			SESDA III Draft RFP Question and Responses Upated 4/13/2010 Upates highlighted		
Question Number	**Section**	**Page Reference**	**Citation**	**Question/Comment**	**Response**
	General				
1				Is the Government expecting to conduct a Bidders Conference for this procurement? If so, when in the procurement cycle do you anticipate scheduling it?	No, we believe that the information provided via the Request for Information (RFI)/Sources Sought, Draft Request for Proposal (RFP), Procurement Library, and industry comment/response process is sufficient to gain a thorough understanding of the procurement.
2				Will the Government provide an updated procurement schedule for planning purposes?	Yes, an updated schedule will be maintained and posted on the World Wide Web through the NASA Acquisition Internet Service (NAIS) at http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/eps/sol.cgi?acqid=145042#Other%2001
	Section B				
3		B.2	Nonproposed Costs One of the line items is "Facilities" with a Year 1 estimate of $171,836.	Please indicate whether this is intended to be for the contractor's offsite facility or for another purpose, and please explain how the estimate was derived.	The final RFP will be updated to remove this as a non-proposed cost.
	Section F				

4		F.1 B.2(a)	Paragraph B.2 indicates an annual expected Facilities cost for Contract Year 1 of $171,836. Paragraph F.1 states that "The services specified by this contact shall be performed at the following location(s): Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, MD 20771 and Contractor's facility. Space will be made available for approximately 300 Contractor provided personnel at the GSFC facility."	Is this amount entirely attributable to the Contractor's off-site facility, or are other facility costs included in this amount?	The final RFP will be updated to remove this as a non-proposed cost. Offerors should propose any facilities costs (whether on-site or off-site) that are appropriate for their approach.
5		F.1	Section F.1 states that room will be made on the Goddard site for up to 300 employees on the contract. Earlier in the DRFP it is stated that work on this contract is to be performed at both the Goddard facility and the Contractor's facility.	Is any SESDA II work currently being performed at Contractor facilities, and if so, is that work scheduled to continue into the new contract?	Yes, work is currently being performed at contractor facilities, however it is up to each offeror to propose their own approach for the new contract.
6		F.1	This paragraph indicates a requirement for a Contractor off-site facility.	Will the final RFP include NASA's minimum communications requirements to be supported, such as speed and security, between the SESDA III off-site facility and GSFC?	Contractor(s) shall comply with Information Technology (IT) Security requirements per the final RFP. The Offeror's proposed approach to any work performed off-site will determine the communication speed based on the requirements of the work activities to be supported.
7		F.1		How many non-management personnel should contractors assume should be housed at the contractor's off-site facility?	That number should be based on each offerors proposed approach.
	Section G				

8		G.10		Are there any TAA employees involved or any other employees that would require special authorizations for travel or working with counterparts at foreign agencies?	There is travel and work with foreign space agencies and other partnering organizations. Foreign travel must comply with Clause G.10 TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES (1852.242 71). Compliance with EXPORT LICENSES (1852 225-70) (FEB 2000) is also required.
9		G.11	Section G.11 indicates that in the event of a follow-on contract, NASA may provide data such as "...historical labor category descriptions, full-time equivalents (FTEs), average direct labor rates, and other information from this contract in the follow-on solicitation for use by all potential offerors."	Is such data, including 533s, historical labor category descriptions, FTEs, average direct labor rates, and other related information available from the SESDA II contract? If so when can this data be expected to be available to the	GSFC Clause 52.242-91 (Item G.11) was not included in the SESDA II contract. The Government has decided to provide Offerors average direct labor rates, FTE information by SOW element, and position description information in Enclosures 1 and 2 of the cost section. GSFC Clause 52 242-91 will be removed from the final RFP.
	Section H				
10		H.7 p. 42	indicates that offerors must specify "incidents... and total employees."	Should the total number of employees be employees on the contract, employees in corporate organization, or employees in the entire corporation? And should the total include subcontractor employees?	The total number should include employees on the contract including subcontractors.
	Section I				

11		I.88 p. 50	This clause identifies two categories as non-exempt. In reviewing the Enclosures 1 and 2, it appears there may be other categories that may fall in the non-exempt category. Specifically, the clause includes a Salary Table with Grade Level and Hourly Rate for two labor categories (Computer Operator and Engineer). The DRFP however contains a much larger list of labor categories.	Please clarify why the Salary Table only includes the two cited labor categories.	The information will be reviewed and any updates will be provided in the final RFP.
	Sections L&M				
12		L.9	This DRFP paragraph indicates that this procurement is intended to result in the award of a Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF) contract.	We see no ordering procedure specified in Sections G or H for Work Activity Plans (WAPs) described in Paragraph C.3 where funding is described. Will there be a formal ordering procedure, and if so, what is the ordering procedure?	SESDA III is a completion contract and therefore does not include formal ordering procedures. Clause C.3 provides guidance on how specific requirements within the scope of work will be identified and managed through work management plans for assigning budgets and tracking costs (see also Subfactor B-Program Management for guidance on the requirements for an online work activity management system).

