

Thought Starters for SS4A Solicitations

Introduction

As you prepare to solicit consultant services for your SS4A grant project, the thought starters in this resource can help you think about what to include in your SS4A solicitation. This resource will focus on three of the most common sections seen in SS4A solicitations:

- Overview
- Project Scope and Schedule
- Technical Qualifications

Each solicitation will be unique, so you will need to **identify the sections you need based on 2 CFR Part 200 requirements and your local policies**. If your agency does not have its own local policies and procedures, State policies may be used.

 **Important Note**

This resource is not meant to support the selection of your procurement method type. For more guidance, check out the [SS4A Procurement Webinar](#), which covers different procurement methods and their requirements.

1. Overview or Background

The overview section introduces your project and provides background information about your organization, project location, the SS4A grant program, and the purpose of the solicitation. This information helps to communicate the overall context and needs of your project.

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- What is the main objective of your grant project?
- What specific outcomes are you aiming to achieve?
- What are your current safety issues and challenges, and what previous efforts have been made to address these issues?
- What defining characteristics or geographic information about your community would help convey the unique context of your project location?
- How does your grant project fit into the broader objectives of the SS4A program?
- How will outside expertise complement your overall project goals and community needs?

2. Project Scope and Schedule

The project scope describes the key components of your project, including what the project work includes, essential tasks, and the level of effort needed, so that your agency’s needs are clear. **It is critical that you are familiar with the SS4A program requirements and your grant agreement’s scope of work, because your solicitation must align with both.** At a minimum, your solicitation should detail the relevant requirements in the [SS4A Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for the fiscal year in which you applied and the applicable scope of work from your grant agreement. Your grant agreement also includes Terms and Conditions and Exhibits that outline additional requirements.

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- Is the format of the project scope understandable, and is the information presented in a way that ensures you will receive the level of support needed?

- Are the tasks and deliverables clearly defined with expected completion dates, as outlined in the grant agreement? Are the desired project elements and outcomes listed and explained with enough detail?
- Are there ongoing activities, such as quarterly performance reports, that would require outside input or assistance?
- What information is needed to establish an understanding of the project's objectives and challenges?
- Are there future or concurrent activities that should be considered when developing the project schedule? This could include separate planning activities that could be informed by this project, or other funding or partnership opportunities to help put your plan into action.
- Is the planned project schedule reasonable? Setting achievable timelines will help ensure that there is sufficient time to complete quality work and will be more likely to result in deliverables that meet expectations.

3. Technical Qualifications

The 'Technical Qualifications' section describes the types and level of experience that are necessary for successful completion of the project scope. They help you identify the expertise that is technically the best fit for your project. Detailed descriptions of these qualification factors help convey the technical skills and project experiences you are looking for and how you will evaluate and score the respondents' capabilities.

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- What qualities, experience, and technical capabilities does your internal team already have? What gaps in these areas could be addressed by outside expertise?
- What overall qualities, experience, and technical capabilities would make a consultant a good fit?
- What types and level of experience are needed to successfully complete the scope of work and help your organization meet its project goals?
- Are there areas of expertise, such as experience in specific types of data analysis, that would enhance your project?
- Do the listed key qualifications clearly connect to specific tasks, outcomes, or goals noted in the scope of work?
- Are the technical evaluation criteria fair to all responders and not overly restrictive, such that it limits competition ([2 CFR § 200.319](#)) or discourages participation from certain businesses ([2 CFR § 200.321](#))?

Do the scope of work and technical qualifications avoid specifying only a "brand name" product, instead of allowing an "equal" product, per [2 CFR § 200.319\(c\)\(6\)](#)?

What Role Does 2 CFR Part 200 Play in Developing Solicitations for SS4A Projects?

SS4A grant recipients must follow their organization's written procurement guidelines and comply with all applicable Federal requirements, including but not limited to, [2 CFR § 200.317-327](#), [2 CFR § 200.400-401](#), [2 CFR § 200.403-405](#), and [2 CFR § 200.430](#). This also includes the procurement requirements at [Subpart D](#). Subpart D provides many requirements for procuring goods and services under different circumstances, but the following sections are the most applicable to developing your solicitation:

- [§ 200.319](#)
- [§ 200.320\(b\)\(2\)](#)
- [§ 200.321](#)
- [§ 200.322](#)
- [Appendix II to 2 CFR Part 200](#)



Important Note

This document is a thought starter to help you develop your solicitation. It does not cover all situations or all elements of a solicitation.