Creating A Winning Proposal

Government & Military Contracts

We provide networking, training & one-on-one counseling to businesses who want to sell to local, state, federal governments and the military.

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APTAC Board of Directors
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MONROE COUNTY • FINGER LAKES
PTAC
Procurement Technical Assistance Center
www.monroecountyfingerlakesptac.org

About PTAP

A **Program** of the Department of Defense, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers serve as a resource for businesses pursuing and performing under government contracts, at no cost.

Military | Federal | State | Local Contracts

- PTACs Assist & Work With:
  - All Businesses
  - Military, Government Agencies & Prime Contractors
  - Partner Organizations

Nationwide NETWORK
providing free assistance

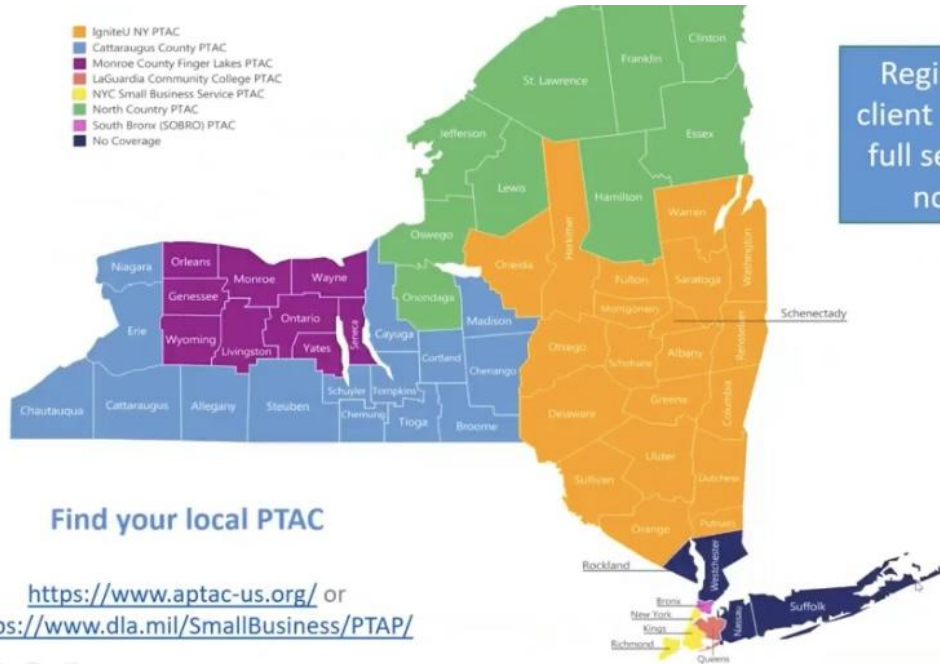- 96 PTACs Nationwide + Territories
- 550,000 jobs created or retained
- $26 Billion in Contracts

aptac

Find your local PTAC
https://www.aptac-us.org/ or https://www.dla.mil/SmallBusiness/PTAP/

Register as a client to receive full services at no cost.

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The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development
PROCUREMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

The National Center American Indian PTAC – Eastern BIA Region
- Syracuse Office Covers NYS

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No Cost Services Overview
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Providing Government Contract Counseling through...

- Training: Workshops / Webinars

- G2B Matchmakers
  - Networking events introducing government buyers and sellers

