When responding to a request for proposal, the key is to carefully read and follow each of the steps involved. The person/group/organization requesting the proposal in most cases has carefully decided on the necessary areas that are needed for applicants to answer. Usually, they are aware of their processes and know the specific area that needs addressing or they know the specific outcome/product they need.

Requesters have a type of decision matrix/rubric in mind. They will judge your proposal based on those areas/criteria.

Requesters generally write their requests with the following in mind:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Why | Leads to | Statement of Purpose | Describes products, services, and overall objectives |
| Who | Background Information | Overview of person/organization. May include contact information |
| What | 1. Scope of Work 2. Outcome and Performance Standards 3. Deliverables | 1. Specific duties to be performed and expected outcomes 2. Includes outcome targets, performance standards, and monitoring methodology 3. List of products, reports, and plans that the person/organization expects to receive |
| How | 1. Term of Contract 2. Payments, Incentives, and Penalties 3. Contractual Terms and Conditions 4. Requirements for Proposal Preparation 5. Evaluation and Award Process | 1. The length, beginning, and end of the contract 2. Outlines compensation 3. Standard agreements of work 4. Outlines the structure and required forms of the intended responses 5. Outlines the review and award process (See below) |
| When | 1. Process Schedule 2. Points of contact for future correspondence | 1. Outlines the schedule for delivering the proposal, review of the proposal, and determination of award status 2. Individuals who may assist in applicants’ proposal writing |

The Decision Matrix may follow a simple pattern. Specific values will be at the discretion of the requester.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | A hierarchy for making decisions | Examples | 1st – Length  2nd – Content  3rd – Data used |
| Options | Solutions | Option A – you do ABC  Option B – you do XYZ |
| Weights | A value placed on each area | 20pts for this  15pts for that |
| Scores | A point value | Total Score |

Sample-------------------0-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Option A** | | **Option B** | |
| **CRITERIA** | **Weight** | Rating | Score(1) | Rating | Score(1) |
| Criterion C1 | 1 | 3 | **3** | 3 | **3** |
| Criterion C2 | 2 | 2 | **4** | 1 | **2** |
| Criterion C3 | 3 | 1 | **3** | 3 | **9** |
| **Total** | 6 | 4 | **10** | 7 | **14** |