

# **SOSSEC 10-Step Process for Project Proposals under the AFRL – Rome, NY Other Transaction Agreement**

SOSSEC's refined and proven 10-step process enables rapid, fully responsive support of White Papers/Statements of Objectives (SOOs) and AFRL PlugFests/PlugTests.

Step 1 has two Sub Steps. Sub Step 1A supports origination of PlugFests/PlugTests. Sub Step 1 B supports our traditional origination approach, submission of White Papers. It is important to note that work originates via Sub Step 1A or Sub Step 1B, not both.

Steps 2 through 10 are applicable to both methods of work origination.

## THE 10-STEP PROJECT PROPOSAL PROCESS

### Step 1A. Plug Fest/Plug Test Initiated Projects

AFRL will initiate the Project-Level Agreement award process by identifying a Mission Thread to the OT Lead (SOSSEC). As part of this identification process, the Government will indicate its intention to pursue this Mission Thread through either the Plug-Fest/Plug-Test process or the Project Announcement/White paper Process, or both. The Mission Thread will consist of the necessary information to clearly identify the scenario and/or requirements to be accomplished. It is the Government's expectation that SOSSEC will take this opportunity to broadly publicize the Mission Thread among its members and recruit new members to the greatest extent practicable and necessary. In some cases, it may be necessary for SOSSEC to accommodate classified research and development. In those cases, it is SOSSEC's role to facilitate the access and safeguarding of classified research and development. This may be done by leveraging other consortium members in a teaming arrangement or by other means, as necessary. (Depending on SOSSEC's proposed compensation approach, funding may be issued at this point, through modification, to cover the cost of initiating the Mission Thread.)

- AFRL, with the assistance of SOSSEC, Inc., the Griffiss Institute and the Cyber Institute will advertise the Plug-Fest/Test Event. The Griffiss Institute, via their Outreach Program takes the lead with Industry. AFRL will post the event in FedBizOps. Companies who respond, and are not members of the SOSSEC consortium must become members in order to participate in the PlugFest.
- The AFRL notice would include:
  - a) The Mission Thread Description
  - b) The dollar amount contemplated for award of the event
  - c) Time frame of the Event
  - d) Post-Event schedule
- Each Plugfest/Test will be demonstrated by a documented requirements gathered from the potential user, by SOSSEC, Inc. The results of the PlugFest/Test will be judged against the mission thread identified by the user, with assistance from AFRL and SOSSEC, Inc. Solutions will then follow the White Paper process described in Steps 2 through 10 below, leading to Project Award.

### Step 1B.

#### OTP Lead (SOSSEC) Early Involvement – White Paper Initiated Projects

- SOSSEC, Inc. will be involved during exploratory phase with potential Government customer to:
  - Properly educate potential customer regarding purpose and limitations of OTAs,
  - Establish clear understanding of the process and each parties roles/responsibilities,
  - Answer customers' inquires and ensure realistic expectations

- Gain *early* Government customer confidence in AFRL, SOSSEC Consortium, SOSSEC Inc. and the OTA Process
- SOSSEC and Member will have “face to face” or teleconference interaction with government customers if requested

## Step 2.

### **SOSSEC Inc. Interaction with Government Customer to Outline Basics of the Requirement Package:**

- **Statement of Objectives (SOO) Key Elements:**
  - Identify the system(s) mission to be supported
  - The nature of the prototype to be developed
  - The final product/effect of the deliverable end item
  - Minimizes consulting/service/support/sustainment functions
- **Operational Security (OPSEC) Requirements:** Identify Security Requirements with a customer provided draft DD 254, explained to the parties involved in the OTA project.

## Step 3.

### **Scope Determination**

SOSSEC will review, at the Government customer’s request, the draft requirement documents and make an initial assessment regarding scope with respect to the SOSSEC OTA.

- Scope depends the nature of the work and end product
- The OTA is limited to research, developmental and prototyping work
- Strictly Sustainment or Maintenance of a system would not be within scope. However, something like :
  - *“research, analysis, and prototype development to lead to global communications architecture improvements and to enable the Air Force to connect multiple intelligence platforms to the Distributed Common Ground System quicker and more efficiently.....”* could be within scope.
- SOSSEC and AFRL review to ensure work is within scope of the OTA
- AFRL Program Manager Statement to support AO Determination & Finding
- Key aspect of scope determination:
  - Work must be considered prototyping in support of a weapon system
  - Work can be determined within scope of OTA but, not eligible for award if effort not considered a new, separate and distinct requirement
  - Cannot duplicate work conducted under a previous OTA project

## **Step 4. Identify Prototype**

SOSSEC will work with the AFRL PM to ensure project identifies prototyping activity.

