



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

State Government Relations and Legislative Advocacy

Introduction

The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (“Authority”) is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals or firms to provide, under contract, services for state government relations and legislative advocacy.

This Request For Proposals (“RFP”) is to invite all interested, qualified people and firms to submit proposals to provide professional services for representing the Authority in legislative matters at the state to further interests and objectives identified by the Authority Board and staff. The primary focus is to assist the Authority with improving its efforts to influence legislation, capture revenues available to local government and assist the Authority in identifying competitive grants and other discretionary funding available to the Authority.

The Authority will ONLY ACCEPT ELECTRONIC PROPOSALS in response to this RFP. Proposers must strictly comply with Authority instructions with respect to submittal of proposals.

Deadline to submit is February 5, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

Critical Dates

- January 15, 2021 – RFP issued
- January 22—Deadline to submit a question or a request for clarification
- January 29—Addendum issued, if necessary, addressing questions
- February 4, 2:00 p.m.—Last day to notify Authority of email addresses authorized to submit proposal
- February 5, 5:00 p.m.—Proposals due by email
- February 8-12—Anticipated interview dates
- February 19—Notice of intent to award
- March 5—Anticipated contract award

Proposals received after the deadline will be rejected and not scored.

Scope of Work

The Authority is seeking proposals from qualified entities interested in representing the Authority before the State government, including without limitation the Governor’s office, the Legislature

(including committees), and administrative agencies, including the State Water Resources Control Board, on matters related to water and natural resources, water infrastructure, water management, and public agency governance. The following is an overview of the services expected to be provided by the individual or firm:

1. Identify proposed legislation and regulations that could impact the Authority and/or its member agencies
 - a. Analyze proposals for potential impact to the Authority; and
 - b. Provide the Authority regular written reports and trackers on proposals.
2. Advise the Authority on and, when needed, prepare:
 - a. Draft legislation and/or amendments to proposed legislation or regulations;
 - b. Position papers;
 - c. Testimony for hearings; and
 - d. Draft talking points for meetings.
3. Lobby and work with legislators and legislative staff, representatives and staff of state offices and agencies, and other parties who may have similar or adversarial positions to the Authority's position.
4. Arrange meetings for representatives of the Authority with state government officials and others, as may be advisable.
5. Participate in weekly meetings with Authority staff.
6. Communicate, as needed with the Board of Directors, Executive Director, Water Policy Director, and other staff.
7. Comply with all requirements of the Political Reform Act and the regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission, including compliance with all lobbying reporting requirements by filing disclosure reports on behalf of the Authority.
8. Provide the Authority with a written annual report, related to the Authority's state agenda, a summary of services provided on behalf of the Authority, and outcomes of service provided.

The work to be performed is more specifically defined in the form contract, attached as **Exhibit A**.

About San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority

The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority was established in January of 1992 and consists of 27 member agencies providing water service to approximately 1,200,000 acres of irrigated agriculture, 2 million people, and 130,000 acres of managed wetlands of critical importance to the Pacific Flyway within the western San Joaquin Valley, San Benito and Santa Clara counties.

The Authority was established for the primary purpose of operating and maintaining (O&M) certain Central Valley Project facilities. The Central Valley Project is the nation's largest federal reclamation project operated by the United States Bureau of Reclamation.

In addition, the Authority represents member agencies by developing, providing and disseminating information to legislative, administrative and judicial bodies concerning a variety of issues such as: Sacramento and San Joaquin Delta exports, water supply, water quality, water development, conservation, distribution, drainage, contractual rights, surface and groundwater management, and any other common interest of the member agencies.

The governing body of the Authority consists of a 19-member Board of Directors classified into five divisions with directors selected from within each division. Each Director, and respective Alternate Director, is a member of the governing body or an appointed staff member of his or her agency.

