TReX/Industry Panel Overview Minutes

**Location:** Program Executive Office Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI), Building PIII, Room #321  
**Date:** 13 January 2020  
**Start Time:** 1300  
**End Time:** 1430

**Panel Members:**  
Deputy PEO STRI, Project Manager Soldier Training, Army Contracting Command – Orlando (ACC-O), National Security Technology Accelerator (NSTXL), and 11 Industry Partners.

The industry panel event opened with remarks by the Deputy PEO, followed by the moderator discussing the rules of engagement and agenda. The agenda consisted of five topic areas, with time allocated for discussion in each area.

**Focus / Intent of Other Transaction (OT) Authority: (15 minutes)**

- Industry wants to understand how to facilitate rapid scope revisions through NSTXL.
- Vendors have the perception of scope creep, which in turn increases financial risk from change in requirements direction due to Firm Fixed Price structure.
- Funding information – Provide both overall funding profile as well as specific Request for Solutions (RFS) funding.

- **What is working well**  
  - OT process allows for ability to get in front of stakeholders/users more often.  
  - Industry stated that collaborative relationships with stakeholders allow for costs and scope changes to work more smoothly.

- **Areas to improve**  
  - Getting access to technical data to improve product demonstrations and quality of proposals. Ensure vendors can access data.  
  - Provide information and data earlier… “if you aren’t ready when the RFS hits, you are already behind.”  
  - Better define and clarify true scope of the effort.  
  - Provide point of contacts for requirements owners to facilitate vendor/user communication.

**De-briefs & Industry Days: (15 minutes)**

- Requested industry be provided a decision memorandum explaining the selection process.
• If there is an underlying tech platform, demonstrations would promote competition and better proposals.
• Industry states delays in receiving answers to questions may impact industry’s solutions.

• **What is working well**
  o Industry days help vendors understand requirements; value added.

• **Areas to improve**
  o Provide a more detailed agenda and timeline for industry days.
  o Provide more detailed feedback in debriefs to help industry understand shortfalls in their solutions; looking for lessons learned.
    ▪ ACC-O is looking to expand debrief process and add face-to-face meetings.
    ▪ ACC-O is reviewing the selection process; balancing act between ensuring vendors’ proprietary information isn’t shared with non-awarded bidders; issues with resources (time).

**Selection Methodologies: (15 minutes)**

• Industry stated to take a close look at RFS verbiage to ensure it is clear when specifying requirements. Examples cited include language like Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) vs “outside the box”; open architecture vs open source; data rights vs intellectual property.

• **What is working well**
  o OT process is working well; ability to have dialogue with customers during industry days.
  o Improved process on selection methodologies has aided selection process.
  o Overall, RFS’s through the OT process are less ambiguous as compared to traditional FAR-based Request for Proposals.

• **Areas to improve**
  o Perception that vendors with mature technology solutions are selected over vendors introducing new innovative solutions. Language in RFS leads industry to believe that the Government is more focused on readily available/COTS solutions.

**Prototype to Production: (15 minutes)**

• ACC-O asked: Has anyone not bid on something because the production side steered you away?
  o Industry replied that the cost of the proposal might be too high, especially for the smaller businesses.
Industry replied that the decision criteria on the path to production needs to be more clearly defined.

- **What is working well**
  - Tolerance for learning from failures, learning from mistakes.

- **Areas to improve**
  - Specify the available budget.

**Q & A: (10 minutes)**

- Normally don’t see industry days for smaller proposals; would be helpful to have WebEx sessions to answer questions/answers.
- Recommendation – Improve accuracy and timeliness of NSTXL website.
- Help industry determine the scale/scope of efforts; higher risk due to inability to gauge/determine complexity of the effort.

**Closing Remarks:**

**Closing comments from Deputy PEO:**

- The Deputy PEO injected a rhetorical question as he was leaving – Asked industry to think about how the Government can reduce costs on integration, while still getting innovation and increased best of breed technology?

**Closing comments from PM Soldier Training:**

- These events are important to BG Sloane to increase learning.
- Thanks to the group for their participation.

**Closing comments from ACC – O Division Chief:**

- Lots of commonalities from last panel; will continue to work on common threads.

**Closing comments from NSTXL:**

- None.

From these industry panel minutes, the team has extracted actionable items that are being worked internally to resolution and we will keep the TReX community consortium members informed on that progress via monthly PALT sessions, the series of TReX industry panel sessions, as well as postings on the NSTXL website and other informing opportunities.