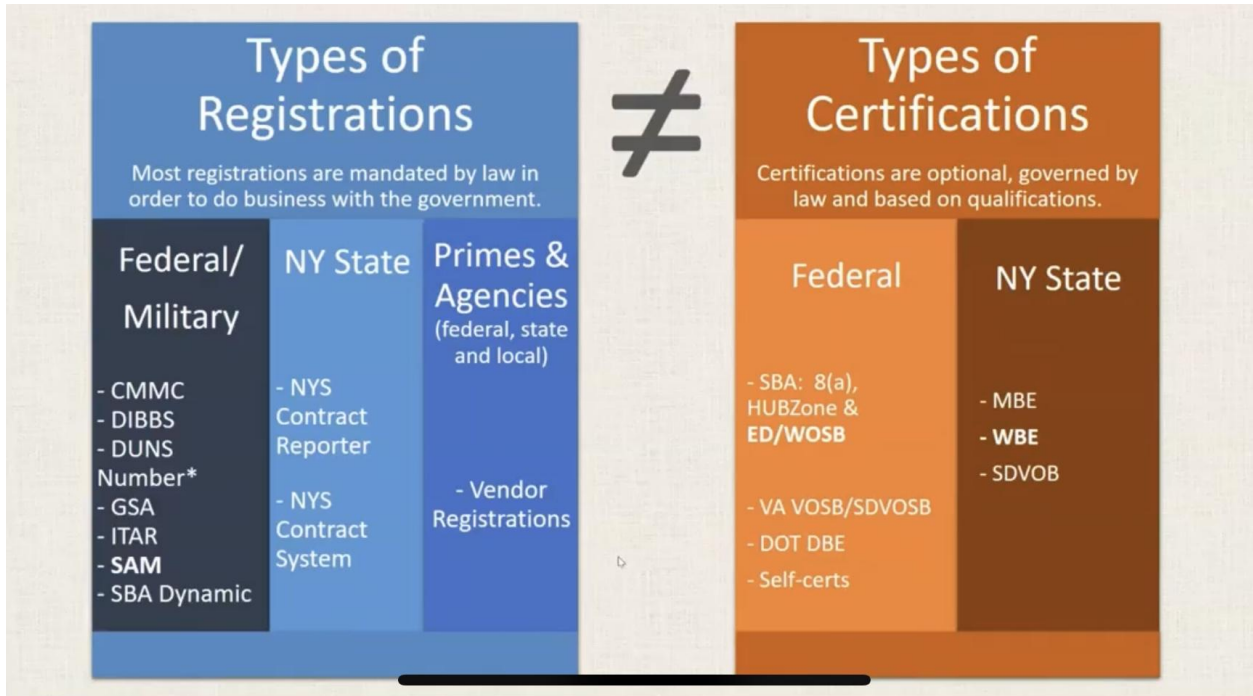- One-on-one counseling
  - Bulk of our work is done here

Must complete application for free services.

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

No Cost Services Overview

One-on-one Counseling

- **Assess**
  - Business potential to do business with the government

- **Assist**
  - Federal and state registrations & certifications; ie: SAM, 8(a), HUBZone, WOSB, SDVOSB, DOT DBE, MWBE, ITAR, DD2345, DIBBS
  - Identifying subcontracting opportunities
  - Solicitation/bid preparation/SBIRs/STTRs
  - Post-award performance; ie: WAWF, packaging and labeling

- **Clarify**
  - Technical information/document specifications/standards

- **Guide**
  - Government markets/government marketing roadmap
  - Notice of upcoming opportunities "**Bid Match**" service

Types of Registrations ≠ Types of Certifications

Types of Registrations

Most registrations are mandated by law in order to do business with the government.

Federal/ Military	NY State	Primes & Agencies (federal, state and local)
- CMMC - DIBBS - DUNS Number* - GSA - ITAR - **SAM** - SBA Dynamic	- NYS Contract Reporter - NYS Contract System	- Vendor Registrations

Types of Certifications

Certifications are optional, governed by law and based on qualifications.

Federal	NY State
- SBA: 8(a), HUBZone & **ED/WOSB** - VA VOSB/SDVOSB - DOT DBE - Self-certs	- MBE - **WBE** - SDVOB

About Business Certifications

Federal, State, Local

All business certification programs require 51% ownership & <u>substantial control</u>

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What is a small business?
Standards differ...

FEDERAL

- *Standards set by Small Business Administration*
  - NAICS codes designated by Census Bureau
  - SBA sets the threshold for each NAICS code
  - *SBA Table of NAICS Size Standards*
    - Not dominate in its industry

NEW YORK STATE
-NYS resident
-Independently owned and operated
-**Employs 100 or less persons OR 300 if M/WBE or SDVOB**
  -Not dominant in its industry

Agency Contracting Goals

Federal statutory goals set by the SBA

- 23 percent of prime contracts for small businesses
  - 5 percent of prime and subcontracts for Small Disadvantaged Businesses
  - 5 percent of prime and subcontracts for Women-owned Small Businesses
  - 3 percent of prime and subcontracts for HUBZone Businesses
  - 3 percent of prime and subcontracts for Service-Disabled Veteran-owned Small Businesses

New York State goals

- Agency goals for small businesses
  - 30 percent for certified Minority-owned Businesses
  - 30 percent for certified Woman-owned Businesses
  - 6 percent for Service Disabled Veteran-owned Businesses
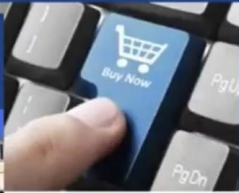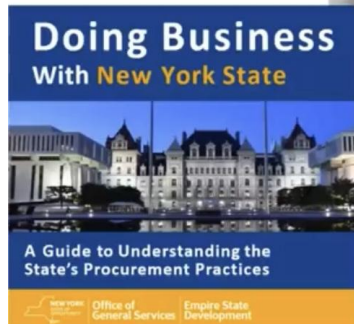
IS THERE A SMALL BUSINESS CERTIFICATION?

