



Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN)

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
for
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
PLANT AND CLERICAL ENTRY & APPRENTICESHIP EXAMS
Proposal Due Date – January 17, 2024**

ALCOSAN
3300 Preble Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233-1092

December 11, 2024

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APPENDIX A – Certificate of Minority, Women’s, and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise Participation*

APPENDIX B – Certificate of Conflict of Interest*

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APPENDIX D – Cost Proposal Form

Note: All Appendices marked with an asterisk (*) are available at <https://www.alcosan.org/work-with-us/standard-forms>

1. INTRODUCTION

The request is for a consultant to update the Authority's Plant and Clerical Entry Exams and to create a behavioral test for the apprenticeship program for union staff. Preparation for developing the entry exams will include reviewing job descriptions, onsite focus groups with ALCOSAN personnel, and developing a list of competencies. This work must result in reliable, legally defensible entry level assessments for ALCOSAN workers. The selected firm will deliver all the services necessary to provide ALCOSAN with reliable assessment exams for plant entry and clerical candidates.

The purpose of this RFP is to define the duties and responsibilities of the Consultant, to specify the requirements for proposal submission, and to delineate the selection procedure. Various supporting and informational documents are attached to this RFP under Appendices. Any future addenda related to this RFP will be emailed to responding firms.

Proposals for providing these services must be received by ALCOSAN no later than 2:00 p.m. January 17, 2025.

For purposes of this RFP, firms that participate in this RFP will be referred to as "Proposers." "Proposer" and its Subconsultants shall be referred to collectively as the "Team." The successful firm shall be referred to as the "Consultant."

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Allegheny County Sanitary Authority ("the Authority") is a municipal sewage authority located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and is responsible for the treatment of residential and industrial wastewater for the city of Pittsburgh and 83 surrounding service areas. The Authority has approximately 430 employees, both union and management.

3. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

3.1. LOCAL OFFICE

Portions of this project may be performed at the Authority offices in Pittsburgh, PA. Production of project documents and other consulting by consultant staff in other offices within the United States will be permitted. All work must be done by persons authorized to work in the United States.

3.2. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The following is an outline of the anticipated project schedule based on the information available at this time. The project schedule is subject to change. The official schedule will be included in the contract for professional services. The consultant may propose additional milestones as appropriate.

Milestone	Date*
Contract Notice to Proceed (NTP)	March 10, 2025
Job Analysis/Needs Assessment	March 24, 2025
Focus Group	March 17, 2025
Develop Instrument	March 31, 2025
Pilot	April 7, 2025
Revisions	April 21, 2025
Launch	May 1, 2025
Product Support	Ongoing (does not have to be onsite)

* Vendor may recommend schedule revisions; however, assuming the NTP date is correct, the launch date is firm.

3.3. MBE/WBE/SDV PARTICIPATION

A condition in awarding this contract is that the Consultant shall strive to expend from ten to twenty-five percent (10-25%) of the total agreed price of the Consultant's services throughout the life of the contract for Minority- (MBE) and Woman- (WBE) Owned business participation and 3% Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDV) participation. The Proposer must complete the "Certificate of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Participation" (**See Appendices**) and include it in the Proposal. In addition, the Consultant must show evidence of commitment to MBE/WBE/SDV Participation through, but not limited to, the following:

1. Letter(s) of commitment from the MBE/WBE/SDV on company letterhead and signed by an authorized signatory, identifying the firm's role and responsibilities.
2. A copy of each firm's MBE/WBE/SDV third party socioeconomic certifications. ALCOSAN does not accept self-certification, nor do we accept certifications from any agency that accepts self-certification. SDV firms must have either a VA or SBA certification. No other certifications will be accepted. Only one certification from a certifying agency is required.
3. Resumes of key MBE/WBE/SDV staff.
4. Other information as necessary, detailing the MBE/WBE/SDV participation in the proposal preparation process and integration into the team.

These items shall be submitted in the Proposal, either as an attachment or integrated into the proposal.

ALCOSAN's policy regarding the employment of MBEs and WBEs is available on the ALCOSAN website.

