



## What is a Project RFP?

An RFP (Request for Proposals) is issued by the project manager or designer to prospective bidders on a construction project. Recipients of the RFP are asked to deliver proposals that will become the basis of the contract documents. The RFP specifies the scope of work to be performed, the bidding process to be followed, expected contract terms and format, and information needed by the Owner to evaluate the bidder's proposal.

A well-crafted RFP lays the foundation for a bidding process in which all respondents are provided the same level of information, bid the same project, generate bids that are responsive to the scope of work, and deliver documents that are reliable and easy to evaluate.

Typically, the RFP includes the following components:

- **Project Description** – a textual narrative of the work to be performed.
- **Scope of Work** – a detailed definition of work elements adequate for an estimator to bid the project accurately. Available drawings and specifications should be conveniently available to bidders.
- **Bid Package**
  - **Bid Form** – this is a checklist of materials to be provided by all bidders. It usually specifies required business information (licenses, insurance coverage, bonding capacity, references, etc.) By signing this form, bidders indicate awareness of the project's scope and the contract's terms and conditions.
  - **RFI Procedure** – how the bidder is to submit RFIs (Requests for Information) to obtain clarification required to bid. The process should specify that all bidders will receive copies of all RFIs and their responses.
  - **Bidding Instructions** – how the bid should be constructed, contacts for Requests for Information (RFIs), bid format, document specifications.
  - **Pre-bid site visit** – the date and time of a project walk-through, which may be mandatory or elective.
  - **Background Information** – financial information, references, relevant experience list, staff résumés, company brochures and flyers, and any other information that will assist in evaluating the bidder.
  - **Bid Negotiation Process** – if desired, the Owner may choose a round of post-bid negotiation to resolve issues identified in the bids themselves.
  - **Example Contract** – Frequently an AIA document, it should address insurance, exclusions, etc.
  - **Proposed Schedule**
  - **Key milestones**
  - **Deliverables**
  - **Expected Construction Documents** – a statement of the drawings, specifications, and other documents the winning bidder will be expected to produce.

The more thorough the RFP, the likelier bids will be competitive. Poorly constructed RFPs force bidders to build in latitude for unresolved variables. Tightly grouped bids indicate a well-structured RFP.