- A prototype is an early sample or model built to test a concept or process or to act as a thing to be replicated or learned from.
- It is a term used in a variety of contexts, including semantics, design, electronics, and software programming.
- A prototype is designed to test and trial a new design to enhance precision by system analysts and users.
- Prototyping serves to provide specifications for a real, working system rather than a theoretical one.
- Engineers use their experience to tailor the prototype according to the specific unknowns still present in the intended designed.
  - For example, some prototypes are used to confirm and verify consumer interest in a proposed design whereas other prototypes will attempt to verify the performance or suitability of a specific design approach.
  - A prototype is not necessarily physical, it can be: training/tactics, structured process, software etc.

## **Step 5. Transfer of Funds from Government Customer to RL**

SOSSEC will support the AFRL PM in explaining the process/instructions the Government customer must follow in transferring monies to AFRL to fund an OTA project.

- Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR) (DD Form 448) or other intra-Air Force Funds transfer vehicle
- Government customer CFO responsible for determining proper use of “fund type”
- Funds are obligated once project awarded unless an exception approved by the AFRL-Rome AO
- SOSSEC will ensure the potential Government customer is aware that the official AFRL OTA MIPR Instructions are those provided by the AFRL PM and cognizant AFRL Financial Manager (FM).

## Step 6. Request for Project Proposal (RPP)

SOSSEC will comply with the instructions when responding to RPPs.

- RL submit a Request for White Paper (RWP) and/or Project Proposal (RPP) to SOSSEC, Inc.
- SOSSEC Inc. posts on the SOSSEC Consortium website, and forwarded to all consortium members.
- Normal due date for proposal(s) submission: 14 days
  - Consortium Members' response to SOSSEC, Inc.: typically given 11 calendar days (SOSSEC, Inc. will establish a reasonable number days for consortium members to provide a detailed response to SOSSEC)
  - SOSSEC, Inc. to AFRL Contracting: typically 14 calendar days are given. (SOSSEC will submit response within the due date or request an extension of proposal due date)

## Step 7. Non Traditional Contractor Involvement in Each OTA Project

SOSSEC will work with consortium traditional defense contractors to ensure project proposals have the requisite non-traditional involvement.

- Each OTA project award must have significant “non-traditional” contractor involvement to avoid 30% cost sharing by “traditional” contractor.
- Each project award judged on its own merit

### OTA COST SHARING

- The Government will assess the extent of expected participation by non-traditional defense contractors to determine whether the statutory cost share will be required. This assessment will be made against each individual project / project selected for award under issued RPP's. If at any time during the period of performance of a particular project / project there is no nontraditional defense contractor participating to a significant extent in the project, the government will require that at least one third of the total cost of the prototype project is paid out of funds provided by parties to the project other than the Federal Government.

### Non Traditional Defined

- **The definition of “non-traditional defense contractor”** is as follows:
  - An entity that is not currently performing and has not performed, for at least the one-year period preceding the solicitation of sources by the Department of Defense for the procurement or transaction, any contract or subcontract for the Department of Defense that is subject to **the full coverage under the Cost Accounting Standards (CAS)** prescribed pursuant to Section 1502 of title 41 and the regulations implementing such section.

- **Small Businesses participation in OTAs:**
  - The traditional/nontraditional delineation is irrelevant to contractors deemed “small businesses”
  - The law expanded and encouraged the participation of small businesses in OTA prototype projects by requiring the use of **either a small businesses or Non-traditional Defense Contractors** as the significant participants in an OTA project.
  - All small businesses representing themselves as Non-traditional Defense Contractors should ensure that contracts on which they performed during the previous year were not subject to full CAS coverage.

### **Significant Involvement Defined**

These nontraditional defense contractors can be at the prime level, team members, subcontractors, lower tier vendors, or “intra-company” business units; provided the business unit makes a significant contributions to the prototype project (i.e., is a key participant). Examples of what might be considered a significant contribution includes supplying new key technology or products, accomplishing a significant amount of the effort, or in some other way causing a material reduction in the cost or schedule or increase in the performance.

### **Step 8.**

#### **Consortium Member Submits Technical (SOW), Cost Proposal, and Warranties and Representations to SOSSEC, Inc.**

SOSSEC will submit fully compliant, supportable proposals in response to RWP and RPPs:

- Cost Proposals are typically Firm Fixed Price and the offeror should propose Milestones (with projected dollar values) for invoicing purposes.
- Technical and Cost Proposals must be sufficiently supported and in the RPP formats for SOSSEC, Inc. to perform a detailed Cost/Price Analysis and *determine fair and reasonableness of the proposed price.*
- *Nontraditional Contractor Warranties and Representations*
  - Each consortium member’s response to RPP must represent the following regarding traditional/nontraditional status:
  - Prime Contractor. Based on the foregoing definition of a nontraditional defense contractor, the Prime Contractor (*insert Organization Name*) for the proposed project  is a traditional defense contractor  is a nontraditional defense contractor. (*check one*)
  - Prime Contractor with Nontraditional Defense Contractor. Based on the foregoing definition of a nontraditional defense contractor, (*insert Organization Name*) is a nontraditional defense contractor and will provide a critical contribution to the Prime Contractor for the proposed prototype project.
    - Proposals required to list key technologies, products and/or processes that the nontraditional defense contractor will provide that are critical to the successful completion of the proposed prototype project.

