



CITY OF HOUSTON

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August 20, 2013

SUBJECT: Letter of Clarification No. 1
Automated High-Throughput Robotics for DNA Extraction for the Houston Police Department

REFERENCE: Request for Proposal No. S30-T24653

TO: All Prospective Proposers

This Letter of Clarification is issued for the following reasons:

- **To revise the above referenced solicitation as follows:**

1. **Page 16, Section 5.1.6 has been deleted in its entirety and shall be revised to read as "Reserved." Remove Page 16 and replace with attached Page 16 marked Revised - August 20, 2013.**

- **The following questions and City of Houston responses are hereby incorporated and made a part of the Request for Proposal:**

1. **Question/Request: What type of Septa piercing tip are you requiring, fixed or changeable? If fixed tip, are there preferences for stainless steel or other metals? Is sonication okay to wash tips?**

Answer: Line 5.1.6 has been deleted. Our preference is changeable tips for any solution transfers, given this instrument will be used pre-amplification.

2. **Question/Request: Is there a generalized protocol that we would be able to review to ensure we account for all equipment needed in the proposal?**

Answer: The protocol will depend on the chemistry selected. Therefore, the instrumentation protocols for this proposal are to be defined by the proposer.

3. **Question/Request: Would we be able to get an example of the LIMS data you wish to have imported and exported as well as dummy barcode so that we can ensure integration?**

Answer: The barcode system is a standard two-dimensional system. An example of a dummy barcode is attached on the website.

4. **Question/Request: What are your current and future bar-coding practices?**

Answer: See answer to question 3.

5. **Question/Request: What importance will be placed on chemistries that are already validated by the lab?**

Answer: Some consideration will be given. However, given a new and comprehensive validation will be required with the higher throughput system, this lab will consider the quality of all chemistries prior to making a decision.

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6. **Question/Request:** In what circumstances would you prefer to have separate chemistry and instrumentation suppliers? Doesn't it make sense to streamline the number of responsible parties for support whenever possible.

Answer: Efficiency through streamlining is a priority, but the quality of the selected chemistry is a higher priority.

7. **Question/Request:** In what situations will you be using septa that need to be pierced? What types of septa will be used?

Answer: See response to question no. 1.

8. **Question/Request:** In what circumstances would an operator need to change liquid handling parameters, air gaps, etc. from pre-defined and validated instrument protocols?

Answer: Ideally, there will be minimal to no manipulation by the laboratory operator.

9. **Question/Request:** It is not clear what is meant by "written proposals to cover all new processes"?

Answer: The selected instrument and chemistry will be used for the extraction of forensic DNA samples that may be of limited quality and/or quantity. The proposer should provide protocols and maintenance instruction for the instruments intended use.

When issued, Letter(s) of Clarification shall automatically become a part of the proposal documents and shall supersede any previous specification(s) and/or provision(s) in conflict with the Letter(s) of Clarification. All revisions, responses, and answers incorporated into the Letter(s) of Clarification are collaboratively from both the Strategic Purchasing Division and the applicable City Department(s). It is the responsibility of the proposers to ensure that it has obtained all such letter(s). By submitting a proposal on this project, proposers shall be deemed to have received all Letter(s) of Clarification and to have incorporated them into this proposal.

If you have any questions or if further clarification is needed regarding this Request for Proposal, please contact me.



Richard Morris
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DM

Attached Revised Page 16, marked revised August 20, 2013

END OF LETTER OF CLARIFICATION 1

SPECIFICATIONS / SCOPE OF WORK

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4.3 The Contractor shall monitor the initial running on-site of the instrument with actual samples and controls.

5.0 Equipment Deliverables

Deliverables shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

5.1 One high-throughput non-differential DNA extraction robotic instrument

5.1.1 Complete instrumentation, accessories, software/scripts, and chemistry for automated non-differential DNA extraction. Must be capable of eluting extracted DNA samples in microtubes and 96-well plates.

5.1.2 Computer and any required peripherals, barcode scanner, and UPS must be included.

5.1.3 Instruments, procedures and software must be fully supported by instrument vendor and/or chemistry vendor. This must include telephonic technical support as well as on-site support. The Proposal shall specify who provides support.

5.1.4 Instruments and procedure scripts/software must be fully validated for forensic casework, compliant with all accreditation standards and federal requirements.

5.1.5 The complete liquid path must be resistant to bleach and ethanol sterilization.

5.1.6 Reserved

5.1.7 All liquid handling parameters, such as air gap sizes, aspiration and dispense speeds and mixing must be accessible to the operator and must be easily accessible for change.

5.1.8 The software must be password protected so unauthorized users cannot make changes to crucial programs.

5.1.9 Editing of the software protocol must be able to be navigated from a single program interface.

5.1.10 The system must include an automated barcode scanner to scan tubes and plates.

5.2 Service Plan - The Contractor shall provide pricing for instrument service plans for 1 year, and 3 years.

6.0 General Requirements

6.1 The Contractor shall deliver fully functioning robotics processes to extract non-differential forensic DNA samples, using the equipment and reagents noted above.

6.2 The Contractor shall provide any needed scripts and/or robotics programming in order to transfer information to and from the extraction hardware and the Porter-Lee Best Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), where necessary.

6.3 The Contractor shall provide written protocols to cover all new processes, as well as required equipment maintenance. The format of these protocols shall be consistent with current HPD Crime Laboratory protocols.

7.0 Additions & Deletions:

7.1 The City, by written notice from the City Purchasing Agent or the Chiefs/ Directors and or designee to the Contractor, at any time during the term of this contract, may add or delete like or similar equipment,