | Ratings/Score by Subfactor | | | Total Score |
|----------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Subfactor A | Subfactor B | Subfactor C | |
| ASTS | Good | Good | Excellent | 714 |
| MSP | Very Good | Good | Fair | 610 |
| SEP | Fair | Good | Good | 574 |
| Ventech | Poor | Poor | Poor | 135 |

Mission Suitability Factor

Arctic Slope Technical Services, Inc. (ASTS)

Subfactor A: Technical Approach to the Sample Problem

ASTS received 0 Significant Strengths, 0 Strengths, 2 Weaknesses, 0 Significant Weakness, and 0 Deficiencies, resulting in an adjectival rating of Good for this Subfactor.

Weakness #1

ASTS's proposal does not provide an adequate discussion of how processes should be tailored to support a Class C Mission with Class B software using a prototype already developed under Class D processes. The ASTS approach to the sample problem is inconsistent with the Mission size, which increases the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #2

The ASTS approach to the sample problem is dependent upon the introduction and implementation of a non-standard process methodology. ASTS was unclear in the implementation details thus negating the benefit of the more efficient life cycle, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Subfactor B: Core Requirements

ASTS received 0 Significant Strengths, 1 Strength, 2 Weaknesses, 0 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 Deficiencies, resulting in an adjectival rating of Good for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

ASTS proposed two innovations that, when incorporated into operations, will benefit the Government in terms of improved contract performance and a more secure IT environment enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

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Weakness #1

The ASTS proposal, in response to the IT section of the Core, was unclear regarding how they would meet task objectives across several of the IT elements, increasing the risk for unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #2

ASTS proposes a staffing reach back approach without adequately providing details on how the proposed approach will work across other AETD contracts. This approach increases the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Subfactor C: Management Plan

ASTS received 2 Significant Strengths, 2 Strengths, 1 Weakness, 0 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 Deficiencies, resulting in an adjectival rating of Excellent for this Subfactor.

Significant Strength #1

ASTS proposed an excellent, extremely detailed plan to incentivize the workforce for continued engineering excellence, attracting incumbent and new employees while maintaining morale. This included strong performance based bonuses, in-depth technical training opportunities, and workforce succession planning. The proposed plan significantly enhances the potential for successful contract performance.

Significant Strength #2

ASTS proposed exceptionally detailed organizational processes and resources providing flexibility and responsiveness to meet the objectives of the contract. The Offeror provides excellent details of their conflict resolution and sub-contractor methodology, insuring all issues are resolved in a fair, repeatable method. ASTS' proposal described a detailed subcontractor monitoring process with formal documented procedures on implementing corrective action. The organizational processes and resources significantly enhances the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #1

ASTS proposed to include the utilization of an established Management Information System that provides greater management efficiencies, effectiveness and visibility into ongoing task order activities enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #2

ASTS proposed a detailed Phase-In Plan with specific milestones and lessons learned from previous successful phase-ins. ASTS outlined a strategy that will provide an efficient and effective transition enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

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Weakness #1

The proposed level of effort for one of the managers/group leads is unrealistic in correlation to the magnitude of contract services proposed for the position, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Mission Solutions Partners, (MSP) LLC

Subfactor A: Technical Approach to the Sample Problem

MSP received 1 Significant Strength, 2 Strengths, 1 Weakness, 0 Significant Weakness, and 0 Deficiencies resulting in an adjectival rating of Very Good for this Subfactor.

Significant Strength #1

MSP proposed an extremely detailed technical approach with assumptions that demonstrate their capability to fully carry out essential engineering functions in order to meet and/or exceed the objectives of the sample problem. MSP's proposal provided exceptional technical detail to tailor processes, incorporate automation and inclusion of follow-on missions early in the development phase. The approach to the sample problem includes extremely detailed rationale for the use of heritage software to lower development costs. MSP also included exceptional reduction and management of risk, significantly enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #1

MSP's approach to the sample problem allowed for a flexible process with issues that typically impact software development. MSP describes how they plan to effectively work with the Government to offer technical and administrative options enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #2

MSP proposed an innovative approach to simulation, distributing development and speed-up of delivery, which assists in maintaining a constrained schedule, lowers cost and reduces risk, increasing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

MSP's approach to developing critical software is not accounted for in the Systems Engineering task of the sample problem, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Subfactor B: Core Requirements

MSP received 0 Significant Strengths, 1 Strength, 1 Weakness, 0 Significant Weakness, and 0 deficiencies, resulting in an adjectival rating of Good for this Subfactor.