Proposal Contents

The proposal should include the sections detailed below in the following order and containing the following information:

1. Cover Letter: The Cover Letter should constitute a letter of introduction, including identification of the proposing firm/individual, contact person, mailing address, physical address, email address, telephone number, and fax number and should be signed by the proposer (if an individual) or an officer of the firm submitting the proposal with authority to act on behalf of and bind the firm. Indicate contact person(s) for the project.	Pass/Fail
2. All issued addenda. It is the responsibility of proposers to ensure that they have received all addenda.	Pass/Fail
3. Proposers shall verify that they have no personal or organizational conflicts of interest, as prohibited by law.	Pass/Fail
4. Resume for each identified key personnel.	Pass/Fail
5. Provide general information about yourself or your firm, including description and history of firm, years in business, name(s) of owner(s), home office location, local office location (if different), and number of employees. Provide a summary of the qualifications, credentials, types of services offered, and types of clients served.	5 Points
6. Discuss the proposer's experience providing the services requested. Be specific with respect to each type of service sought, as described in the scope of work above. Describe a particularly challenging project, and a particularly rewarding project, and why each was such. Please be specific in your descriptions.	10 Points
7. Identify the key personnel proposed to provide services to the Authority, including their roles. Identify the individual who will be the lead on the contract. Specify each identified key personnel's background and experience, focusing on services they have provided similar to what the Authority seeks. State a commitment that, if the proposer is selected, the firm will not substitute key personnel without notice to and authorization by the Authority.	10 Points
8. Provide at least three references for the firm and key personnel. The references shall include a contact name and contact information (address, phone number and email address) for the Authority to contact. At least one reference should be a public entity. If the Authority is unable to reach at least two references for	15 Points

the proposer, then the person’s or firm’s proposal will be rejected as non-responsive.	
9. Provide a discussion of your understanding of the Scope of Work and a detailed outline of the proposal to meet the Authority’s needs. Describe the special strengths that you or your firm can bring and how these set you or your firm apart.	30 Points
Total Technical Points	70 Points

Proposed Fees/Cost Proposal

Please provide the Proposed Fees/Cost Proposal in a separate, clearly labeled file. Identify the proposed monthly fee to perform the tasks identified in the Scope of Work. Submission of fees/cost information with other portions of the proposal will result in the proposal being rejected.

Electronic Proposal Submission and Evaluations

The Authority will **ONLY ACCEPT ELECTRONIC PROPOSALS** in response to this RFP. Proposers must notify the Authority at [scott.petersen@sldmwa.org] no later than **2:00 p.m. on February 4, 2021** of up to two (2) individuals authorized to submit the proposal, with their email (electronic mail) addresses. Instructions will then be emailed directly to those email addresses. Following receipt of the proposal, the Authority will respond to the provided email(s) indicating the date and time that the proposal was received. Proposals will be maintained as confidential until the proposal opening time. Email and electronic systems may reflect some delay in delivery and upload, and the Authority assumes no responsibility if the entire proposal is not received prior to the opening time.

Proposals must be submitted as **two separate** electronic files in PDF format, each no more than 10MB in size, one for the Cost Proposal and one for the other requirements. Proposals will be considered only if both files are delivered to the Authority on or before the specified due date and time. Submittals from anyone other than those pre-authorized to submit a proposal will not be accepted and, as such, will not be considered. Proposals must be verified as authentic with delivery of the original of the electronic proposal with wet signatures by overnight delivery, confirmed to be sent on or before the bid due date to the following address:

San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority
842 Sixth Street
Los Banos, CA 93635
Attn: Scott Petersen

The hard copy proposal shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope plainly marked with the name and address of the proposer and "Proposal for State Government Relations and Lobbying Services" followed by the date of opening proposals. Within the sealed proposal envelope, the Cost Proposal shall be included in a **separately sealed** envelope labeled "Cost Proposal for State Government Relations and Lobbying Services" and the name of the proposer.

Number of Copies

Submit a single electronic copy of the proposal in pdf format.

Submission Questions and Clarifications

If you have any questions regarding this request for proposals, you may contact Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director, at scott.petersen@sldmwa.org. Proposers are requested not to contact other Authority staff or Board members in any manner in connection with this RFP and selection process. Any applicants who violate this request may be disqualified from further consideration.

The Authority will reply regarding substantive questions by addenda which will be emailed to any potential proposer who has requested such information and uploaded to the Authority's website. It is the responsibility of the proposer to check for updated information prior to the proposal due date. Questions received after the deadline noted in the RFP may not be answered.

