

UC IRVINE

DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTING PROCESS

In the design-build contracting mode UC Irvine contracts with a single entity (the design-build team) to **design and build** capital projects. The solicitation of proposals for design-build projects includes the following:

- 1) A program setting forth the project scope and the size, type, and desired design characteristics of the building and site.
- 2) A set of performance specifications (*Campus Standards and Design Criteria*) establishing the quality of materials, equipment, and workmanship.
- 3) A Maximum Acceptance Cost (referred to as the “MAC”) which establishes the maximum cost that the University has available to contract for the project, as required by the California Public Contract Code.
- 4) Architectural concept drawings illustrating the University’s vision for the project.
- 5) A method for evaluating and scoring proposals on the basis of specific criteria established in the Request for Proposal documents. Such criteria typically include architectural, structural, civil and landscape design, project program compliance, electrical, plumbing and HVAC design, project work plan, mitigation of subsurface risks, LEED certification, outline specifications, ability to meet and understand program requirements, etc.

The design-build contracting program at UC Irvine has several distinguishing features not found in the traditional design-bid-build solicitation process that awards a contract to the lowest bidder:

- 1) **DESIGN TEAM PREQUALIFICATION**. Only pre-qualified design-build teams are allowed to submit proposals. Each team is required to submit its qualifications and answer a series of questions in the UC Irvine pre-qualification package. The responses are then scored by a technical team from UC Irvine and only those teams scoring the points required to prequalify are invited for team interviews. Each team interviewed is also scored and the teams meeting the published prequalification requirements receive letters that they are deemed by UC Irvine as “pre-qualified.” This process limits the field to those teams that have similar project experience, demonstrated ability to perform, and a strong financial standing.
- 2) **SUBCONTRACTOR PREQUALIFICATION**. UC Irvine also typically pre-qualifies subcontractors in the major trades so that only firms with a history of good performance and strong financial standing can be considered for use by the pre-qualified design builders.
- 3) **STIPENDS**. The University pays a stipend to unsuccessful proposers that submit responsive proposals. This encourages each team’s best efforts and provides consideration as partial compensation for the University’s ownership of each team’s design ideas.
- 4) **ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS**. Once the solicitation process is underway, the University schedules a series of confidential one-on-one meetings with each design-build team to facilitate University feedback on their design approach, program concerns, suggestions, requests for clarifications, design/program innovations, value engineering, etc. The

University does not provide any “coaching” but does provide feedback on the design team’s questions and proposed solutions. The process is intended to allow the design-build team the opportunity to offer proprietary solutions and align their proposal with the University’s expectations. Nothing discussed in the one-on-one meetings changes the requirements in the proposal documents. All questions of a non-proprietary nature are submitted as RFIs and all responses are issued in the form of an addendum to the bid documents.

- 5) **BLIND EVALUATIONS.** To ensure impartiality in the proposal evaluation and scoring process, proposals are submitted “blind” without any markings or indication of the design-builder’s identity. Each team is assigned an identification number known only to the assigned contract administrator. Each initial technical submittal is “scrubbed” by the Contract Administration group to remove any markings or references that may have been inadvertently included in the proposal submittals.
- 6) **ORAL PRESENTATION & AWARD.** Technical proposals are evaluated by a University panel and a technical score is awarded to each proposer. Following the technical evaluation, each team makes a short oral presentation of its project approach and proposal highlights, followed by a question and answer session to allow the technical evaluation team to clarify and proposal issues. After the cost proposals are publicly opened, the proposer with the lowest price per technical point who is responsive to the project requirements is awarded the contract.
- 7) **BAFO.** If none of the proposers submits an acceptable proposal, the University can enter into a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) process. A schedule is developed and discussions are held with each responsive proposing team following submittal of their first technical and price proposals. Once the issues are resolved with respect to the project requirements and available funding, the design build teams submit their BAFO technical and price proposals. The University then reconvenes the technical evaluation team and the proposals are scored. The BAFO price proposals are publicly opened and the team with the lowest price per technical point who is responsive to the project requirements is awarded the contract.

