

RFP:

IFIB-ACT-SACT-26-01-VANGARD

Reference:

Q&A #1

Date of Issue: 11/18/2025

The following questions were raised with respect to subject IFIB-ACT-SACT-26-01-VANGARD. Responses are to provide clarification.

Questions	Responses
<p>1. In Annex C, there is a requirement in the Response Part 3 stating that the vendor will need to explain how it will provide reachback at no additional cost. Does this mean that there would be no amendments to a BOE, or that reachback support cannot be included in the original BOE?</p>	<p>Amendments to the BOE will be considered upon sufficient information</p> <p>Any limitations or assumptions identified as risks in the Contractor response to a Task Order may lead to an amendment to the BOE if those assumptions have not been met.</p> <p>Changes to stated deliverables may lead to an amendment to the BOE.</p>
<p>2. In the Bidding Instructions, Para 7(b) it states "HQ SACT reserves the right to terminate this contract for its sole convenience. In the event of such termination, the Contractor shall immediately stop all work hereunder and shall immediately cause any and all of its Suppliers and Subcontractors to cease work". We request that this clause be amended to stipulate that there is a 30-day notice of termination.</p>	<p>No such clause will be amended.</p>
<p>3. In Enclosure 4 Mandatory Price Proposal Excel Spreadsheet, it states that the pricing is to be done by Group. For the bid, is the bidder to send in multiple sheets for each Group, or cut and paste the PL matrix in the same sheet and just put headers in for the Groups being bid on?</p>	<p>See amendment 1.</p>
<p>4. In Enclosure 4 Mandatory Price Proposal Excel Spreadsheet, it states that the pricing is to be done by Group. It is recommended that this be changed to pricing by individual sub-group, as basket group pricing will not accurately reflect the costing between disparate skill sets. For example, there is a market difference between someone with</p>	<p>See amendment 1.</p>

Wargaming skills and a Data Scientist under Group H - Decision Analysis Group.	
5. If government-furnished data or networks are required, please specify the process and lead time for access approvals.	Further guidance will be provided post award.
6. Are figures, tables, and diagrams excluded from the five-page limit per Group, or counted within it? If excluded, what limits apply?	They are included within the limit.
7. Are hyperlinks to short demo videos or interactive prototypes allowed in the technical volume, and will reviewers follow them?	Hyperlinks are allowed to supplement the proposal but not a requirement. The award evaluation will be based on the contents of submitted written technical proposal. It is the Bidders responsibility to ensure the links are accessible.
8. Are there any restrictions, disclosure requirements, or documentation expectations for the use of AI-assisted tools in producing deliverables, including code and analytical reports?	AI-assisted tools must be disclosed when producing deliverables. See amendment 1.
9. What is ACT's policy for incorporating open-source software into deliverables?	The allowability of open-source software will be determined by the Task Order. Software deliverables under this framework are expected to use tools and / or elements that are already accredited for use by NATO.
10. For the QA Plan, are there preferred frameworks or certifications that earn credit in evaluation (e.g., ISO 9001, Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) level evidence), or is a practical, contract-specific QA process sufficient?	Evaluation is based on the strength of the QA plan to ensure the quality of deliverables. Frameworks and certifications may support bidder responses, but do not, themselves, guarantee the quality of deliverables specific to this framework process.
11. When Task Orders require collaboration with other awardees, will ACT provide standard teaming rules, conflict-of-interest guidance, and data-sharing provisions so that competitors can coordinate without risk?	No, the task order will be awarded to a single group awardee.
12. In Table 1, for Group H, in each category it refers to "products and reports"; can it be clarified if this includes the development of analysis, M&S, Wargaming, Data Science products (i.e., software, wargaming tools, etc.), or is it just in terms of the outputs of analysis?	The "Deliverable" for every Task Order is listed in Table 2. Deliverables. Every deliverable must be a tangible product with clear acceptance criteria. Where the intended outcome is the successful completion of an activity, the "deliverable" may be a status report, after-action report, etc., which demonstrates that the activity has been completed to the required standard.