13		L.10 p. 9	lists the page count for the Past Performance Volume at 30 pages, and then states that the page count "Applies to prime, major subcontractors and team members individually."	The questions this raises follow: a. Does the government intend for each proposed party of an offeror's team to have 30 pages to discuss their company's Past Performance? b. Does the Government intend for each team member of a bidder to submit a past performance write-up, whether they are a significant subcontractor (at least 10% annually) or not? We recommend the government ask for Past Performance from Primes and significant subcontractors to avoid receiving responses that are not pertinent to the solicitation.	a. The page limitation for the past performance section is for the entire Offeror's proposal. Both Prime and significant subcontractor(s) information should be included within the page limitation. b. Offerors should submit past performance for Primes and significant subcontractors.
14		L.10(a)(2) L.13.1	L.10(a)(2) states that offerors should submit one copy to DCAA and DCMA.	However, the instructions in L.13.1 for the Cost Volume state that offerors should submit one copy of their cost volume to DCAA. Which instruction is correct?	The requirement to submit proposal information to DCMA will be removed from Section L.10.
15		L.10 (a)(4) p. 7	indicates that proposals "*...shall be submitted in Microsoft Word and Excel (Windows 2007) or Portable Document Format (version 5.0 or greater). Cost/price proposal charts shall use Microsoft Excel 2000 for Windows.*"	Please clarify if offerors can provide the Cost exhibits in Excel 2007 format, or if the exhibits must be saved in the older Excel 2000 format.	Yes, the final RFP will be updated to reflect that Excel 2007 format must be used for cost exhibits.

16		L.10(a)(4)		Please clarify the requirement for the electronic copy file format for the Cost/price proposal charts. The first requirement is to submit MS Excel (Windows 2007) and the second requirement for cost/price proposal charts indicates that offerors are to use MS Excel 2000 for Windows.	Yes, the final RFP will be updated to reflect that Excel 2007 format must be used for cost exhibits.
17		L.10(a)(5)		Is the SOW Compliance Matrix only required to be provided for the Mission Suitability Volume?	Yes.
18		L.10(b)	In the table of proposal volumes, under Offer Volume, the RFP requests a submittal of "contract Attachment P (if Proposed)."	We are unable to locate any other reference in the DRFP to Attachment P or locate a copy of Attachment P. Please clarify the requirement.	The final RFP will be revised to remove reference to Attachment P.
19		L.10(b)(1)	Proposal Content and Page Limitation: Offer Volume makes reference to Attachment P	please clarify what is Attachment P?	The final RFP will be revised to remove reference to Attachment P.
20		L.10(b)(1)		Item (a) for the Cost Volume refers to submittal of direct labor rates, indirect labor rates, and fixed fee matrices. These matrices were not listed in the attachments or enclosures, and are not discussed in the cost instructions. Are these required? If so, please provide instructions and/or format.	The final RFP will be revised to remove Item (a), as the information requested is to be provided in the cost exhibits.

21		L.10 (b)(1) p. 9	Page Limitations for both BOE and Past Performance sections include an asterisk pointing to a note that reads "**Applies to prime, major subcontractors and team members individually.*"	This would suggest that proposals from teams with multiple members will be allowed to have many more pages than offerors that include a small number of organizations. The result will be an unfair advantage to large teams and substantially more material for the Government to evaluate. We respectfully request that GSFC reconsider this approach and impose a common page limitation for all offerors independent of team composition.	The page limitation for the past performance section is inclusive of the Prime and all significant subcontractors. We intend to update the final RFP to reflect a total page limitation of 80 pages for BOE's, which is inclusive of the Prime and all significant subcontractors.
22		Page 11	Business Systems	Please confirm the adequate accounting system requirement is applicable to the prime and all proposed subcontractors	The requirement is for the Prime only as stated in RFP Section L.13 (1).