Respondents shall submit questions regarding any ambiguity, uncertainty, or other perceived flaw in this RFP, or any proposed changes to the contract attached as Exhibit A, as soon as the issue is identified, but no later than the deadline to submit questions on this RFP. Any such issue which is not raised prior to the deadline to submit questions shall be waived, and the Authority will not consider any challenge based on the contents, structure, or terms of this RFP after the proposal deadline.

The Authority shall not be obligated to respond to any question unless it is submitted in writing to the Authority's designated representative identified above. The Authority shall be bound only by written responses to questions contained in an addendum to the RFP. Oral responses, or email responses, shall not be binding on the Authority.

Proposal Evaluations

Proposals received after the deadline, February 5, 2021, will not be considered.

Evaluation Process

The purpose of this RFP is to enable the Authority to select a person of the firm(s) offering the best value for award of a professional services contract. The Authority will use the qualifications-based selection process outlined below.

1. A review and selection committee will review and evaluate all proposals based on the technical scoring criteria identified above. The evaluation team first will determine whether the proposal meets the format and content requirements and the standards specified in this RFP.
2. All compliant proposals will be scored using the technical criteria identified above. The evaluation team will not open the contents of the sealed price proposal during this part of the evaluation.
3. After the evaluation team scores all proposals, each proposal shall be assigned a technical score for each scored factor that is the average of the individual evaluators' scores for the factor, and a sum of the total average factor scores.

4. After the technical scores are assigned, the price proposal will be opened. Compliant price proposals will be scored in accordance with the price proposal standards identified above. Each proposer's price proposal score will be added to its technical score.
5. The Authority will rank proposers from the highest to the lowest using the total score and will schedule interviews with the top three scoring proposers. If the score for the fourth-ranked proposer is within 10 points of the third-ranked proposer, then the Authority may, at its sole discretion, schedule the fourth-ranked proposer for interview as well. Prior to the interviews, the Authority will develop standard questions to ask of each presenter. The Authority may or may not share its questions with the short-listed proposers prior to the interviews. Proposers may receive up to 50 additional points based on responses to those interview questions. All key personnel will be expected to participate in the interview.
6. After the interviews, the interview score will be added to the total of the technical score and the price proposal score for each interviewed proposer.
7. The Authority will rank proposers by highest to lowest score. If the Authority elects to proceed with award, then, in a Notice of Intent to Award, the Authority shall publicly announce the intended awardee offering the best value and state the date of the Board meeting at which the award will be considered.

The Authority reserves the right to investigate any proposal or proposer, including without limitation requesting clarification from the proposer or contacting other entities who have engaged the proposer or any of its personnel for additional information related to the proposer. The Authority reserves the right to consider information relating to a proposer or proposal based on information obtained outside of the proposal available to the evaluators.

The Authority reserves the right to waive any immaterial deviation in any proposal.

A joint proposal from more than one firm will be considered by the Authority.

Final Selection

Following the initial review and screening of all proposals submitted by the deadline, Authority staff may negotiate draft contract terms with the person or firm Authority staff will recommend to the Board for award of the contract. The Authority's Board will make the final selection.

Issuance of this RFP does not guarantee that the Authority will award a contract. The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals at its sole discretion, to re-bid the services, or to request that all proposers submit revised proposals to address new or different factors or criteria. The final award will not necessarily be made to the lowest bidder. Other factors will be considered in awarding this project.

Miscellaneous

Costs of preparing a proposal in response to this RFP are solely the responsibility of the proposing person or firm. The Authority will not be responsible for any proposal costs, and the proposer shall not include any such expenses in its proposal.

The Authority does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, ancestry, medical condition, disability or gender in consideration for an award of contract.

A proposer may withdraw its proposal at any time **before** the proposal due date. After the proposal due date, the proposal shall constitute an irrevocable offer to the Authority for up to 120 days after the proposal due date.

The selected proposer shall execute the contract, in substantially the form of the contract attached as Exhibit A, with the Authority within five (5) business days of receipt of the contract for execution. If the proposer fails to execute the contract within the required timeframe, the Authority may extend the timeframe or may award the contract to the next highest ranked proposer.

All proposals received on this RFP shall be public records under the California Public Records Act upon announcement of the intent to award a contract.