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Strength #1

MSP's proposal described an overall approach to the Core that was detailed and process-oriented. MSP provided a solution for Core that addressed current and future mission requirements enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

MSP proposed a Core labor and skill mix inconsistent with the requirements of the Core objectives. MSP's proposed level of staffing did not correlate with the duties proposed, increasing the risk of higher costs and inefficient work plans increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Subfactor C: Management Plan

MSP received 0 Significant Strengths, 2 Strengths, 1 Weakness, 2 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 deficiencies, resulting in an adjectival rating of Fair for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

MSP's proposal included the utilization of an established suite of Management Information Tools that provided greater management efficiencies, effectiveness, and visibility into ongoing task order work activities, enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #2

MSP proposed a detailed plan to incentivize the workforce for continued engineering excellence and staff retention including performance based incentives, enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

MSP's proposed Safety and Health plan did not correlate to several NASA Goddard procedures relevant to Safety and Health that could lead to the reduction of the safety culture under this contract, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Significant Weakness #1

MSP proposed an integrated project team approach with several subcontractors supporting niche rolls with no clear prime contractor roles. The lack of work-share guidelines and lack of a distribution adjudication process increases the likelihood of confusion over which company will be backfilling vacancies and filling new task orders which appreciably increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

Significant Weakness #2

MSP proposed several key management positions that significantly overlap with other management or technical level task positions described in the proposal. MSP was unclear on a strategy for balancing the technical and management/administrative duties for the parties involved. It is unclear how this additional layer of management will outweigh the cost, appreciably increasing the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

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System Engineering Partner (SEP)

Subfactor A: Technical Approach to the Sample Problem

SEP received 0 Significant Strengths, 1 Strength, 4 Weaknesses, 0 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 Deficiencies resulting in an adjectival rating of Fair for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

SEP proposed a realistic approach to re-using mature Ground System components reducing integration complexity, schedule, and development staff. Components of the Ground and Flight Systems were selected as part of their approach to meet technical functional and performance requirements through use of heritage components. Their method increases the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

SEP's proposal provided insufficient detail to integrate proposed innovations to meet the essential engineering functions/objectives of the sample problem. Without detailing quantifiable efficiencies to balance the risks associated with new innovations it increases the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #2

SEP's proposal provided insufficient rationale for software systems engineering assumptions and development suggestions leading to potential cost and schedule impacts, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #3

SEP's proposal demonstrated an inefficient use of trade studies to select tools, applications and processes supporting the size and scope of the sample problem. The extensive use of trade studies to perform make/buy or procedural decisions will incur additional cost, schedule and complexity, increasing the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #4

SEP's proposal contains various discrepancies, from milestone charts conflicting with the referring text, to duplicating positions between flight and ground specific task orders, and not identifying combined reviews on the overall Milestone Chart. The lack of consistency led to confusion about which statements were intended, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Subfactor B: Core Requirements

SEP received 0 Significant Strengths, 2 Strengths, 2 Weaknesses, 0 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 Deficiencies resulting in an adjectival rating of Good for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

SEP proposed to infuse specific elements of industry accepted process models to improve upon current services, remove unnecessary processes and ensure consistent service. Utilizing

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industry recognized best practices for service delivery in an IT environment, enhances the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #2

SEP proposed innovations to foster communication and build/sustain a stable workforce, demonstrating a commitment to long sustainability for positions. The proposed innovations allow for employee growth within the contract, enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

