Request for Proposal: Contractor support for technical assistance to brownfields communities grant proposal (EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-05)

Summary:
Smart Growth America (SGA) is preparing a grant proposal to be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide technical assistance to brownfields communities in EPA Region 3 (EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-05). SGA seeks to augment team capabilities with contractor expertise. SGA is accepting proposals from interested non-profit organizations, educational institutions, private firms and individual consultants to be a part of the SGA team that is proposing on the EPA grant. The proposed project period (i.e., the length of the project) may be up to five (5) years.

Proposals under this SGA request are due no later than 5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday, October 31, 2012.

EPA’s evaluation of the subject grant proposal will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of an applicant’s named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

Accordingly SGA is hereby requesting proposals from contractors in accordance with 40 CFR Part 30 as appropriate for a not-for-profit organization. This request for proposal shall be posted on the SGA web site October 10th through October 19th. Contractors who have worked with SGA on similar assignments in the past may also be sent a copy of the request for proposal.
**Contractor services requested:**
Respondents to this request for proposal should present for SGA’s consideration a proposal to provide technical assistance in one or more of the following subject areas:

1. **Community Involvement**

   Activities supporting this subject area should look at brownfields issues from a community-based perspective. Projects should aim to provide communities with information, tools and technology to better understand or participate in an informed way in decision making related to brownfields area-wide planning, assessment, cleanup, environmental workforce development and job training, and the redevelopment process, or to foster a better understanding of the impacts of living near a potentially contaminated brownfields property.

2. **Health Impacts of Brownfields sites**

   Technical assistance supporting this subject area should address the connection between health issues and brownfields. The assistance should focus on the impacts to health and quality of life when brownfields are not cleaned up and redeveloped, or examine effects on health and quality of life as a result of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. The assistance should strive to improve the health of individuals living near brownfields (particularly, those belonging to sensitive and environmental justice populations) and to increase the level of understanding of brownfields-related health issues and to foster interaction and partnerships with local public health departments.

3. **Science and Technology Relating to Brownfields Assessment, Remediation, and Site Preparation**

   Technical assistance in this subject area should focus on various aspects of brownfields cleanup and subsequent redevelopment, including: assessment and inventory methods, sampling and cleanup methods, institutional controls and long-term stewardship to ensure long-term protection of human health and the environment, and risk assessment methods and policies.

4. **Integrated Approaches to Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment**

   Technical assistance in this subject area should address linkages between environmental, economic, and social issues, at brownfields sites including such things as: green revitalization, cleanup and redevelopment, port and waterfront utilization, energy issues, air and water quality issues, equitable development, affordable housing, leveraging partner agency resources, environmental justice, sustainable development and green building design approaches. Technical assistance outputs should aim to increase knowledge of linkages among various types of cleanup, redevelopment and planning
efforts, and to increase coordination among such efforts including prevention of future brownfields.

5. Brownfields Finance

Technical assistance in this area should address finance issues in brownfields cleanup such as assisting communities in working with lenders, investors, developers, and insurers and how to establish and leverage partnerships for funding assessment and cleanup that is consistent with plans for subsequent redevelopment. Activities may also increase state, local, and tribal stakeholders' knowledge base of finance issues on topics such as tax incentives, loan funds, insurance, economic development/development and other financing tools. Note that general fundraising costs are unallowable under Office of Management and Budget Cost Principles.

6. State, Tribal, and Local Government Brownfields Programs

Technical assistance in this area should focus on providing brownfields information to state, tribal (including Alaskan native tribes), local government representatives and other stakeholders about brownfields issues, brownfields-related government programs, and brownfields funding opportunities to receive support (e.g., financial, technical assistance) for their brownfields cleanup and redevelopment efforts. Technical assistance should also provide support on state and tribal response programs and assistance to communities with Brownfield grant funding that need technical assistance to move their projects forward.

Form and content of proposal:
To be considered complete, all proposals must include:

1. A cover letter. The cover letter that accompanies your proposal must be signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the project and should be written on your organization's official letterhead.

2. A description of the technical assistance you propose to provide. For each type of technical assistance proposed, the description should include:
   a. Subject areas addressed (see above).
   b. Specific content and issues to be addressed (500 word limit).
   c. The need for this assistance in EPA Region 3 (250 word limit). Please note whether you believe this need is general or specific to certain community contexts, site conditions or geographies.
   d. Intended audiences (200 word limit).
   e. How the assistance would be delivered (200 word limit). For instance, a workshop conducted in the receiving community, webinars, a self-guided worksheet with some expert support, etc.
   f. Expected outcomes (250 word limit).
g. Previous experience delivering similar technical assistance in communities in or similar to those in EPA Region 3 (500 word limit).

Narratives that clearly and completely address these items with fewer words will be favorably received. Answers to these questions may be combined in a single narrative if desired.

3. A budget for each of technical assistance types you propose, including all relevant direct costs (e.g., personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual) and indirect costs. If you propose technical assistance that could be delivered more than once, please base your budget on a single typical engagement. For instance, if you were to propose a series of webinars on different topics, please present a budget per webinar.

Please include a separate schedule of hourly rates for all principal staff that will have a significant role in the project.

4. A discussion of other resources you could provide to support the technical assistance program, including other sources of funding, in-kind contributions (eg. use of facilities for workshops), or collaboration with affiliated programs. (300 word limit)

5. Staff profiles and qualifications: The applicant must include short profiles of all principal staff that will have a major role in the project. These staff profiles must specifically address each individual’s experience with the issues addressed by this RFP and the EPA RFP.

