Elements of a Successful Application for Public Building Projects reviewed by DSB – Compilation of Board Thoughts

Key factors for creating compelling applications to the Designer Selection Board (DSB) for public building projects. We'll cover team qualifications, project relevance, application quality, technical aspects and best practices – note, following these recommendations does not guarantee your firm will be selected for a project.

12.18.2024 DSB Public Board Meeting

Designer Selection Board
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Firm and Team Qualifications

Team Composition, Expertise, & Availability

- Include seasoned members with extensive experience in public building projects, particularly for the Prime position. Specify years of experience and relevant project leadership roles.
- Note staff longevity with the firm, highlighting the average tenure of key personnel and emphasizing continuity of experience. experience.
- Develop a comprehensive backup plan outlining procedures for personnel changes or unexpected absences, ensuring project ensuring project stability and seamless execution.

References and Evaluations

- Provide relevant evaluations or references from past, similar projects.
- Evaluations from agencies are better than references, especially regarding how the firm performed on projects similar to the one similar to the one being discussed. If you have done work with Agencies and they have not provided you a should request one. request one.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Highlight SDO certifications held by your firm and subs.
- Emphasize your firm's demonstrated commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, including specific examples of how these principles are integrated into your firm's culture and project practices.
- Provide diversity statistics from prior projects.

Firm Capacity

- Demonstrate your firm's ability to successfully manage this project alongside current commitments. Highlight any relevant relevant experience with managing multiple concurrent projects of similar scope and complexity.

Project Relevance and Experience

Prime Experience

- Highlight projects aligning with Public Notice requirements. requirements. Connect previous work to current needs.

- Indicate relevant experience of key personnel.

- Avoid generic language in project descriptions.

- For Single Project Public Notices, prioritize firms with closely related project experience. For House Doctors, consider smaller or newer firms if they have relevant experience.

Sub-Consultant Experience

- Ensure subs have relevant experience.
- Strong sub-contractor experience can differentiate smaller and newer prime firms.
- A mix of experience from both the prime and subs on similar projects is ideal.

Public Sector Experience

- Emphasize familiarity with public sector project requirements requirements (Ch. 149, Ch. 149a, DCAMM Cert, etc.).

Application Quality and Presentation

Organization of Application

- A clear, structured, application is critical. Applications typically average 40-50 pages. Avoid extra pages that are not part of the typical format in the Designer Selection Application. Of course, the final page count is up to the prime consultant on what will represent their Team.
- We are working on adding a hyperlinked table of contents and an org chart to the system which will assist everyone.
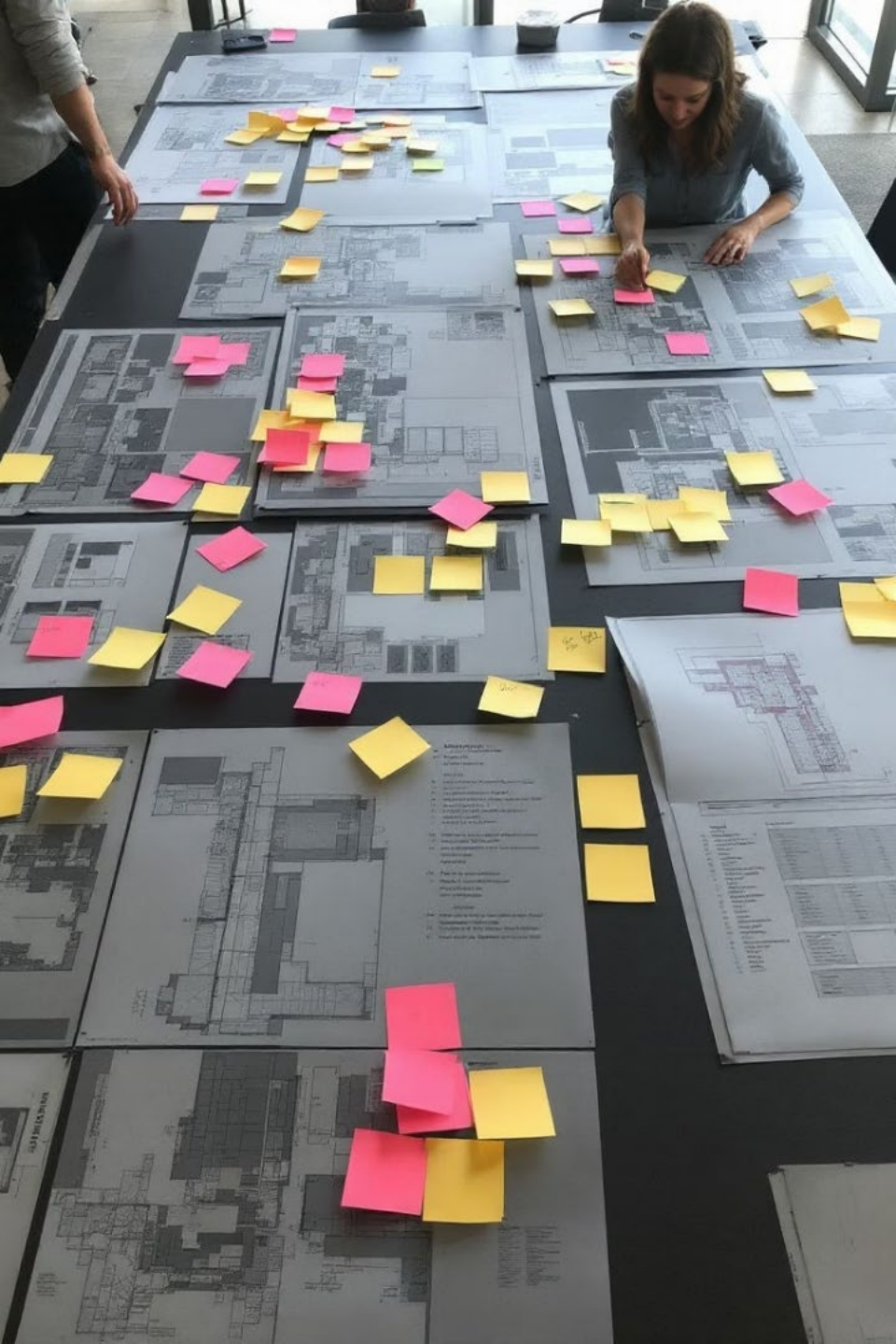
Graphics