23		Pages 14 and 20 L.12.3	"There seems to be a redundancy in the RFP regarding the methodology for determining and obtaining the optimum skill mix. See: Subfactor A – Technical Approach The Offeror shall explain the approach for identifying the optimum skill mix by discipline based upon the requirements of the SOW and the approach for matching skill mix to services/functions. (page 14). Subfactor B: Management Approach Staffing ... the Offeror shall provide a complete staffing plan covering management, including management support staff, and non-management labor that shows how it will determine and acquire the optimum skill mix by discipline for implementing/supporting the requirements specified in the SOW and identify the proposed staffing methodology.....(page 20).	There seems to be a redundancy in the RFP regarding the methodology for determining and obtaining the optimum skill mix. Question to the Government: Since we are working against a page limitation, is it really the Government's intent that essentially the same information be provided in two different places in the page-counted portion of Mission Suitability volume?	The final RFP will be revised to eliminate the redundancy.
24		L.12.3 p. 14	Subfactor A	Does the Technical Approach to the Statement of Work response have to also address all of the work content in the Addendum to the SOW?	No, the Addendum is provided for offerors to take into consideration when addressing the overall requirements of the SOW.

25		L.12	Section L.12 indicates that "The Offeror's response to the combined scenarios shall be limited to a maximum 12 pages."	In the interest of demonstrating better understanding of the GSFC requirements and each offers ability to meet and exceed those requirements, will the government consider increasing the page limit to 20 pages?	No, the Government does not intend to increase the page limit for scenarios to the amount suggested in the question. However we intend to update instructions in the final RFP to reduce specific details in the Offeror's scenario responses. Offerors may refer to their responses to the SOW requirements when addressing the scenarios and explain how they will be utilized in the scenario responses.
26		L.12.3	This paragraph requires that "The response to each Question/Scenario shall be in narrative form."	Since the instruction also asks for items such as 'timelines', is it acceptable to incorporate graphics and figures into our responses?	Yes, they are acceptable for supporting narrative responses. The specific example of "timelines" will be eliminated from the requirements for the Offeror's response to the scenarios. Graphics and figures are acceptable if used to supplement narrative responses. The instructions in L.10(b)(2) "Proposal Content and Page Limitation" apply.
27		L.12.3	Regarding Scenarios:	There appears to be overlap in the functionality described in scenario #1 and scenario #6 in that both ask for proposed descriptions of data operations/data processing environments. Would it be appropriate to say that #1 is to focus on support of the mission science data aspects themselves, while #6 focuses solely on the information technology aspects that support science data processing?	Scenario #1 will be revised. Offerors should respond to the Questions/Scenarios based on their understanding of the requirements and their proposed capabilities. Any assumptions and rationale made in preparing a response to these questions must be clearly stated.

28		L.12.3 p. 15	Under 2, we are to provide a "Staffing Plan consistent with the technical approach and schedule and proposed labor categories including ***the source of staffing by skill category*** (with appropriate skill mixes and hours) ***differentiating between in-house, subcontractors and other hires.*** " ***(Emphasis added).***	We assume the meaning of "in-house" to be proposed prime contractor existing employees. We assume that "subcontractor" employees means existing proposed subcontractor employees. We assume the meaning of "other hires" to mean all incumbent contractor and subcontractor employees and proposed new hires of the proposed prime and subs.	The specific requirement for offerors to respond to this information will be deleted.
29		L.12.3 p. 15		Will you provide sufficient detail to accurately estimate a timeline, schedule, staffing mix, and labor hours in the final RFP?	The specific requirement for offerors to respond to this information will be deleted.
30		L.12.3 p. 15	Paragraph 3, item 6 - "Lines of communication ... among contractor staff, GSFC staff, and project staff"	What do you mean by project staff? Do you mean by other non-Goddard, civil servants? Would we as contractor be required to interact directly with non-NASA project staff?	a. The Final RFP will be revised to replace "project staff" with "partnering organization staff". b. Yes.
31		L.12.3 p. 15	Under 4, you refer to "...other resources, such as facilities and equipment to successfully accomplish the scenario."	Do you want us to list resources such as facilities and equipment owned by the Government (i.e., laboratories and laboratory equipment)? Does "other resources" include civil servant resources needed (i.e., a government laboratory manager)?	The specific requirement for offerors to respond to this information will be deleted.