<p>13. Refer to page 10, Enclosure 3, items 7 and 10. Please clarify the difference between "7. Valid Point of Contract, Company Address, Email, and Telephone Number of Reference" and "10. Complete Contact Information for Client".</p>	<p>See amendment 1.</p>
<p>14. Page 5, 12(a) states pricing submitted is to be submitted as a PDF, whereas page 10, Enclosure 3, paragraphs 3 and 4 state "Pricing shall be submitted using the excel workbook provided. Bidders may elect to submit a second PDF proposal for pricing if the excel workbook is provided as well. Proposals not submitted in the proper format will not be considered". Please confirm that submitting either the excel workbook or a PDF will be considered</p>	<p>See amendment 1.</p>
<p>15. Could ACT kindly confirm that no key personnel are required, but that any personnel supporting VANGARD should be citizens of a NATO nation?</p>	<p>Personnel supporting VANGARD task orders must be citizens of a NATO Nation. See amendment 1.</p>
<p>16. Given that most groups have multiple serials and recognizing that HQ SACT is looking for the most qualified industry partners able to provide "timely access to leading edge information and quality support " across the serials, can HQ SACT confirm that demonstrated success must be shown in all serials of a group with 3 or less serials and at least 75% of serials (rounded up the nearest whole number) in groups with 4 or more serials? This would ensure suppliers with the broadest experience able to address HQ SACT's needs and avoid any ambiguity for bidders from the phrase "a portion of the Serials"</p>	<p>No. For groups with fewer than four Serials, percentage ranges remain. For example, demonstrated understanding of two Serials in a Group with three Serials is 67% of the Serials in a Group.</p>
<p>17. If a company does not bid on every Serial in a Group, but is an awardee for that Group, is that company eligible to respond to WOs in execution for Serials that they did not bid on or were not deemed compliant?</p>	<p>The Bidder would be eligible for only the serial they were awarded.</p>
<p>18. Can HQ SACT confirm that the performance levels required for compliance are those listed Baseline measures in paragraphs 5, 7 and 8 of Annex E and the Table at paragraph 9?</p>	<p>Correct.</p>
<p>19. Can HQ SACT confirm that separate excel files are required for bidders submitting bids on multiple groups or would separate tabs per group in one price excel file be acceptable?</p>	<p>See amendment 1.</p>

20. Can ACT kindly clarify what is meant by "the grade level" and the "grade description"? Is "grade level" synonymous with "Performance Level"? Is "Grade Description" the "Baseline Measure"?	See amendment 1.
21. Can ACT clarify that at a minimum one CV is required per PL and per serial to be compliant? What does ACT mean by "indicative grade benchmarks" and how will this be scored?	Correct, one CV per PL per Serial is required for grading. "Indicative grade benchmarks" are Performance Levels. See amendment 1.
22. Given the complexity of baseline measure and scoring criteria of CVs, Would ACT be willing to extend the page limit of each CV to 3 pages?	Requirement will not be increased.
23. Confirming that three past performance citations are required per group that the company is applying for and that the limit is 12 pages. In other words if the company applies for all nine groups, there will be a total of 27 performance citations and a limit of 72 pages?	Page limit is increased to 18 pages for all past performances. Bidders may submit as many past performance examples, within that limit and no fewer than three, as required to demonstrate performance for all Groups.
24. For the reachback, quality assurance and technical approach. Does a separate one of each of these need be submitted for each group the company is proposing for as well? Or can one plan be used for all groups?	Can be used for all groups.
25. To confirm the pricing is simply what the company would charge for each PL (Expert/Senior/Junior) per hour?	Correct.
26. Understanding that deliverables may not have been wholly defined, can ACT provide an estimate of the time duration or hours expected or a range for a typical deliverable?	HQ SACT is unable to provide an estimate as the deliverables vary with the task orders.
27. Pending a successful award, Will ACT provide deliverable task orders in time to begin execution by PoP start?	Yes, the intent is to have task orders provided immediately upon award.
28. In Annex B, the first table shows a requirements matrix that partially reads like for a company (i.e. Ser 2 - Contractor Company holds FSC at SECRET of	See amendment 1 annexes.

<p>Higher); while some serials are more for individuals (i.e. Ser 4 - Demonstrated proficiency in English, Ser 5 - Valid NATO Nation passport). There is also a list of criteria for the PLs in Annex E. In building and submitting Technical Evaluation Matrices for the CVs, should the table in Annex B be used, the criteria in Annex E, or is the bidder responsible to create their own hybrid? It is requested that a standardized TEM for the CVs be produced by the Contracting Authority so that there is an even playing field between bidders as to how the criteria are presented.</p>	
<p>29. According to Sections 7 (<i>Submission of Bids</i>) and 11 (<i>Amendments and Extensions</i>) of the IFIB, HQ SACT reserves the right to extend the closing date for receipt of bids by written amendment published on the official contracting website.</p> <p>Could HQ SACT please confirm whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Any extension of the current bid submission deadline (5 December 2025, 09:00 Eastern Time) is currently being considered; and b) What formal procedure candidate bidders should follow if they wish to request or propose an extension to the bid submission deadline. 	<p>No extension will be provided at this time.</p>