Slide 1

Are you ready to contract with the government?

- How long have you been in business?
- Do you have the resources/personnel to pursue government contracts?
- Do you have established past performance?
- Does your business have the proper registrations?
- Need an established history and strong foundation
- Government cannot "save your business"
- Are you ready, willing and able to be a government contractor?

*New York State Procurement Guidelines Section II

- Reliable
- Responsive
- Responsible

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Slide 2

New York State's Procurement Process | Where to Find Bid Opportunities | How to Be a Successful Bidder | How to Get Paid | Get Certified & Find Resources | Contact Information & Customer Services

Doing Business With New York State

A Guide to Understanding the State's Procurement Practices

Office of General Services | Empire State Development

New York State's Procurement Process
The Order of Purchasing Priority for Agencies

- First: Preferred Sources
- Second: Centralized State Contracts
- Third: Agency or Multi-Agency Established Contracts
- Fourth: Agency Conducts Its Own Procurement, Including Discretionary Spending

New York State's Procurement Process
The Order of Purchasing Priority for Agencies

The state's procurement process addresses such issues as ensuring fair, open, and transparent competition, and establishing vendor responsibility. State procurement must facilitate each agency's mission while protecting the interests of the state and its taxpayers, and promoting fairness in contracting with the business community. State agencies are required to purchase commodities, services, and technologies in accordance with New York State Finance Law, Article 11.Guidance on Article 11is set forth in the New York State Procurement Guidelines, issued by the New York State Procurement Council.

State agencies purchase commodities, services and technologies to address a wide range of needs. To meet these varying needs, agencies are mandated to make purchases in the following order:

First:	Preferred Sources
Second:	Centralized State Contracts for Commodities, Services and Technology
Third:	Agency-Established Contracts
Fourth:	Agency Conducts Its Own Procurement, Including Discretionary Spending

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Home   Conta

NYS Market Research
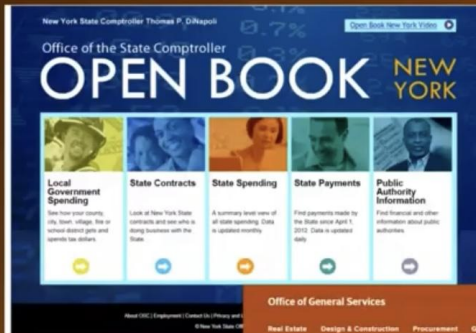
1. Preliminaries – Bids vs. Proposals
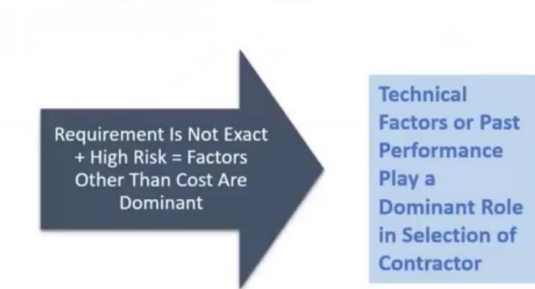*It's all in the language*

BIDS - Invitation For Bids
- Government's Requirement Is Clearly Defined
- Risk of Unsuccessful Performance Is Minimal

PROPOSALS - RFPS
- Government's Requirement Is Less Well-Defined
- Development Work Is Required
- Performance Risk is Higher

Cost or Price Plays a Dominant Role in Selection of Contractor

Clear Requirement + Low Risk = Cost Is Dominant

Requirement Is Not Exact + High Risk = Factors Other Than Cost Are Dominant

Technical Factors or Past Performance Play a Dominant Role in Selection of Contractor

1. Preliminaries
The Concept of Responsiveness and Responsibility

- A public contract is not awarded unless these two requirements are satisfied.
- Universally practiced in government – at federal, state and local levels.

