

## Writing an Effective Statement of Work (SOW)

Prepared by Detra Robinson for the  
EMBLEM Project Meeting  
Research Project Management Track  
September 17-20, 2012  
Mwanza, Tanzania



## Learning Objectives for EMBLEM Staff

- Know the importance of the SOW for a project
- Become familiar with terminology used in procurement documents in the US
- Know the components of an ideal SOW
- Know that modifications to an SOW contained with a contract are not easily done

2

## What is a Statement of Work?

- The SOW is a formal, written document that -
  - Contains project background, a schedule for deliverables, and staff roles to complete the work products
  - Describes work required to complete a specific project
  - Is agreed upon by all parties involved, as indicated by signatures [in the contract]

3

## Statement vs. Scope of Work



The **Statement of Work (SOW)** summarizes the project's purpose and desired results. Included in the SOW is a listing of project milestones, deliverables, work to be done, and the staff qualifications of those responsible for the work.



The **Scope of Work** is a section of the SOW that describes the discrete tasks of the project, describing measurable outcomes that must be produced as stated in the contract.

4

## Other Important Terminology

Deliverables	Sponsor	RFP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documents or other events to be 'delivered' or submitted to the project sponsor as outlined in the contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The agency funding the project, and persons named to make key decisions for the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Request for Proposal is a procurement document used to solicit proposals from prospective companies</li> </ul>

5

## An Effective SOW

- To be effective, the SOW must contain:
  - An appropriate level of detail;
  - The duration of work involved;
  - What the deliverables are; and
  - Sufficient content describing what criteria are acceptable.

6

## Contents of the SOW

- Ideally, the SOW contains:
  1. Introduction and background
  2. Scope of work
  3. Performance period
  4. Place of performance
  5. Work requirements
  6. Schedule of deliverables
  7. Acceptance Criteria
  8. Other requirements

7

## Writing SOW Contents (1/3)

### Background/ Introduction

- Include a general description of the project and what is to be gained by the work.
- Highlight the subject matter, and other work that may have contributed to the objectives.
- Include the background necessary for bidding organizations and vendors.

### Scope of Work

- Describe the specific deliverables and tasks needed to complete the project.
- Outline what is, and what is not included in the scope of the project.

8

## SOW Contents (2/3)

### Performance Period

- Define the time period over which the project will occur since time is a variable in the project's cost.

### Place of Performance

- Describe where the work will be performed.
- Outline any equipment and work space that is acceptable.

### Work Required

- Describe the actual tasks required for the project in order to ensure its successful completion.
- Every effort should be made to make this section as detailed as possible.

9

## SOW Contents (3/3)

### Schedule/ Milestones

- List the product and the date due to the sponsor.
- These products/dates should be consistent with what was provided in the Request for Proposal (RFP).

### Acceptance Criteria

- Define the process of how the sponsor will accept the deliverables, which is made understandable to both parties.

### Other Requirements

- Include any special requirements needed to ensure the success of the project, such as certifications and any training requirements for staff.

10

## Example Work Requirements

1. Provide access to medical records of consenting patients to obtain data required by the study.
2. Maintain IRB approvals from hospital to conduct EMBLEM [study].
3. Process biospecimen samples collected in hospital, health centers, and villages according to the established procedures [for EMBLEM].
4. Store processed samples.
5. Submit invoices to WESTAT in a timely manner.
6. Ship samples according to schedule established by EMBLEM [principals].
7. Assist in obtaining permissions and documents that may be required for [shipment] of samples to the US.
8. Participate as a member of the EMBLEM Study Steering Committee.
9. Provide secure parking area for study vehicles.
10. Allow hospital staff to participate in EMBLEM-related activities which may be carried out outside the hospital [or country].

11

## Modifications to the SOW

- At contract award, contractors should request a meeting with the sponsor to clarify the written scope statements
- Proposed modifications should be discussed with the team leaders to review implications
- The request for change should be based on documentation, with data easy to quantify
- Modifications to the SOW have impact on the project costs and schedule, and must be approved by the sponsor's contracting officer

12

## Summary

- The Statement of Work (SOW) has several parts, and is included with a signed contract from the project sponsor
- The Scope of Work should describe what is, and what is not a part of the contracted work
- Changes to the SOW after project work has begun are generally not easily done

13

## Questions and Comments



14