32		L.12.3 pp. 15-17	Questions/Scenarios. This instruction requires that we address a minimum of 8 topics for each of 6 questions/scenarios: a) Assumptions b) technical approach c) staffing plan/labor categories d) schedule/flow of activities e) other resources f) challenges/risks g) lines of communication/interfaces h) specific questions posed by the scenario	The requirements for responses to the scenarios/questions are very similar to those for full Representative Task Orders in other RFP's, for which page allowances are commonly in the 10-15 page range, and detailed schedule and cost information is allotted an additional 10-20 pages in a Basis of Estimate section. We respectfully suggest that the allocation of 12 pages total (2 pages per scenario) is insufficient to provide the detailed response required by the RFP, and will lead to widely different responses that do not permit reasonable evaluations. If the Government's intent is in fact to require such a large level of detail in the response to the Scenarios, we respectfully request that the page limitation for the Mission Suitability Volume be increased to 125 pages to allow offerors to properly address the requested information.	No, the Government does not intend to increase the page limit for scenarios to the amount suggested in the question. However we intend to update instructions in the final RFP to reduce specific details in the Offeror's scenario responses. Offerors may refer to their responses to the SOW requirements when addressing the scenarios and explain how they will be utilized in the scenario responses.

33		L.12.3 pp.15-17	Questions/Scenarios	The six Scenarios with their requirements constitute a significant challenge, especially because of the small page allocation (12 pages total for the response to all six Scenarios). The responses would each require the offeror to define several critical technical-, schedule-, and cost-related assumptions, each of which would strongly affect the Government's evaluation and comparisons. The nature and quality of these assumptions would, in fact, determine the likelihood of a response's success, failure, and overall quality. We respectfully suggest that the Government shift the emphasis of the evaluation of Scenarios to place a major fraction of the weight on the quality of the offeror's assumptions and their rationale, and accordingly decrease the requirements for detail in the technical, staffing, and schedule response.	We intend to revise the instructions in the final RFP to reduce the expected level of detail in the Offeror's response. Offerors assumptions and rationale will be evaluated in accordance with Section M.
34		L.12.3 pp. 15-17	Questions/Scenarios	The expected responses to the scenarios/questions seem to be extremely detailed and quantitative, including staffing plans, schedules, labor categories, skill mixes and hours. The descriptions of the scenarios themselves, however, do not provide information about the scope, size, or durations of the efforts, nor do they provide a basis for estimating them. We respectfully suggest that this will lead to offerors' submissions that differ widely and that therefore cannot be compared fairly.	We intend to revise the instructions in the final RFP to reduce the expected level of detail in the Offeror's response

35		L.12.3 p. 16	Scenario #2	Does "scientific support" of the instrument team include the full scope of all SESDA-III tasks (e.g., engineering services, EPO, travel support, etc.) or simply providing scientists to work with the instrument team?	Scientific support in this scenario refers to items described under section 3.1 in the SOW as they apply to the scenario.
36		L.12.3 pp. 17	Program Management requires offerors to "*Describe the organizational structure, policies, procedures, and techniques for efficiently managing the proposed work*."	Please clarify if the adjective "organizational" refers only to "structure" or also to "policies," "procedures," and "techniques for managing the proposed work."	The final RFP language will be clarified in this area.
37		L.12.3 P. 17	This paragraph states that "Offerors are invited, but not required to describe any new or innovative methods, techniques or technologies related to the Statement of Work requirements. The Offeror shall fully describe each method, technique or technology and explain how it would impact the performance of the SOW under the proposed contract."	This requirement is evaluated under Subfactor A – Technical Approach. We suggest that the final RFP include a similar requirement and section under Subfactor B – Management Approach.	Offerors are free to propose any management approach they consider to be the most effective and efficient to support the requirements of this contract.
38		L.12.3 p. 18 M.4 p. 4	"*...contract clause C.2 New and Modified Funding Procedures*."	Is this a typo? Should it read C.3? Same comment for Section M.4, Subfactor B, Program Management, p. 4	The final RFP will be updated to reference C.3.
39		L.12.3	This paragraph states that "The Offeror shall describe the electronic and online work activity management system that will be used to comply with the requirements specified in the contract clause C.2 New and Modified Funding Procedures."	However, in the DRFP, C.2 is labeled as "Reports of Work" and C.3 is labeled as "New and Modified Funding Procedures." Shouldn't the L.12.3 reference be to C.3 rather than C.2?	The final RFP will be updated to reference C.3.