SEP's proposal provided insufficient detail needed to convey an understanding of the inherent problems associated with the objectives of the Core. The Offeror failed to provide a clear and comprehensive description for several areas in the SOW specific to technical approach for staffing, managing and executing activities, increasing the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #2

SEP's proposal provided inadequate detail needed to convey how the labor skill and mix will be employed to efficiently support the IT section of the Core SOW. The Offeror proposed consolidations without providing sufficient implementation and management details which hinders the government's ability to adequately adjust support intended for IDIQ tasks. These issues increase the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Subfactor C: Management Plan

SEP received 0 Significant Strengths, 4 Strengths, 1 Weakness, 0 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 Deficiencies resulting in an adjectival rating of Good for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

SEP's proposal included the utilization of an established, proprietary web-based contract management and administration tool. The tool contains a variety of modules providing real time access for tracking costs, risk management and other important features, enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #2

SEP proposed a plan to attract and maintain a qualified workforce through developing an incentivizing learning culture. This method contributes to the technical development and cultivation of a workforce enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Strength #3

SEP proposed a detailed Phase-In Plan (PIP) including a full schedule of necessary task transition, management, and staffing activities, and demonstrated their ability to assume responsibility for performance of the contract. Their PIP contains a mitigation plan insuring continuance of work with uninterrupted service, enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

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Strength #4

SEP's Safety and Health Plan includes information explaining how they plan to comply with applicable safety requirements. The implementation of this plan can reduce the chances for incidents leading to work stoppages increasing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

SEP's proposal does not clearly describe the plan to utilize significant subcontractors specifically in the transition of employees not currently employed by the SES incumbent. An unclear split of responsibilities, percentages of work to be performed and distribution judication process increases the likelihood of confusion over which of the significant subcontractors will be hiring those not already employed under the incumbent contractor and future additions to the contractor workforce, increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Ventech Solutions (Ventech)

Subfactor A: Technical Approach to the Sample Problem

Ventech received 0 Significant Strengths, 0 Strengths, 1 Weakness, 2 Significant Weaknesses, and 1 Deficiency resulting in an adjectival rating of Poor for this Subfactor.

Weakness #1

Ventech proposed an inefficient use of trade studies. Ventech did not limit the amount of technologies to be traded with known CubeSat capabilities. The extensive use of trade studies to perform make/buy or procedural decisions will incur additional cost, schedule and complexity; leading to the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Significant Weakness #1

Ventech's proposal failed to include a detailed technical approach to reasonably, effectively and adequately address the Ground Software Engineering tasks within the sample problem. The lack of technical detail and clear choice of technical solutions conveys a lack of understanding of the sample problem objectives. The proposed technical and staffing approach lacks detail to be evaluated for realism and efficiency to accomplish the objects of the sample problem. The Offeror's proposal fails to demonstrate an ability to tailor processes and procedures down to fit the sample problem Mission size and scope. The lack of detail offered in the proposal appreciably increases the potential for unsuccessful performance.

Significant Weakness #2

Ventech's proposal fails to include a detailed technical approach to reasonably, effectively and adequately address the Flight Software Engineering task within the sample problem. The absence of technical detail conveys a lack of understanding of the sample problem objectives. Ventech's proposal provided insufficient technical detail and several inconsistencies to demonstrate their capability to perform essential flight software engineering objectives in the Sample Problem, appreciably increasing the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

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Deficiency #1

Ventech's response to the sample problem contained past performance and proposed processes without providing a technical solution to the sample problem, leaving the Government little to evaluate for realism, relevance and adequacy. Ventech details their expertise in software systems but fails to demonstrate how this expertise could be utilized in addressing the sample problem. Ventech provides inadequate details of analogous process or architecture details to substantiate the comparison between their past efforts and the Sample Problem. Ventech's response generally parrots the sample problem with their "teams" past performance with little detail as to how they will actually solve the sample problem which increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level.

