

SARATOGA ASSOCIATES

Landscape Architects, Architects,
Engineers, and Planners, P.C.

RFQ/RFP MISTAKES TO AVOID

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RFQ/RFP MISTAKES TO AVOID

Crafting a strong Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or Request for Proposals (RFP) is essential for attracting qualified and competitive responses. Avoiding common pitfalls ensures clarity, compliance, and successful project outcomes. Key considerations include maintaining accurate and tailored information, defining a clear scope, and setting reasonable timelines. Thoughtful attention to proposal formatting, evaluation criteria, funding details, and documentation requirements will help streamline the process and foster strong partnerships.

1. **Copy/paste Risks:** wrong names, project info, funding sources, date conflicts, typos, etc.
2. **Contact Clarity:** clear contact information for questions and submission
3. **Scope Clarity:** project description, then scope. Need enough depth to receive “apples to apples” complete responses; has any work been done already? Meeting/outreach/travel requirements? Missing information/attachments
4. **Schedule:** make it reasonable (vs rushed/incomplete responses, or no response)
 - > Pre-proposal meeting? Questions due? Proposals due?
 - > Project schedule (for team availability and fees)
5. **Funding:**
 - > Source constraints/compliance items
 - > Budget (at least a range – comparable to level of detail/effort)
 - > MWBE/SDVOB/DBE requirements (vs goals)
6. **Required Documents/Forms:** can you include a list/checklist?
7. **Evaluation Criteria:** include a scoring rubric with percentages
8. **Cost/fee Type:** Lump sum? Per deliverable or task? Time and expense with hourly rates? Should a template be used?
9. **Format of Proposal:** list out the bidder’s response, ie. sections; page limits; does cost need to be separate?; resumes; work examples; references; # of copies
10. **Flexibility:** can proposers offer alternative approaches, additional services?