## Step 9. Proposal Evaluation

- RL will request the Government Customer Perform Technical Evaluation and,
- SOSSEC, Inc. will perform the Cost/Price Analyses (and make a *Fair and Reasonable* Price Determination)
- RL's Program Manager will request the Government customer evaluate the Technical Proposal according to specific RPP basis of selection standard instructions.
- SOSSEC will respond to/revise if applicable, project proposals IAW technical evaluation feedback

### Cost Assessment

- SOSSEC, Inc.'s and the Government Customer's Responsibilities:
- Cost/Price Analysis of the Offeror's Research Area proposal will be performed by SOSSEC, Inc., Consortium Management Firm. SOSSEC, Inc. will evaluate the cost proposal for completeness, reasonableness, and realism of the proposed costs. SOSSEC, Inc., or the Government through SOSSEC, Inc., may make adjustments to the cost of the total proposed project as deemed necessary to reflect what they assess the project should cost. These adjustments shall consider the task undertaken and technical approach proposed. These adjustments may include upward or downward adjustments to proposed labor hours, labor rates, quantity and price of equipment/materials, travel, burden rates and profit/fee.
- The cost proposal must be consistent with information provided in the technical proposal (i.e., BOEs, costs, cost share, dates, etc.).
- The Cost Proposal Format section of the proposal must include a breakout of the total cost proposed by cost element for each new year of the program. In addition, proposals should be broken out by offerors business year. Supporting data and justification for labor, equipment/ material, team member/subcontractor, consultants, travel, other direct costs, and indirect costs used in developing the cost breakdown must also be included.
- The cost proposal must include the "sample composite labor hour worksheet" provided in the RPP proposal preparation instructions.
- Cost must be broken out by task and individual cost element.
- The Offeror must provide sufficient details to allow full understanding of and justification for the proposed costs and all the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the proposal.

- The Government Technical Evaluation will evaluate and comment on the quantitative and qualitative aspects of Offeror's proposed direct labor categories, skill mix and hours to perform total proposed project.
- The technical evaluation should also evaluate/ comment on any Offeror proposed Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) for specific project tasks, milestones and deliverables.
- The technical evaluation shall review/ comment on any proposed travel, materials and requested Government Furnished Property, Government Furnished Information or requested Base Support requirements of the Offerors proposal.
- SOSSEC, Inc. will take into consideration exceptions taken in the Government Technical Evaluation during negotiations of the total project price.

## **Step 10. Project Award**

After RL's Contracting Office awards the OTA Project to SOSSEC, Inc.,

- SOSSEC, Inc. will issue a sub-contract to the selected Consortium Member which will include project specific Subcontract Terms and Conditions:
  - Subcontract incorporates, by reference, applicable OTA Articles
  - Articles flow down from SOSSEC OTA to subcontract
  - DD Form 254 and/or applicable OPSEC and other requirements will be made a part of the sub-contract
  - Sub-contracts will include as a minimum the SOW/PWS, DD Form 1423 Data Deliverables, and Milestone Delivery Schedule and all applicable OTA flow-down provisions/terms and conditions specific to the OTA project award.

<b>Summary of SOSSEC, Inc.'s Processes And Practices For OSAI Execution</b>	
<b>PlugFest/PlugTest Initiated Projects</b>	<b>White Paper/SOO Initiated Projects</b>
1. RL publishes Mission Thread/Identifies System	1. Customer generates white paper/SOO
2. RL Identifies funding	2. RL/SOSSEC reviews SOO for: substantial non-traditional involvement, prototype, weapon system supported
3. SOSSEC/GRIFFISS Institute arranges for a PlugFest (outreach) AFRL publishes opportunity in Fed-Biz-Ops	3. Customer provides funding
4. Griffiss Institute conducts PlugFest. Identifies possible candidates. Conducts PlugFest. Customer selects items for project review/award	4. RL/SOSSEC generates Request for Project Proposals (RPP)
5. SOO produced by AF, assisted by SOSSEC, Inc.	5. SOSSEC distributes RPP to Consortium Membership
6. The remaining 9 steps described above are followed, leading to Project award	6. Members submit proposals (cost/technical)
	7. SOSSEC completes fair and reasonable price determination. Customer completes technical evaluation
	8. Negotiate if required/award
	9. SOSSEC tracks milestones, insures delivery