Subfactor B: Core Requirements

Ventech received 0 Significant Strengths, 1 Strength, 1 Weakness, 1 Significant Weakness, and 1 Deficiency resulting in an adjectival rating of Poor for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

Ventech proposed several innovative techniques and processes that, when combined, demonstrate a desire to create a proactive security culture to increase the IT Security of AETD enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

Ventech proposed staffing unclearly maps to the objectives of the IT section of the Core. Ventech did not adequately identify a reasonable, effective, or realistic rationale for overlapping positions, leading to a lack of confidence that Ventech understood the requirements. The inefficient use of proposed labor and a misunderstanding of the AETD IT environment increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

Significant Weakness #1

Ventech's proposed technical approach to meeting the objectives of the Flight Software Sustaining Engineering (FSSE) Core section provides very little detail about how they will meet stated objectives, leaving the Government little to evaluate for effectiveness of techniques, comprehension and the ability to satisfy requirements in a timely and cost effective manner. Without technical examples of how proposed personnel and process engineering will be utilized, it is unclear how Ventech reached the proposed labor and skill mix and if Ventech understands the complexities associated with maintaining Flight Software. The overall reliance on processes engineering without a listing of technical duties and approaches, appreciably increases the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Deficiency #1

Ventech failed to describe any risk management techniques, nor include the probability of risk, impact and severity, and time frame of each identified risk, as required in Section L for the Core. The Government was unable to evaluate the Offeror's approach to Risk Management for soundness and reasonableness. The lack of information regarding risk increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level.

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Subfactor C: Management Plan

Ventech received 0 Significant Strengths, 1 Strength, 3 Weaknesses, 2 Significant Weaknesses, and 0 Deficiencies resulting in an adjectival rating of Poor for this Subfactor.

Strength #1

Ventech proposed to use a web-based Management Information System to support the execution of tasks including financial management, budget allocations, and tracking and variance reporting enhancing the potential for successful contract performance.

Weakness #1

Ventech proposed to delegate the responsibility of Task Order execution to lower level lead employees, making the roles, responsibilities, and authority of the Group Manager unclear. Ventech's approach for Task Order leads increases the potential for unsuccessful performance.

Weakness #2

Ventech's proposal does not adequately describe how the Program Manager (PM) would address resource conflict resolution, workload variability, and manpower fluctuations. The passive approach to conflict resolution and unclear authority of the PM over subcontractors increases the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Weakness #3

Ventech's Safety and Health (S&H) Plan shows a lack of understanding with GSFC procedures and directives. Lack of knowledge of the GSFC S&H procedures increases the potential for unsuccessful contract performance.

Significant Weakness #1

Ventech's management and technical roles are unclear, when they refer to themselves as a member of "Team Ventech". The nature and extent, including the lack of responsibilities/work percentages, of the Prime Contractor's utilization of subcontractors is unclear and does not map to the subcontractors list of capabilities. Ventech states that "they will perform nearly 80% of the tasks requested on SES II", though fails to offer details on aspects of the Contract that they will be performing. Ventech goes on to state that their significant subcontractor will support most if not all of the SOW requirements over the life of the contract. This inconsistency leads to confusion, appreciably increasing the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

Significant Weakness #2

Ventech's proposal inadequately details how they will obtain the proposed incumbent capture leading to a high risk phase-in and a strong possibility of interrupting ongoing work. The Prime contractor's phase-in plan is unclear and tends to rely on past successful subcontractor phase-ins. The conflicting information and lack of detail within Ventech's hiring plan appreciably increases the potential for unsuccessful performance.

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Cost Factor

Ventech had the lowest total proposed cost/fee, followed by ASTS, SEP, and MSP accordingly. The evaluation team made upward/downward probable cost adjustments to each of the Offeror's proposed direct labor rates (that were not provided in the RFP). Additionally, the evaluation team made an upward probable cost adjustment in ASTS's Core management and non-management hours, and escalation rate. MSP received a downward probable cost adjustment due to an error in their proposal. SEP received an upward adjustment for materials and travel. Ventech received an upward adjustment to their proposed escalation rate. After the adjustments were made, Ventech had the lowest probable cost which was moderately lower than SEP's probable cost, which in turn was very slightly lower than ASTS's probable cost. MSP's probable cost was the highest and was slightly higher than ASTS' probable cost.