40		L.12.3 pp. 19-22	Quality Assurance Plan, Phase-In Plan, Total Compensation Plan, Safety and Health Plan.	Since these plans include their own or no page limitation, we respectfully request that requirements for these plans be moved to the end of Subfactor B so that offerors may number pages 1-100 of the Mission Suitability Volume consecutively and include the cited plans immediately following the response to Subfactors A and B.	The final RFP will be updated to exclude the Quality Assurance Plan from the Mission Suitability page count limitation. The requirement for the plans will be re-ordered in the final RFP.
41		L.12.3 p. 20	top paragraph. The first sentence of the paragraph beginning with "*The Offeror shall provide a detailed phase-in…*"	appears to have some missing text. Please clarify.	The sentence was reviewed and found to be complete.
42		L.12.3 p. 20	top paragraph. The third sentence, beginning with "*The phase-in plan shall also specifically address…*"	also seems to be missing some text. Please clarify. It seems like you are asking offerors to describe how the following things will be maintained, become operational, or be accomplished: i) Ongoing work ii) Proposed management organization iii) Schedule iv) Complete staffing v) Technical and cost reporting mechanisms vi) Orientation and training of personnel	The final RFP will be updated for clarity.

43		L.12.3 p. 20	Staffing: requires the offeror to "*explain how it will determine and acquire the optimum skill mix by discipline...*"	Please clarify what is meant by "discipline." Does it refer to each of the four major disciplines pursued by GSFC's SED: Earth science, astrophysics, heliophysics, and planetary science? Please identify the disciplines to be considered by offerors.	The final RFP will be revised to delete "by discipline" from the pertinent sentence.
44		Page 21	Staffing/Incumbent Capture	"suggest Government consider adding (in the incumbent capture metrics) - a metric for offerors to list Incumbent retention. So, as opposed to just documenting how many incumbents they have captured - what is the average tenure/length of employment of incumbents they have captured. It is important to see that companies were able to retain captured incumbents to continue working on the contract	We believe the current information requested by the RFP in this area will be sufficient to evaluate proposals.
45		L.12.3 p. 21	Staffing: second paragraph, requires/instructs offerors to "...identify the expected number of personnel to be hired from incumbents (if any)..."	Is it GSFC's intent that this information be contained in the Staffing section as well as in the Phase-in plan where it is also required? Please clarify.	This information is required only in the staffing plan. The final RFP instructions will be clarified in this area.
46		L.12.3 p. 22	Safety and Health Plan: The RFP references Clause I.116 Hazardous Material Identification and Material Safety Data	The correct reference is I.91.	The final RFP will be updated to reference Clause I.91.

47		L.12.3 L.13.2(d) Enclosure 1		Please explain the relationship between the Contractor's Basis of Estimate for performing the Statement of Work Level III activities and the Government's FTE Estimate for Year 1 of the SESDA III Contract Requirements (Enclosure 1). Where and how should we reflect the efficiencies of our proposed innovations, as per the DRFP instruction that "Efficiencies should be quantified where possible"? Should we reflect these efficiencies only in our discussion of Innovations under Subfactor A, or should they additionally be quantified in our Basis of Estimate?	(a) The information in Enclosure 1 is provided to assist offerors in assessing the resources needed to satisfy year one of the SESDA III contract requirements, and may be used as a guideline for proposal pricing purposes. (b) Efficiencies of proposed innovations should be included in the Mission Suitability Section. (c) Efficiencies may be quantified in the Basis of Estimate.
48		L.13	Cost Volume 1	For pricing purposes, please provide the expected start date for the phase-in period and the contract start date.	The final RFP will provide the dates.
49		L.13 P 25 (top of page)	Cost Volume, 2. Cost Proposal Format "…may be used by (the Offeror) as a guideline for proposal pricing purposes."	Should the word "Offeror" appear in the following phrase	The sentence is updated to include the word "offeror".

50		L.13, 2 page 25 (top of page).	Cost Proposal Format: "Offerors are free to deviate from this estimate in proposing their non-management labor estimates based on their own specific approaches; however, all labor estimates shall be fully explained and supported, consistent with their detailed Mission Suitability approach and explained within the Basis of Estimate (BOE)."	Question: The RFP requires the submission of BOEs. Are the BOEs only required if you deviate from the Government's GPM as detailed in Enclosure 1?	No. BOEs are required for the offerors proposed labor, whether consistent with the Government guidance or not, in order to explain how the estimates are consistent with the offeror's Mission Suitability approach. In addition, items such as management approach, cost-estimating relationships and subcontracting, which are not addressed in Enclosure 1, should be discussed in a Basis of Estimate. See L.13 for a full description of the BOE.
51		L.13.2(b) p. 25	Element of Cost by SOW (Attachment A) Functional Work Breakdown Structure (WBS): Exhibit 2C and 2D requires providing worksheets by each WBS Level II and III by each month.	We respectfully request you to reconsider this. This will amount to preparing over 75 worksheets and information that may not be useful. Specially given the DRFP stated projection that the overall contract staffing level "*will remain essentially constant for each year of the basic and option periods*." Exhibits 2A and 2B require offerors to provide information by year and that level of detail should be sufficient for the Government's evaluation.	The Final RFP will be revised to reduce the amount of cost data to be provided by offerors.
52		L.13.2 p. 25		How recent will the data of Enclosure 1 and Enclosure 2 therein be?	The FTE information is the anticipated level for year 1 of the SESDA III contract. The rate information is current as of year 5 of SESDA II (current Contract Year 5 is July 2010 - June 2011).

