

Sources Sought Notice No.: SS-ETSB-91028-56

Title: Provision of Animal Facilities and Performance of Routine Experiments and Tests

This is a Small Business Sources Sought notice. This is NOT a solicitation for proposals, proposal abstracts, or quotations. The purpose of this notice is to obtain information regarding: (1) the availability and capability of qualified small business concern; (2) whether they are small business; HUBZone small business; service-disabled, veteran-owned small business; 8(a) small business; veteran-owned small business; woman-owned small business; or small disadvantage business; and (3) their size classification relative to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for the proposed acquisition. Your responses to the information requested will assist the Government in determining the appropriate acquisition method, including whether a set-aside is possible. An organization that is not considered a small business under the applicable NAICS code should not submit a response to this notice.

The NAICS code for this project is 541940.

The small business size standard is \$7.0 million in annual receipts.

Background

This project is a projected recompetition of an existing contract which provides a facility for housing non-human primates and other standard laboratory animals under appropriate animal biosafety level 2 (BL2) conditions with animal biosafety level 3 (BL3) practices and procedures. This includes veterinary care and routine health surveillance for all animals. In addition, the contractor also provides technical and veterinary assistance for all routine procedures such as inoculations, bleedings, collection of mucosal secretions, biopsies, infection with pathogenic viruses, and implementing therapeutic regimen have also been provided. Clinical laboratory support services are been provided, and surgical procedures and complete post-mortem exams, including histological examination of tissues, have carried out on study animals as required.

Previous contracts have provided immunological and virological support services for experiments carried out using animal under the contract. These included in vitro immunological assays in appropriate BL2/BL3 laboratories to characterize humoral or cellular immune responses following inoculation with viral antigens or virus infection and in vitro culture and detection of virus from peripheral blood and/or tissues or retrovirus-infected animals. The immunological and virological testing phases of the prior contract have been substantially removed.

This work is currently being conducted under contract N02-RC-57701 held by Advanced BioScience Laboratories, Inc.

The proposed project is to provide facilities for non-human primate studies in the Section on Animal Model and Retroviral Vaccines and the Section on Immune Biology of

Retroviral Infection of the VB. A base number of macaques will be requested with additional options for increasing animal numbers.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this project is to provide support for pre-clinical studies in non-human primates and standard laboratory animals by providing maintenance of the animals, through required quarantine periods and during performance of experiments, in accordance with all animal welfare regulations. Testing activities will include antibody screening for viruses known to infect non-human primates and typing of MHC class I haplotypes when animals are purchased, and analysis of total blood counts and CD4 and CD8 phenotypes, in addition to routine clinical tests necessary to monitor the health of the animals. The Contractor must be able to provide technical and veterinary assistance for performance of all research activities, including inoculations and viral challenges, sampling of body fluids and tissues, sometimes requiring surgical procedures, and histological and pathological examination of tissues. Collection of large quantities of lymphocytes and plasma by cytopheresis and plasmapheresis will be required.

Project requirements

Major tasks required of the Contractor include the following:

- 1) Provide a well-equipped and maintained animal facility for the maintenance of non-human primates and standard laboratory animals.
- 2) Locate, purchase, and maintain non-human primates, mice and/or rabbits as requested by the Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR).
- 3) Provide shipping for purchased animals to the contract facility.
- 4) Provide facility for quarantine of newly arrived animals.
- 5) Provide housing, care and routine health surveillance for all animals maintained under the contract seven days a week as necessary.
- 6) Provide standard technical and veterinary assistance as needed for performance of inoculations/immunizations, bleedings, and challenges of non-human primates and standard laboratory animals.
- 7) Provide standard technical and veterinary assistance as needed for collection of mucosal samples and secretions including rectal, vaginal, and nasal secretions, saliva, and bronchial alveolar lavage (BAL).
- 8) Provide standard technical and professional veterinary assistance as needed for collection of tissue samples requiring minimal invasive surgical procedures, such as genital/rectal pinch biopsies, peripheral lymph node biopsies, and bone marrow.
- 9) Provide standard technical and professional veterinary assistance as needed for collection of tissue samples requiring endoscopy or laparotomy, such as jejunal endoscopy and collection of mesenteric lymph nodes.
- 10) Provide standard technical assistance and professional veterinary assistance as needed for administration of daily therapy to non-human primates infected with SIV or SHIV.

- 11) Provide accurate CD4/CD8, and total lymphocyte counts of blood samples obtained from study subjects as required by research protocols.
- 12) Provide histological and microscopic pathological examination of tissues obtained from test animals or at necropsy
- 13) Provide collection of lymphocytes by cytopheresis and plasma by plasmapheresis.
- 14) Meet on regular basis with the COTR and NCI scientists involved in the studies.

As part of the work under this potential contract semiannual and final technical report are expected.

Other important considerations

All biological materials delivered will need to be packaged in appropriate containers and delivered according to Department of Transportation regulations.

This work requires the Contractor to have or establish biocontainment (BSL2 with BSL3 capability) in order to conduct work with human retroviruses and non-human primate retroviruses (HIV, SIV, SHIV) adenovirus, and poxviruses.

This work also requires the delivery of fresh, viable cells and biologically active purified proteins to Bethesda, Maryland within one hour after preparation and the pickup of fresh, viable cells and tissues from Rockville, Maryland within one hour of notice by the Government.

Anticipated period of performance

The anticipated period of performance for this requirement is one year, with four one-year options.

Capability statement/information sought.

Interested qualified small business organizations should submit a tailored capability statement for this requirement, not to exceed 20 single-sided pages (including all attachments, resumes, charts, etc.) presented in single-space and using a 12-point font size minimum, that clearly details the ability to perform the aspects of the notice described above. Statements should also include an indication of current certified small business status; this indication should be clearly marked on the first page of your capability statement, as well as the eligible small business concern's name, point of contact, address and DUNS number.

Information submission instructions

All capability Statements sent in response to this SOURCES SOUGHT notice must be submitted electronically (via email) to Juana A. Diaz, Contract Specialist, at diazj@mail.nih.gov in MS Word, WordPerfect or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), by September 21, 2009, 3:00PM, EST. All responses must be received by the specified due date and time in order to be considered.

Disclaimer and Important Notes

This notice does not obligate the Government to award a contract or otherwise pay for the information provided in response. The Government reserves the right to use information provided by respondents for any purpose deemed necessary and legally appropriate. Any organization responding to this notice should ensure that its response is complete and sufficiently detailed to allow the Government to determine the organization's qualifications to perform the work. Respondents are advised that the Government is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted. After a review of the responses received, a pre-solicitation synopsis and solicitation may be published in Federal Business Opportunities. Respondents will be added to the prospective offerors list for any subsequent solicitation. However, responses to this notice will not be considered adequate responses to a solicitation.

Confidentiality

No proprietary, classified, confidential, or sensitive information should be included in your response. The Government reserves the right to use any non-proprietary information in any resultant solicitation(s).