Past Performance Factor

As a result of the evaluation process, the SES II Source Evaluation Board ratings are summarized below:

| Offeror | Level of Confidence Rating |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| ASTS | Very High |
| MSP | Moderate |
| SEP | High |
| Ventech | Low |

ASTS

ASTS was assigned an overall confidence level rating of Very High which is reflective of the SES II Source Evaluation Board's subjective evaluation of information contained in the written narrative; past performance evaluation input provided through customer questionnaires; and other references. The overall relevance of ASTS's reference contracts was rated high to very high with overall performance rated as primarily very high. The significant subcontractors demonstrated moderate to very high relevance with performance ratings of moderate to very high. Based on the offerors performance record, there is a Very High level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort.

MSP

MSP was assigned an overall confidence level rating of Moderate which is reflective of the SES II Source Evaluation Board's subjective evaluation of information contained in the written narrative; past performance evaluation input provided through customer questionnaires; and other references. The overall relevance of MSP's reference contracts were rated moderate with overall performance rated as very high. The 8(a) and the Joint Venture (JV) partner demonstrated moderate relevance with performance ratings of very high. The significant subcontractor demonstrated very high relevance

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and very high performance. Based on the offerors performance record, there is a Moderate level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort.

SEP

SEP was assigned an overall confidence level rating of High which is reflective of the SES II Source Evaluation Board's subjective evaluation of the information contained in the written narrative; past performance evaluation input provided through customer questionnaires; and other references. The overall relevance of SEP's reference contracts were rated high in relevance with overall performance rated very high. The 8(a) JV partner demonstrated low relevance with performance ratings of very high, while the non-8(a) JV partner demonstrated high to very high overall relevance and high to very high performance. Based on the offerors performance record, there is a High level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort.

Ventech

Ventech was assigned an overall confidence level rating of Low which is reflective of the SES II Source Evaluation Board's subjective evaluation of the information contained in the written narrative; past performance evaluation input provided through customer questionnaires; and other references. The overall relevance of Ventech's reference contracts were rated low with overall performance rated very high. The significant subcontractor demonstrated moderate to high relevance with performance ratings of high to very high. Based on the offerors performance record, there is a Low level of confidence that the Offeror will successfully perform the required effort.

Source Selection Decision

On August 21, 2015, I, as the Source Selection Authority (SSA), along with several ex-officios, met with the Source Evaluation Board (SEB) to hear the SEB's findings and evaluation conclusions. Prior to that meeting I carefully reviewed the Source Evaluation Board's documentation entitled "Software Engineering Services II (SES II) Presentation to Source Selection Authority." I determined that the findings presented by the SEB, as documented in its presentation and the accompanying "SES II Cost Evaluation Report" were detailed, consistent with the evaluation criteria in the SES II RFP, and provided a clear description of the merits of each proposal. I questioned the SEB with regard to its rationale for the findings and the adjectival ratings and scores for the mission suitability subfactors, and also questioned the rationale for the evaluation of cost and past performance. Further, I solicited the views of my ex-officio advisors in their areas of expertise. I determined that the findings were reasonable and valid for the purpose of making a selection decision. I accept the findings from the SEB and concur with the Contracting Officer (CO) that a competitive range and discussions are not necessary. In determining which proposal offered the best value to NASA, I referred to the relative order of importance of the three evaluation factors as specified in the RFP:

The Cost Factor is significantly less important than the combined importance of the Mission Suitability Factor and the Past Performance Factor. As individual Factors, the Cost Factor is less important than the Mission Suitability Factor but more important than the Past Performance Factor.