3.4. COMMUNICATIONS

Questions and requests for clarification regarding this Request for Proposals ("RFP") must be directed, in writing via email, to:

Suzanne Thomas
Procurement Officer
Allegheny County Sanitary Authority
Email: procurement@alcosan.org

Please do not contact other ALCOSAN staff unless directed by the Procurement Officer. Contacting other staff will result in the Proposer being excluded from this procurement.

Responses to all general questions and requests for clarification will be emailed to all proposers. ALCOSAN will provide, in writing, any clarifications, changes and/or other information deemed to be necessary as addenda to this RFP. ALCOSAN cannot guarantee responses to any questions received after 2:00 p.m. seven (7) business days prior to the submittal date.

3.5. RIGHT TO KNOW

ALCOSAN is a municipal authority and is therefore subject to requests through the Pennsylvania Right-To-Know Law (RTKL). Submittals may become part of a RTKL request during and after the subsequent contract. All Proposers shall clearly identify only that portion of the proposal, which is considered company proprietary information and, therefore, exempt under the RTKL. A legend at the beginning of the proposal and/or on every page will not be considered sufficient. If there is no information contained in the submittal that may be exempt from the RTKL, Proposers shall make a statement to that fact in the Submittal. Please note the Cost Proposal is considered public information unless identified as otherwise.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

Project Name: Plant and Clerical Entry & Apprenticeship Exams
Existing Location: 3300 Preble Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15233
Schedule: Six (6) Weeks from Notice to Proceed

ALCOSAN is a municipal authority providing wastewater treatment to 83 municipalities within Allegheny County. ALCOSAN administers an exam to all potential union hires, hiring workers to perform maintenance, operations, regional conveyance, industrial waste and interceptor systems.

Plant & Clerical Entry Testing: The current exam for plant entry measures capabilities in the following categories: Work Behaviors, Critical/Logical Reasoning/Mathematical Skills, Mechanical Aptitude, Spatial Relations, and Reading Comprehension. Those wishing to enter

ALCOSAN in a clerical role are tested for Work Behaviors, Critical/Logical Reasoning/Mathematical Skills, Verbal Comprehension, Clerical Skills w/Names and Clerical Skills w/Numbers. Currently, both test results are identified as a rating of “Potential for Success” of Below Average, Average, or Above Average. Under this procurement, ALCOSAN is looking for a rating that is more conclusive and presents data to differentiate candidates with more precision. For the Plant & Clerical Entry candidates, both a cognitive and behavioral test will be required.

Apprenticeship Program: For those who desire consideration for the ALCOSAN Apprenticeship Program, a cognitive assessment is given to evaluate their potential for success in Mechanical Trade, Electrical/Electronic Trade, and/or Construction/Fabrication Trade. For the Apprentice candidates, the cognitive assessment will not be needed, however, a behavioral assessment will be added. Please note, this program is not affiliated with any national union apprenticeship programs.

ALCOSAN is seeking a consultant who can provide an online hiring assessment delivered that is:

- legally defensible for the testing practices. The Consultant is not expected to defend any ratings or future employment opportunities.
- predictive of the potential to advance.
- predictive of performance in the entry-level custodial role and clerical entry role (with potential to advance).
- predictive of behavioral characteristics in those groups and the apprentice candidates.
- a discrete measurement to differentiate candidates for the most fair and accurate data to make the best selection.

Project Deliverables:

- Conduct a comprehensive job analysis of the skills needed to fill positions within the plant.
- Conduct four (4) focus groups of management staff that supervise union employees.
- Submit a report of the job analysis process used to acquire data and outline conclusions.
- The assessment is delivered on an electronic platform.
- An assessment, in multiple-choice format, administered online at ALCOSAN.
- The assessment is for three (3) user groups:
 - A cognitive and behavioral assessment for Plant Entry candidates.
 - A cognitive and behavioral assessment for Clerical candidates.
 - A behavioral assessment for the Apprentice candidates.
- Results are provided electronically to ALCOSAN.
- Once tests are completed, results should be received within two (2) business days. ALCOSAN would have the option to discuss the results with an industrial psychologist.
- The assessment should be specific enough to report the results so ALCOSAN can differentiate between candidates (for example, candidate scores should be weighted).

5. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

5.1. PURPOSE

Proposers shall submit one electronic copy via email of their Proposal. Each Part and Section (as set forth below) shall be separated by tabbed dividers or other appropriate materials. Elaborate graphics and the like are not required or expected. Please focus all information on the procurement scope of work; standard marketing information is not needed or wanted.

Each Proposal shall consist of the following items, and shall be organized in the following order:

- a. **Outside Cover and/or First Page:** Shall contain the name of the RFP, the name of the Proposer, a point of contact, contact information (email address and phone number) and the submittal date.
- b. **Table of Contents**
- c. **Cover Letter:** Provide a cover letter and company profile introducing the firm. This letter shall commit the firm to the terms of this RFP and shall be signed by a person authorized to bind the company. This letter shall be no more than two (2) pages and shall be considered the Executive Summary.
- d. **Technical Proposal:** The requirements of the Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal are set forth below in additional detail.
- e. **Cost Proposal:** The requirements of the Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal are set forth below in additional detail.

5.2. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The Technical Proposal shall consist of multiple sections. Each section shall be separated and utilize the headings set forth below.

- a. **Project Approach and Scope of Services (Section 1):** Proposers shall provide a detailed description of their understanding of the scope of the work. This section should include a description of all work products, methodologies, and techniques applicable to the Project. This section is limited to no more than three (3) pages.
- b. **Project Schedule (Section 2):** Proposers shall create a detailed schedule that sets forth the tasks in the Project with milestones and time frames. On a Gantt chart, bar graph or approved format, Proposers should show the duration and sequence of all classes and reporting. Include any pertinent information such as review meetings, interim reports, review period allowances, etc.
- c. **Project Management (Section 3):** Proposers shall describe the project management approach including items such as technical coordination among activities, staff, contractors, and ALCOSAN; progress meetings and reporting; budget and schedule monitoring and control; and internal and external quality control. This section is limited to two (2) pages.

Proposers shall provide a one-page organizational chart showing the proposed Team structure for the Project including firm name, individual name, and project assignment. The chart should clearly show the chain of command and provide enough detail for ALCOSAN to understand roles and responsibilities of the Team members.

Resumes, not exceeding 2 pages, of all key Project personnel shall be included in an appendix. Personnel's familiarity with any and all Project requirements should be highlighted. The resumes should be project-based and not a chronological listing of employment. By submitting a resume, the Proposer is committing said individuals to the project.

- d. Experience and Qualifications (Section 4):** The Proposer should provide four (4) one-page case history descriptions of the team's experience in projects similar in size, scope, and technical complexity to this Project. Include a reference list (including address and phone number) of the clients who benefited from your work on the submitted projects. These firms may be contacted for references for the Team.
- e. Subconsultants (Section 5):** Include a list and description of tasks, qualifications, and detailed responsibilities of any Subconsultants that may be utilized, including your firm's previous experience with the Subconsultants. "Subconsultants" means firms or individuals outside of the proposing consultant business entity that may be contracted by the Proposer on this Project. Any proposed outside technical experts should also be listed in this section.
- f. Potential Conflict of Interest (Section 6):** The Consultant is required to immediately notify ALCOSAN of potential conflict of interest situations, with ALCOSAN reserving the right of termination of the "Agreement for Professional Services" and any related service authorization if, in ALCOSAN's view, a conflict of interest is possible. Each team member shall submit in the Proposal a Certificate of Conflict of Interest (**See Appendices**) and show appropriate information to support its belief that its business activities do not and will not create a conflict-of-interest situation. This information could include detailed descriptions of existing contractual relationships, corporate policy statements related to the conflict-of-interest issue, and certified statements by authorized corporate officials related to present and future courses of action. The Proposer should pay particular attention to affiliate activities.
- g. Non-Collusion Affidavit (Section 7):** ALCOSAN's Non-Collusion Affidavit is attached hereto in the Appendices. Each team member must execute the Non-Collusion Affidavit and include it in the Proposal for the proposal to be considered responsive.
- h. The Authority Terms and Conditions:** This project shall be conducted in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, specifically the Municipal Authorities Act, 53 Pa.C.S.A. 5601 *et al.*

5.3. COST PROPOSAL AND CONTRACT ACCEPTANCE

The Cost Proposal shall be submitted Section 8 of the Technical Proposal. The Cost Proposal shall include the following:

- a. **Price for Milestones** – this should include all Other Direct and Travel Costs. ALCOSAN anticipates a fixed price, milestone payment contract.
- b. **Monthly Maintenance Fees**
A monthly maintenance fee to provide consulting and updates as needed.

6. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

6.1. PROJECT PROCUREMENT TEAM

The evaluation of Proposals will be undertaken on behalf of ALCOSAN by the Project Procurement Team after proposals have been received. The objective of the Project Procurement Team is to provide its recommendation of the best qualified firm to the ALCOSAN's Board of Directors utilizing a transparent, uniform, and objective selection process.

6.2. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

After submittal, all Proposals will be individually evaluated and scored by each Project Procurement Team member. The Proposals will be scored utilizing the following criteria:

- Qualifications and Experience 40%
Overall capabilities of the Proposer and Key Personnel to meet the required services described in this RFP, including, but not limited to, the quality of the Proposer's credentials and related project experience. ALCOSAN will conduct an evaluation of the credentials of key personnel and the Proposer's capability to perform the work required.
- Approach to Program Scope 15%
Proposer's proposed management approach to accomplish the technical requirements set forth in this RFP. Demonstration of clear understanding of the Project goals and how Proposer will accomplish Project Objectives and Scope of Work within the schedule. Quality of the sample training plan submitted with the Technical Proposal.
- Cost Proposal 40%
ALCOSAN will conduct an evaluation of the Cost Proposal for allowability and reasonableness. While Cost may not be a deciding factor, if the highest technically ranked firm submits a Cost Proposal exceeding what ALCOSAN may consider fair and reasonable, that proposal may be rejected for the second ranked proposal.
- MBE/WBE Participation 5%
Evidence of how Proposer will effectively partner with Subconsultants. Consideration of Proposer's proposed MBE/WBE participation.

Based upon the scoring results, the Project Procurement Team will make a recommendation to the Professional Services Committee. The Professional Services Committee shall review this recommendation and present it to the Board of Directors for approval. The Board of Directors may then authorize ALCOSAN to enter into negotiations with the top-ranked firm to develop a final and contractually agreed-upon scope of services and a corresponding price for the services to be performed. If ALCOSAN cannot reach an agreement with the highest ranked firm, ALCOSAN may initiate negotiations with the next highest ranked firm.

Once an agreement is reached, the contract will be awarded, all Proposers will be notified of the selection process results.

6.3. SCHEDULE OF RFP EVENTS

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|---|-------------------|
| • Release of RFP Documents | December 11, 2024 |
| • Deadline for Proposal Submission | January 17, 2025 |
| • Consultant Selection (<i>tentative</i>) | February 2025 |
| • Commencement of Contract (<i>tentative</i>) | March 2025 |

7. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals for providing these services must be received by ALCOSAN no later than 2:00 p.m. on January 17, 2025. Electronic submittals shall be sent to the email address below. It is the Consultant's responsibility to ensure the documents have arrived on time.

Late and/or noncompliant Proposals will not be accepted for any reason. A noncompliant proposal is one which fails to adhere to the requirements of the RFP.

Proposals are to be delivered to the following email with the RFP name heading:

Request for Proposal
Plant and Clerical Entry & Apprenticeship Exams
Allegheny County Sanitary Authority
Attention: Suzanne Thomas
Procurement Officer
Procurement@alcosan.org

Late and/or noncompliant Proposals will not be accepted for any reason. A noncompliant proposal is one which fails to adhere to the requirements of the RFP.

All inquiries related to this RFP must be presented in writing to Ms. Thomas.

Responses to all inquiries will be posted on the website. If ALCOSAN determines that an amendment is required to this RFP, ALCOSAN will post a written addendum on the website. Upon posting, the addendum will be deemed to form part of this RFP.

* * * END OF RFP * * *