Submission Dates and Times
The deadline for receipt of proposal packages is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on October 31, 2012. One copy of the proposal in PDF file format must be received by Elizabeth Schilling by email at eschilling@smartgrowthamerica.org by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on October 31, 2012. No late proposals will be accepted.

SGA Consultant Review Process and Criteria
SGA has developed the following review process and criteria in conformance with the attached SGA procurement policy.

Review Process
- SGA staff shall review each proposal for completeness. Only complete proposals shall advance to the next step.
- A proposal review committee shall review each proposal per the criteria listed below.
- SGA will determine which proposals meet its requirements and offer the contractors whose proposals meet SGA requirements a position on the team proposing to EPA. SGA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals as not meeting its requirements.
Successful proposers will be notified by November 5, 2012.

Review Criteria

1. Degree to which the applicant demonstrates expertise and experience in one or more of the six subject areas associated with this RFP (up to 40 points).
2. Quality, salience, and likely effectiveness of the proposed technical assistance program and the methodology for delivering them (up to 20 points).
3. Applicant’s programmatic capability and environmental results as demonstrated by past performance (up to 20 points).

Cost effectiveness of applicant’s proposal. Degree to which the project budget effectively uses funds as proposed in the EPA RFP (up to 20 points). Note that, under “Form and Content” item 3 asks for a budget for a typical task for each area of technical assistance area that you are applying for. SGA recognizes that responses for “typical tasks” may vary widely between respondents; therefore responses will consider the budget relative to the described task as well as its relationship to the budgets of other respondents.

Pre-Proposal/Application Assistance and Communication
Any communication regarding this proposal shall be in writing to Elizabeth Schilling at eschilling@smartgrowthamerica.org. SGA requests that applicants not contact other SGA staff.
SGA Procurement Policy and Procedures

It is the policy of Smart Growth America that:

1. No employee, officer, or agent of SGA shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved.

2. All SGA procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition.

3. SGA procurements shall provide for, at a minimum, that paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) of this section apply.
   (1) SGA shall avoid purchasing unnecessary items.
   (2) Where appropriate, SGA will make an analysis of lease and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement for the Federal Government.
   (3) Solicitations by SGA for goods and services provide for all of the following.
      (i) A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, such a description shall not contain features that unduly restrict competition.
      (ii) Requirements that the bidder/offeror must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.
      (iii) A description, whenever practicable, of technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.
      (iv) The specific features of “brand name or equal” descriptions that bidders are required to meet when such items are included in the solicitation.
      (v) The acceptance, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, of products and services dimensioned in the metric system of measurement.
      (vi) Preference, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, for products and services that conserve natural resources and protect the environment and are energy efficient.

4. SGA shall determine the type of procuring instruments used (e.g., fixed price contracts, cost reimbursable contracts, purchase orders, and incentive contracts). The type of procuring instrument shall be appropriate for the particular procurement and for promoting the best interest of the program or project involved. The “cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost” or “percentage of construction cost” methods of contracting shall not be used.
5. SGA shall only make contracts with responsible contractors who possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement. Consideration shall be given to such matters as contractor integrity, record of past performance, financial and technical resources or accessibility to other necessary resources. In certain circumstances, contracts with certain parties are restricted by funding agencies' implementation of Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, “Debarment and Suspension.”

6. SGA shall, on request, make available for funding entities, pre-award review and procurement documents, such as request for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc.

7. Some form of cost or price analysis shall be made and documented in the procurement files in connection with every procurement action. Price analysis may be accomplished in various ways, including the comparison of price quotations submitted, market prices and similar indicia, together with discounts. Cost analysis is the review and evaluation of each element of cost to determine reasonableness, allocability and allowability.

8. SGA procurement records and files for purchases in excess of the small purchase threshold (currently $100,000) shall include the following at a minimum: Basis for contractor selection; justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained; and basis for award cost or price.

9. SGA shall include, in addition to provisions to define a sound and complete agreement, the following provisions in all contracts. The following provisions shall also be applied to subcontracts.
   (a) Contracts in excess of the small purchase threshold shall contain contractual provisions or conditions that allow for administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances in which a contractor violates or breaches the contract terms, and provide for such remedial actions as may be appropriate.
   (b) All contracts in excess of the small purchase threshold shall contain suitable provisions for termination by the recipient, including the manner by which termination shall be effected and the basis for settlement. In addition, such contracts shall describe conditions under which the contract may be terminated for default as well as conditions where the contract may be terminated because of circumstances beyond the control of the contractor.
   (c) Except as otherwise required by statute, an award that requires the contracting (or subcontracting) for construction or facility improvements shall provide for requirements relating to bid guarantees, performance bonds, and payment bonds unless the construction contract or subcontract exceeds $100,000.
10. All negotiated contracts (except those for less than the small purchase threshold) awarded by recipients shall include a provision to the effect that the recipient, EPA, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access to any books, documents, papers and records of the contractor which are directly pertinent to a specific program for the purpose of making audits, examinations, excerpts and transcriptions.

11. All contracts, including small purchases, awarded by SGA and SGA contractors shall contain the procurement provisions of the appendix to Circular A–110, as applicable.