Include high-quality visuals and well-organized applications to demonstrate professionalism and attention to detail.

Clarity

Respond directly to criteria. Use specific examples and include measurable statistics such as past performance metrics (e.g., budget adherence, schedule)

Application Content Structure

1 **Section 1: Overview**

List ALL subs and ensure consistency in project information provided

2 **Sections 2**

Recommendations should be relevant to the project at hand and the applicant's proposed role.

3 **Section 3: Team**

Include resumes for all team members, noting their relevant projects. Include the full team in this section before section before moving on to Section 4.

4 **Section 4: Projects**

Highlight key projects aligned with Public Notice criteria. Ensure you clarify why each project is included if it included if it stretches the relevance.

5 **Section 5: Evaluation Criteria**

DO IT IN ORDER - Address criteria explicitly, using data and examples. 5-6 pages recommended. Explain how a Explain how a firm's experience makes them a great choice - smaller firms that are 'bootstrapping' a bit to get 'bootstrapping' a bit to get experience need to work on this especially.

Technical and Procedural Aspects

Criteria Response

Address each evaluation criterion **in the order order presented in the PN**. If not clearly addressed, the application may be discounted. discounted.

References & Evaluations

Ensure all required evaluations and references are included in the application. Agencies and the DSB reserve the right to collect their own, particularly if none are provided.

Disqualification & Compliance

Meet the legislated ownership requirements requirements before you submit.

Licenses must be up to date for the state of Massachusetts.

You will be disqualified if you do not meet the meet the requirements of the legislation.

Requirements are outlined at:

https://www.mass.gov/info-details/eligibility-details/eligibility-requirements-for-applicants applicants

Pre-Submission Support

Ask DSB staff questions before submission. They are there to help you at: infodsb@mass.gov. Once the infodsb@mass.gov. Once the application is submitted, it is too late for changes.

Best Practices and Considerations

General Best Practices

- Conduct an internal review to identify potential issues in the application.

- Keep the format consistent and professional.

- Look at past successful applications to serve as references. They are available after the board review as a public record which can be viewed in the Designer Selection Network under the Download section.

Anticipate Project Needs

- Address public participation, environmental concerns and sustainability considerations of the project, and historic preservation if relevant.

- Demonstrate understanding of the project. How will you assist?

- Consider veteran owned firms for military contracts

Visual Materials

- Use charts and high-resolution visuals to clarify complex data that is tailored to the specific Public Notice and not just general marketing materials.

1

2

3

Summary of Process & Selection Criteria

1 **Ownership and Licensing Requirements**

Meets all legislated requirements for ownership and current Massachusetts licenses.

2 **Agency Feedback and Reference Relevance**

We review Agency feedback on application and references/evaluations references/evaluations from relevant relevant past projects.

3 **Application Responsiveness**

Demonstrates a complete and responsive application addressing all addressing all criteria.

4 **Management & Execution Capabilities**

Showcases effective project management and the ability to perform the work.

5 **Diversity Goals**

Meet or exceed the diversity goals, goals, including prior experience and and office culture.

6 **Designer Selection Mission**

Application aligns with the legislated legislated Mission of the DSB.

The selection process evaluates applications based on these key criteria, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of each firm's qualifications and qualifications and application quality. **If you have questions about your application, please contact the DSB at InfoDSB@mass.gov** InfoDSB@mass.gov

Members of the Board

- ENGINEER: CHAIR Maureen Sakakeeny
- PUBLIC MEMBER: VICE-CHAIR Mark Boyle
- ARCHITECT: David Carlson
- ARCHITECT: Arthur Choo
- ARCHITECT: Khalil Mogassabi
- ARCHITECT: Michael Chavez
- ENGINEER: Sam Liao
- ENGINEER: Severino Luna
- ENGINEER: Devin Hurson
- GENERAL CONTRACTOR: David Capaldo
- PUBLIC MEMBER: Vacant

Members of Staff

- EXEC DIRECTOR: Simone Early
- PROGRAM COORD III: Claire Hestor
- PROGRAM COORD II: Roberto Melendez

Thank you for attending – We welcome your feedback

Questions?

Send Questions to the DSB at InfoDSB@mass.gov