53		L.13.2(d)	Basis of Estimates (BOE)	We request that the Government establish an overall page limitation for the entire BOE section instead of defining limits at the WBS level (2-pages). Staffing levels and complexities vary by each WBS (for example, requirements under SOW 3.1.1 for analysis and modeling, or under SOW 3.2.3 for computer systems management are significantly more complex than requirements under SOW 3.3.1 for proposals and scientific documentation support) and limiting BOE to 2-pages unnecessarily constrains an offerors ability to provide a comprehensive explanation of the staffing requirements.	We intend to update the final RFP to reflect a total page limitation of 80 pages for BOE's, inclusive of the Prime and all significant subcontractors.
54		L.13 Bullet 6	Cost Proposal, 2. d) Basis of Estimates (BOE): explanation of how all materials, computer services, travel, equipment, and other direct costs were estimated.	Question: If the government provided these data as non proposed cost, why is a BOE required from the contractor?	The Final RFP will be updated to remove the requirement for BOE's for non-proposed costs.
55		L.13.2(d)	This paragraph requires that "The BOEs shall address the entire potential five year period of performance for each SOW Functional WBS Level III activity (i.e., only one 2-page BOE per SOW WBS III activity addressing the full five years)." It further states that "The information provided under this section, along with audit information, will be used to assess the cost realism aspect of Mission Suitability."	We find no mention in Section M of how you will evaluate the BOEs. Will they only be used to assess the cost realism aspect of Mission Suitability?	All cost information, including the BOEs, will be assessed to determine reasonableness and cost/resource realism.

56		L.13.2(d) Enclosure 1		What is the relationship between the hours proposed by the Contractor, as reflected in the BOEs, and the Full Time Equivalents to be enumerated in the Government Full Time Equivalents (FTE) Estimate for Year One of the SESDA III Contract Requirements?	The information provided in Enclosures 1 and 2 may be used as a guideline for proposal pricing purposes. Offerors may deviate from this estimate in proposing; however, the approach utilized shall be fully explained and supported within their BOE.
57		Cost Exhibits	Ref Exhibits 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D: Footnote The exhibit footnote ** reads, "List each major subcontractor separately by name expected to exceed $5 million for each contract year". This is the subcontractors' costs if a major subcontractor	However, the form implies that all hours (prime, major subcontractor, and non-major subcontractor) to be listed together under the Direct Labor portion of the form. Question: Where should the costs due to non-major subcontractors be listed?	The term "major" subcontractor will be changed to "significant" subcontractor. The footnote on the cost charts will be revised.
58		Procurement Library/Cost Information	The Internet-based Space and Earth Science Data Analysis (SESDA III) Reference Library indicates that the reference library is under construction and that additional document(s) will be posted.	Will the additional documents to be posted include redacted NASA 533 reports for the incumbent contract? The information contained in these 533 may obviate the inherent advantage that the incumbent contractor has and help to create a more even playing field for the competition.	The Government has decided to provide Offerors average direct labor rates, FTE information by SOW element, and position description information in Enclosures 1 and 2 of the cost section.

59		Page 28 L.14(a)	In the SESDA II RFP five years ago the requirement for Past Performance contract submissions was: "An Offeror's past performance record indicates the relevant quantitative and qualitative aspects of performing services or delivering products similar in size, content, and complexity to the requirements of this acquisition. The information requested below is anticipated to be sufficient for purposes of the evaluation of past performance. However, Offerors may submit additional information at their discretion if they consider such information necessary to establish a record of relevant past performance. Refer to FAR 15.305(a)(2)(iii)." This requirement has been significantly narrowed in the current draft RFP, which now reads "Prime Offerors shall furnish the information requested below for all of your most recent contracts (completed and ongoing) for similar efforts with a minimum average annual cost/fee incurred of $5 million that your company has had within the last 5 years of the RFP release date. Indicate which contracts are most related (i.e. similar in size, content, and/or complexity) and how they are related to the proposed effort, as well as which contracts were performed by the division of your	We feel that this narrowed requirement is disadvantageous to small businesses, for two reasons: (1) the number of such contracts that Offerors are likely to have as past performance will tend to be extremely limited; and (2) such contracts will in many cases be subcontracts instead of prime contracts and thus more difficult to obtain evaluations from. We therefore suggest to the Government that the RFP requirement revert to the original wording, which is in the spirit and letter of the FAR, is more suitable to small business competition, and gives Offerors the discretion to propose past performance examples which in their own judgment are relevant.	We have considered your feedback, but given the size of this procurement, we have determined that the current language is reasonable and appropriate.