Responsiveness refers to your **offer** – your submittal in response to the invitation.
- *Following instructions.*

Responsibility refers to **you** – your qualifications and ability to perform.
- *A judgement is made about your wherewithal.*

1. Preliminaries
Examples of Responsiveness

- Offer submitted on time to correct location.
- Pricing information is complete.
- References submitted in accordance with solicitation instructions.
- Offeror takes no exceptions to specifications.
- Page limitation is obeyed.

Recognize there are different Solicitation Types

- Sources Sought (market survey)
- Presolicitation
- Combined Synopsis/Solicitation
- Solicitation
- Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Invitation to Bid (IFB)
- Request for Quote (RFQ)

CAN I CONTACT THE CONTRACTING OFFICER WITH QUESTIONS?

2: Preparation
Getting ready to write a proposal

     a. Identifying the government's needs.

     b. Envisioning how you can be a solution.

     c. Offering ideas for RFP development.

     d. Anticipating what will be called for.

     e. Participating in pre-proposal conferences.

     f. Identifying resources needed.

     g. Forming a team, if necessary.

3. Execution
Critical Steps and Considerations

a. Read & Re-reading the RFP document.

b. Digesting the scope of work (SOW).
- ***Make sure you can perform all the work.***

c. Determining your potential.

d. Understanding the terms and conditions/ "boilerplate."
- ***Don't discount their importance / government expects you to understand all of the T's & C's.***

e. If given the opportunity, submit questions.

f. Mastering the evaluation (selection) criteria.

g. Assigning team responsibilities and manage a schedule.

h. Following all instructions, completing the proposal, and then submitting it.

3. Execution
Determine your potential

- Is the opportunity consistent with your business plan?
- Do you have adequate capacity, equipment and personnel?
- Do you have (or can you acquire) sufficient experience?
- Can you beat the competition?
- Is the risk manageable?
- Can you make money?
- Make a "Go / No-Go" decision

Develop Internal Controls

- Who is receiving bid notifications / performing searches
  - How are they determining, go/no go
  - Do you have time to respond
  - Can you deliver

- Who is reading/responding to bids
  - Be Responsive
  - Cost Analysis
  - Understanding Terms & Conditions (FAR)
  - Are drawings involved

Post Award
- Who is making sure contract is executed on time and within budget
- Who is submitting invoices for payment/How do you get paid

SUBMITTING BIDS

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis
vs SWAG (Strategic Wild A** Guess) Analysis

Question	Go	No Go
Do you have sufficient time to prepare a quality bid? What is the deadline		
Is it a bid for which you qualify?		
Have you performed this work before?		
Can you get information on pricing from past contract?		
Can you get the technical information needed to bid?		
Do you have all required licenses or permits?		
Can you make a profit if you win the bid?		
Do you understand the requirements?		
Have you read and understood the terms and conditions?		
Can you comply with all the terms and conditions?		
What does the government require that differs from your commercial customers?		
Will these requirements add costs to production/delivery?		
Can you accommodate the geographic area and/or language(s) requirements?		
Total Score (10 out of 13 is a recommended Go)		

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Proposal Preparation - SOL # A-07-12345

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Percent Complete	Start Date	End Date	TASK	November
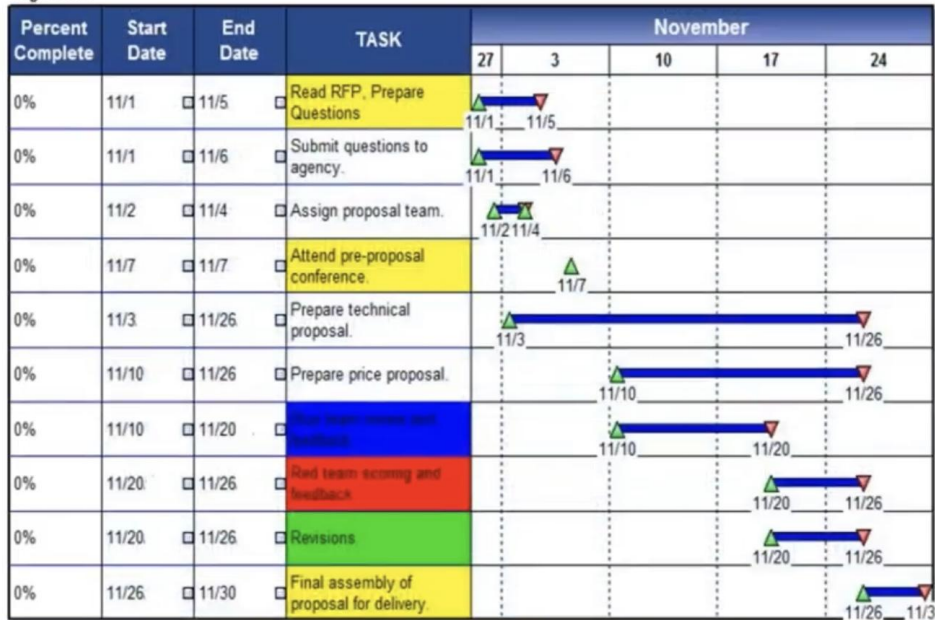
Sample Internal RFP Submittal Schedule

