

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

- The winning strategy is different at the ADB and the WB because the first prefers multi-consultant contracts with a single firm, while the second prefers to put together teams itself with consultants from various firms. "The World Bank is an old boys club." [22]
- Registration with the IFIs is necessary but does not in itself generate work. [25]
- The firm's win rate is about 50%. The firm is reluctant to bid unless it believes it is one of the top two firms in the short-list of five. [28]
- The firm likes to have the lead in a joint venture, or alternatively to be clearly a minor partner - 50/50 ventures do not work. [28]
- Having the "*academic credibility*" to win IFI technical assistance work[29]
- For anything to do with finance connections to New York are essential to credibility – the clients would like to get New York capabilities at Canadian rates. Canadian professional fees are a bargain compared with the large US firms. [29]
- Not wasting opportunities – "*we get only three short-listings a year so we look for the big ones - \$us900,000 or more*". [30]
- "Batting average" = 1 in 5 proposals successful.
- Careful selection of work on which to bid and then, once short-listed, high investment in an excellent proposal. A proposal can occupy three people for a month and involve \$10,000 in other expenses such as travel to the country. Having people "on the ground" can be a major factor. [31]
- Being able to "*bring something of interest to the table*" not just arriving to ask "*what's coming up*". [37]
- Offering solutions, not just general capabilities. ["*Most Canadian consultants are not leading edge.*"] [37]
- Some general advantages of Canadian firms are a low dollar, a generally attractive culture and easy-going way of doing business, and fluency in English. European competitors submit their proposals and resumes in English for IFI work, but their staff are often not truly fluent enough to work in English. Often the client's only foreign language is English. [37]
- Willingness to learn the IFI process [38]

The Director perceives the following factors to be important to success:

- Focusing on a limited field in terms of topic and expertise, but pursuing opportunities