

APPENDIX A

AOOS CONTRACTUAL PROCEDURES FOR SOLICITATION, EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF THE AOOS DATA MANAGER AND THE DMAC TEAM

Process for Solicitation and Selection

Following an external review of its existing sole-source data management contract with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the AOOS Board voted in 2010 to solicit competitive proposals for two sets of services, with proposers allowed to bid on one or both of these components, separately or combined.

I. Data Management and Communication Services: Services include providing data management support (data ingestion, metadata, relational database development and maintenance) and communication services (web portal, data clearinghouse, coordination, and communication), building upon the hardware, software, query tools and products developed over the previous years, and following the national IOOS Program guidance.

II. User Product Development Services: Develop user-driven products and associated interface and visualization tools that will be maintained by and interact with the data system developed under component #1 above.

AOOS Data System Management Proposal Components for Data Management Team Selection

The following are the basic components that must be included in submitted proposals if they are to be considered:

- Signed Cover Page -- Names of applicant organization and principal/co-investigators, requested funds and other support, and a place for the signature of an official authorized to legally bind the submitting organization.
- Contact Information -- Names, affiliations, phone, email, and physical addresses for applicant lead, partners and collaborators.
- Section that explains whether this proposal is responsive to requested services Section I, II or both.
- A Proposal Summary – Description of the overall proposal and a brief description of its goals and objectives.
- Technical Approach – Detailed description of the work to be performed including goals, methods, and appropriate technical details.
- Management Approach and Personnel Qualifications – Description of the management structure and responsibilities of key personnel, including qualifications, past experience and successes with similar or relevant projects of key personnel, discussion on how key personnel will coordinate and collaborate with other programs.
- Deliverables and Timelines – Demonstrate candidate team can achieve an outcome and product within the requested award period. Example: Provide a clear table, organized by semi-annual reporting period, detailing timelines, measurable milestones (accomplishments and deliverables), and performance metrics that will be used to track the program's progress.

- Budget Information and Narrative – Detailed budget narratives must be provided that match to the tabular budgets and include a list of the personnel for each component of the project, including position aligned with expertise, proposed tasks, time commitment and labor costs.
- Data System Management Team Resumes – Curriculum vitae of *two pages maximum* are required for all key personnel.
- Past Experience – For each key person in the proposal, provide at least 3 references of people that have knowledge of the proposer’s past experience. For the proposing institution or organization, provide 3 references that show the institution’s or organization’s experience and capabilities relevant to the AOOS Data System management requirements.

AOOS Evaluation Criteria for Data System Management Team Selection

Proposals were evaluated on these criteria:

The selected AOOS Data Manager and DMAC Team must exhibit advanced capabilities in developing user products and data visualization tools. The team must show experience in working collaboratively and flexibly with other teams.

Soundness of Approach: (50%) This assesses whether the approach is technically sound, whether the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives consistent with the objectives stated in the AOOS DMAC Plan. Reviewers will consider the following:

- Deliverables that are clearly identified, measurable, connected to timelines, and designed to meet goals and objectives;
- The conceptual framework, design, methods, and approaches are adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project;
- The applicant acknowledges potential problem areas and consider alternative approaches.

Qualifications and Past Experience of Applicants and Partners: (30%) This ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education and skills, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the stated goals. Reviewers will consider the following:

- The entity’s working environment contributes to the probability of success;
- The proposed activities employ useful collaborative arrangements;
- The applicants have the technical programming skills, as well as strong project management skills, and the flexibility and willingness to work with a variety of users.

Project Costs: (10%) The Budget is evaluated to determine if costs are reasonable, allowable and necessary, and if they are realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame.

Considerations:

- The proposal effectively describes expenditure of funds for the first year (which are guaranteed);
- The proposal lays out a path for years 2-5 (which is subject to future appropriations but has a high probability of success).

Project Management: (10%) This provides a description how the overall data team will be managed.
Considerations:

- How the is team structured to accomplish its goals;
- A clear organizational chain of command.

AOOS Data System Management System Proposal Review Process

Proposals are reviewed by an expert panel comprised of representatives from academia, private research institutions, and government agencies. AOOS Conflict of Interest policies (adopted by AOOS Board May 11, 2010). are followed in selection of panel members and review of the proposals. The panel rates the proposals as described above and places them in a relative rank order. The review panel may decide to give the final top group of applicants the opportunity for an interview and presentation in person as part of an opportunity to complete a “best and final” offer and help clarify any outstanding questions.

The review panel recommended unanimously that the AOOS data management contract be awarded to the team of AXIOM, led by Rob Bochenek. The Executive Director subsequently agree with the recommendation and present it to the full AOOS Board. A 5-year contract was awarded to Axiom, and subsequently extended by the Board for an additional 3 years to August 31, 2018.

Contract Provisions for Annual Performance Reviews, Renewal, Transition and Termination

The 2010-2015 contract with Axiom included the following provision:

- (a) This Agreement represents the first year of activities and funding of what is expected to be a longer term contractual relationship. However, no statement in this Agreement or Appendix 1 should be construed as a promise or guarantee of additional funding beyond what is contained in this Agreement.
- (b) A formal annual review will be conducted by the AOOS Executive Director. Subsequent agreements and/or additional funding will be contingent on the outcome of this review.
- (c) AOOS may terminate this Agreement, in whole or in part, in the event that Axiom fails or refuses to perform tasks or deliver services specified in the Agreement within the time provided, fails to obtain appropriate permits, or otherwise violates any of the conditions of this Agreement, or if it becomes evident that Axiom is not conducting the work in accordance with the specifications or with diligence so as to permit delivery on or before the specified delivery date. Delays in delivery beyond the time specified in this Agreement due to causes beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of Axiom may be excused by AOOS if Axiom notifies ASLC in writing of the cause of such delay within a reasonable time and requests an extension of the project term.
- (d) AOOS may terminate this Agreement, in whole or in part, upon written notice sixty days in advance.

- (e) Axiom will develop a transition plan by October 1, 2010, subject to approval by the AOOS Executive Director, which will describe a timeline and processes by which the data system and products developed by Axiom would be transitioned at the conclusion or termination of this Agreement or subsequent agreements.

The Axiom contract was extended by a unanimous vote of the AOOS Board in fall 2015 for an additional 3 years – until August 31, 2018, and according to the Board’s resolution “subject to the same parameters as the original contract, which included annual review and approval by the board”. The annual review and approval of the contractor’s performance is conducted by the AOOS Executive Director in consultation with the AOOS Data Management Advisory Committee, and is based on the AOOS Data System Goals and Objectives described in Section 2.1 of the AOOS Data Management Subsystem Plan that the data manager and team are tasked with implementing. It is ratified by Board adoption of the data management contract within each annual work plan.