3. Execution
Follow all instructions, complete the proposal, and submit

- Attention to detail is paramount!
- Look for proposal-writing instructions in the RFP *(section L in federal RFPs).*
- Your proposal will be judged now as your work later.
- If you are asked to answer 10 questions, answer 10 – *not 9 or 11.*
- You cannot be late!

VENDOR SCORECARD TEMPLATE

CRITERIA CHECKLIST

Prior to use, update criteria as needed to be consistent with RFP. Update basis for scoring to have qualitative scoring details.

Scores Available from 1-5. Basis for scoring must be listed with specific examples.

1. Adherence to RFP Instructions	VENDOR 1	VENDOR 2	VENDOR 3	BASIS FOR SCORE
Timeliness	0	0	0	
Completeness	0	0	0	
Overall Quality & Level of Professionalism	0	0	0	
Overall Response	0	0	0	
Average Score	**0**	**0**	**0**	
2. Company Information	VENDOR 1	VENDOR 2	VENDOR 3	BASIS FOR SCORE
Financial Viability	0	0	0	
Organizational Structure	0	0	0	
Experience with Similar Companies	0	0	0	
Service Department	0	0	0	
References	0	0	0	
Partnerships	0	0	0	
Average Score	**0**	**0**	**0**	
3. Project Understanding	VENDOR 1	VENDOR 2	VENDOR 3	BASIS FOR SCORE
Overall Comprehension of Project Objectives	0	0	0	
Understanding of the Business Requirements	0	0	0	
Understanding of the Business Vision	0	0	0	

Table of Contents

4. Follow Up

- Find-Out the Selection Schedule
  - Check the RFP.
  - If not in RFP, ask during Q&A period.
  - Otherwise, email, or call and ask.

- Check-in periodically on progress.

- Respond to Any Requests.

- Always offer to help.

4. Follow Up

Abide By Communication Rules

- Early in solicitation process, two-way communication is common.

- After Q&A period and when final solicitation is issued, communication with government officials will be prohibited.

- Post-proposal submittal, communication may be limited.

- Familiarize yourself with exact rules.

4. Follow Up

Prepare for an Oral Interview

- Rehearse numerous times.
  - Prepare to address points asked about.
  - Anticipate follow-ups.
- Plan for what could go wrong.
- Only one person in charge.
- Pay close attention to questions asked.
  - Designate recorder or note-taker.
- Presentation team must *know* their proposal's content.

Remember, the government is trying to envision you as the contractor.

4. Follow Up

Selected or Not, Ask for a Debriefing

- Ask for debrief from contracting officer – within 3 days (federal rule).
  - Check Solicitation on Debriefing Rules
- Don't be discouraged – no one wins every time.
- Learn from the experience.
- Incorporate what you learn into your next proposal.

Remember: The proposal you've created contains many elements that can be used again, if kept up-to-date.

Wrap Up

- Follow the instruction and tips provided, and you'll be certain to submit **responsive proposals** that will receive serious consideration.

- **Attention-to-detail is of paramount importance** when preparing a proposal.

- Follow the instructions contained in each RFP.

- *There's no such thing as a universal proposal template!*

WHO HAS AUTHORITY TO MAKE CHANGES TO CONTRACTS?

SUBMITTING BIDS
Top 5 Blunders to Avoid

1. **Complex Language**

   Be concise, clear and easy to understand

2. **Over-Extending**

   Make sure you have the time, knowledge, skills and resources to complete the project on time and within budget

3. **Not Accepting Credit Cards**

   70% of government procurement is paid by credit card

4. **Pricing in Incorrect Units**

   If they ask for the price of a quart – don't give them pricing for a gallon!

5. **Submitting Messy Bids**

   Make sure paperwork is tidy, organized and professional looking. Check for typos, misspelling, poor grammar, page numbering, food stains

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