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Regarding the Mission Suitability Factor, I noted that the three highest rated proposals, ASTS, MSP, and SEP, received significantly higher ratings and scores than Ventech. Ventech's proposal had one or more significant weaknesses and/or deficiencies in their Mission Suitability evaluation. This made Ventech less competitive in the Mission Suitability Factor. Further, Ventech's lower probable cost advantage did not offset the significant Mission Suitability advantages and higher Past Performance ratings received by ASTS, MSP, and SEP. Therefore, the remainder of my decision focused on the three most competitive proposals, ASTS, MSP, and SEP.

Regarding Subfactor A, I noted that MSP was the only Offeror who received a Very Good rating. ASTS received a Good rating while SEP received a Fair rating. I then closely examined the evaluation findings for MSP, ASTS, and SEP. I noted that MSP received two strengths and a significant strength for their detailed technical approach to the sample problem which included assumptions that demonstrate their capability to fully carry out essential engineering functions. While ASTS and SEP demonstrated a fundamental technical understanding of the sample problem, neither of these offerors received a significant strength in Subfactor A. Further, I noted that MSP received a weakness while ASTS received two weaknesses and SEP received four weaknesses. Taking into account the nature and impact of the weaknesses received by each of these offerors coupled with MSP's significant strength, I determined that the findings received by MSP in this subfactor constituted a discriminator when compared to ASTS and SEP. Therefore, in my review of Subfactor A, I did find a discriminator between the overall Very Good rating received by MSP compared to the Good rating received by ASTS and the Fair rating received by SEP.

Regarding Subfactor B, the least weighted subfactor, I noted that ASTS, MSP and SEP all received a rating of Good. I further examined the respective strengths and weaknesses received by ASTS, MSP, and SEP, and found no meaningful discriminators within those strengths and weaknesses for these offerors, who each proposed sound approaches to meeting the Core requirements.

Regarding Subfactor C, the most heavily weighted subfactor, I noted that ASTS was the only Offeror who received an overall Excellent rating, due to its two significant strengths. SEP received a rating of Good, and MSP a rating of Fair. Although SEP and MSP had strengths in their management approach, none of them had any significant strengths. I noted this to be a significant discriminator, as ASTS had an excellent proposed management approach for efficiently and effectively managing the SES II contract, as well as, an excellent, extremely detailed plan to incentivize the workforce for continued engineering excellence. Although ASTS received a weakness for not providing an adequate level of effort for one of their management team members, I found this to be a relatively minor weakness that did not significantly detract from their overall management approach. ASTS's excellent overall management approach will significantly increase the likelihood of effective management of the SES II contract.

Regarding the cost evaluation, I noted that SEP's probable cost was very slightly lower than ASTS, which was in turn slightly lower than MSP's probable cost. I determined there was no significant discriminator between the two lowest offerors, SEP and ASTS, while these offerors had a slight cost advantage over MSP.

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Regarding the past performance evaluation, I noted that ASTS was the only Offeror to receive a Very High level of confidence rating. SEP and MSP received a High and Moderate level of confidence rating, respectively. I found there was a discriminator between ASTS' past performance and MSP's and SEP's past performance; as ASTS was the only Offeror to receive a Very High level of confidence rating.

Finally, I carefully considered the findings in relation to the evaluation criteria in the RFP, and exercised my independent judgment regarding the significance of the findings as discriminators between the proposals in accordance with evaluation criteria in the RFP.

Based on the foregoing evaluations and upon consideration of the relative importance of the three evaluation factors under the RFP, I determined that one Offeror, ASTS, presented an overall superior proposal that offered the best value to the government. Specifically, under the most important factor, Mission Suitability, I concluded that ASTS's Mission Suitability proposal had a significant advantage over the other Offerors; particularly in Subfactor C. Additionally, ASTS was the only Offeror to receive a Very High level of confidence rating in past performance. I have concluded that the substantial management advantages offered by ASTS's Mission Suitability proposal, as noted above, coupled with their Very High past performance rating, outweigh MSP's higher rating in Subfactor A and SEP's very slight edge in probable cost. Therefore, I select ASTS for award of the Software Engineering Services II (SES II) contract.



Dr. Christy Johnson
Source Selection Authority

9/29/15
Date