60		L.14	Section L.14 Past Performance Volume, (a) Information from the Offeror, Prime Offerors shall furnish the information requested below for all of your most recent contracts (completed and ongoing) for similar efforts with a minimum average annual cost/fee incurred of $5 million that your company has had within the last 5 years of the RFP release date.	To permit the inclusion of the broadest possible set of skills germane to NASA's space science environment we request this threshold be lowered to an average annual of $3 million.	See response to question 59.
61		L.14	Section L.14 indicates that all past performance citations must have an average annual cost/fee of $5 million. In Section M.6, it is asserted that "Content and complexity will be weighed more heavily than size in evaluating past performance relevance."	Considering the latter statement, would the government consider removing, or at least decreasing, the minimum size cost/fee standard in the case where the past performance cited is directly relevant to the work listed in the solicitation?	See response to question 59.
62		L.14	The draft letter for SESDA III indicates that 541 -- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services/541712 -- Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences on an employee-based size code of 1000 employees is the size standard. The draft SESDA III RFP is asking for $5 million average annual income contracts with an SOW detailed customer questionnaire. While small businesses have contracts of this size and larger, this may result in a situation where a small business may not be able to demonstrate its customer reviewed performance across all areas of the SOW.	We would suggest the following change: Prime Offerors shall furnish the information requested below for all of your most recent contracts (completed and ongoing) for similar efforts with a minimum average annual cost/fee incurred of $2,500,000 that your company has had within the last 5 years of the RFP release date. At least one of the contracts should have a minimum average annual income of $5 million. Indicate which contracts are most related (i.e. similar in size, content, and/or complexity) and how they are related to the proposed effort, as well as which contracts were performed by the division of your company (if applicable) that will perform the proposed contract/subcontract.	See response to question 59.

63		L.14(a) p. 28 M.6 page 47	Past Performance: requests references for "similar efforts with a minimum average annual cost/fee incurred of $5 million…"	We respectfully recommend that GSFC revise the cost threshold to an average annual cost/fee $10 million. The SESDA-II contract was awarded with a value of $221M corresponding to approximately $44M/year. A threshold of $10M/year represents a program that is ~20% the size of the contemplated SESDA-III program and thus is large enough to qualify as a similar effort. The same recommendation applies to Section M.6, page 47.	See response to question 59.
64		L.14(a) p. 29	Past Performance, third paragraph: begins with *"The offeror shall provide an estimated value and percentage of work to be performed on this contract by the prime offeror and each significant subcontractor. Indicate the primary functions (SOW, WBS, etc) to be performed by the prime offeror and each proposed significant subcontractor."*	These sentences appear to be out of place as they don't seem relevant to the Past Performance section. Please clarify.	The purpose of this sentence is to provide the Government information that will be helpful in appropriately evaluating the relevance of the specific work to be accomplished by the prime and/or significant subcontractors, as well as the amount of work to be accomplished by the prime and/or significant subcontractors. This information should be consistent with other areas of the proposal.
65		L.14(a) p. 29	Past Performance, third paragraph	We believe that the third sentence in this paragraph (beginning with "*Indicate which contracts…*") is superfluous as it duplicates text in the first paragraph under L.14(a) on p.28.	Duplicate sentence will be removed from page 28.

66		L.14(b) bottom of p. 31	instructs offerors to include written consent from significant subcontractors to allow the Government to discuss the subcontractors' past performance with the offeror.	Please confirm that these consent letters are excluded from the page limitation for the Past Performance volume.	Yes, the consent letters are excluded from the page limitation for the Past Performance volume.
67		L.14(b)	This paragraph requires the offeror to instruct each of its references to return the Past Performance Questionnaire "directly to the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center Contracting Officer."	Since the Past Performance Questionnaire in Exhibit 9 includes not only a mailing address, but also an email address and FAX number, will it be acceptable for the Government to receive these questionnaires via email? We find that many of our references prefer to email responses to these questionnaires and often do so despite our request that they use the addressed envelopes that we give them.	Electronic copies can be emailed if encrypted utilizing NASA's PKI encryption service.
68		M.4		What is the point scoring of each of the Scenarios?	Per NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) 1815.304-70(a) there is no rating or scoring below the subfactor level in evaluating proposals.

