

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

for technical quality, and 200 for price. Price includes fees and all non-fee expenses. [In contrast CIDA counts only fees – this results in a more level playing field between international and local firms.] In a particular case, the firm was almost 100 points ahead on technical quality and still lost on cost. The firm believes that the ADB approach is better – the competition is on technical quality, and price is negotiated with the best technical bidder. [9]

- SMEs find it difficult to follow a successful strategy to obtain short listings. Being allowed only 3 short listings each year at ADB is a constraint for a small company. A firm could prepare three proposals and get no work. The firm has a specialist subsidiary in accounting and performance measurement, separately incorporated, which enables it to get 6 short listings a year. Large companies with many subsidiaries may have almost unlimited short-listing possibilities. [9]
- *"The ADB rules for evaluating proposals are a problem. They award 10% bonus points for a full time employee who has been at least one year with the firm for the Team Leader positions and they award an additional 5% for all other team members if they are full time. This puts us at a huge disadvantage because we only work internationally. For firms that have domestic work, they can keep staff on full time. We have to wait for the IFI or other donor to decide to proceed. Sometimes they move at the breakneck speed of three years from starting discussions with us to actually implementing. So we have only half a dozen full time people in the field and about 30 here in Ottawa. The other people in the field are what we call associates who get paid only when they work on projects."* [9]
- The ADB "cherry picks". That is, in negotiating with the winning contractor the Bank staff may ask the contractor to drop some proposed staff and to add others who were suggested by other proposals. Since proposals are not paid for, this practice raises some ethical issues as well as proposal strategy issues. [10]
- The ADB technical assistance jobs are too small to be interesting to the firm. Generally they want only one or two experts. [Sic] [11]
- "Our main competition is the Australians – they can tap into AusAid funds more easily than we can CIDA." [30]
- The IFI task managers are "harder to read" than they used to be – less forthcoming and less willing to answer questions especially questions about topics that are covered on the Bank's web site. [38]
- Canadian scholars like international projects, but on their terms. They are often reluctant to make the sort of sacrifices consultants make to be available when the client wishes, and to work for extended periods in remote locations. [42]