69		M.4(a) M.4.2	Weights and Scoring: Paragraph M.4(a) indicates that it will evaluate Subfactor A – Technical Approach in three ways: 1. "The Offeror's technical approach will be evaluated to assess how well it demonstrates an understanding of the depth, breadth and objectives of the requirements of the SOW as well as the techniques and procedures that will be used to satisfy these requirements in a timely and cost effective manner." 2. "The Government will evaluate the Offeror's approach for providing support in the specific technical areas identified in the Questions/Scenarios when assessing the Offeror's understanding of the requirements of the SOW." 3. "The Government will evaluate for effectiveness and efficiency the Offeror's proposed new or innovative methods, techniques or technologies related to the Statement of Work requirements."	The Weights and Scoring table at the end of M.4 indicates that the weights (points) associated with Subfactor A – Technical Approach is 400 points. Will these 400 points be equally divided between the three evaluation areas listed above? Are each of the three evaluation areas weighted identically, or is one more important than another and therefore weighted or scored with more points during the Government's evaluation?	Per NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) 1815.304-70(a) there is no rating or scoring below the subfactor level in evaluating proposals.
70		M.6 p. 47	"*Evidence of a binding teaming agreement or other contractual agreement which creates legal responsibility on the part of the significant subcontractors may be given more weight in the evaluation of significant subcontractors, in comparison to proposals that lack such agreements and/or evidence.*"	Please indicate if offerors should include copies of teaming agreements in order to provide evidence of such legally binding agreements. Please also clarify that such agreements are excluded from the page limitation of the Past Performance volume.	The final RFP will be updated to remove the guidance regarding evidence of teaming agreements.
	SOW				

71		Draft SOW Paragraph 3	"*Appropriate use of innovations, wherever possible, is encouraged*".	This statement seems out of place for a SOW in a contract. Recommend deleting it.	Reference will be deleted.
72		Draft SOW Page 8		The ODIN contract no longer exists. The replacement contract is called Agency Consolidated End-User Services, or ACES.	Reference to ODIN will be deleted and replaced with "agency-wide desktop IT support contractor"
73		Draft SOW Section 3.1.6 Science data users and utilization support	The section is titled "Science data users and utilization support," and the general introductory sentence mentions support for a range of science data systems. However, the following detailed user support requirements paragraph talks about classes and training, image processing and graphics packages, visiting scientist programs and so forth, but makes no mention of actually supporting science data users, which the section title implies is a main focus.	Would the Government please be more specific about how it expects the contractor to support science data users?	Pertinent part of the SOW (3.1.6) will be revised.
74		Draft SOW Section 3.1.6 Science data users and utilization support	The detailed science utilization support requirements paragraph talks about supporting the multiple areas of Homeland Security, Air Quality, Disasters, Agriculture Efficiency, Energy, Coastal Zone management, Water, Public Health, Aviation Safety, Ecological forecasting, and Carbon management, however the Agency has identified only eight focus areas through the Applied Sciences Program (Agriculture, Air Quality, Climate, Ecological Forecasting, Natural Disasters, Public Health, Water Resources and Weather).	Would the Government please confirm the specific areas for societal benefit the science utilization effort is to support?	See revised SOW 3.1.6.

75		Draft SOW		Will the NASA Center for Climate Simulation (NCCS) be directly supported by SESDA?"	At this time SESDA does not support NCCS operations, however, minimal NCCS support is anticipated, as indicated in WAP # 606.0-012-01 in Attachment B, SOW Addendum.
	Surveillance Plan				
76		Surveillance Plan	The Government Surveillance Plan included with the DRFP starts out with the words "Under performance-based contracts, such as this one…".	There seem to be no provisions in the anticipated SESDA-III CPFF contract for incentivizing contractor performance. Please explain in what way(s) the SESDA-III contract will be performance-based.	SESDA III is considered to be a performance based contract since it is structured around the purpose and outcome desired as opposed to the process by which the work is to be performed. In addition, the contract will be evaluated annually using NF1680 Evaluation of Performance. Also, prior to exercising the option, the Contracting Officer must determine, among other things, that the exercise of the option is the most advantageous method of fulfilling the Government's need, price and other factors considered, per FAR 17.207(c).