



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
January 20, 2022**

**PERIOD OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION ENDS:
February 10, 2022**

ABOUT PROPOSALS. The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (hereafter “the Commission”) invites submission of proposals to provide a concise, one-time unclassified report on the demographics of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) and personnel challenges associated with PLA recruitment and retention.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION. The Commission was established by Congress in 2000 to monitor and report to Congress on the national security implications of the bilateral trade and economic relationship between the United States and the People’s Republic of China. Further details about the Commission are available on its website at: www.uscc.gov.

The Commission solicits this research pursuant to its Congressional mandate (contained in P.L. 113-291, Section 1259B), which states, “The Commission ... shall investigate and report ... on...”

(E) The military plans, strategy and doctrine of the People’s Republic of China, the structure and organization of the People’s Republic of China military, the decision-making process of the People’s Republic of China military, the interaction between the civilian and military leadership in the People’s Republic of China, the development and promotion process for leaders in the People’s Republic of China military, deployments of the People’s Republic of China military, resources available to the People’s Republic of China military (including the development and execution of budgets and the allocation of funds), force modernization objectives and trends for the People’s Republic of China military, and the implications of such objectives and trends for the national security of the United States.

This report’s key research requirements are:

1. **What do Chinese leaders assess to be the most significant shortfalls in PLA personnel quality?** How serious do they believe these shortfalls are, and how do they impact Chinese leaders’ confidence in the PLA services’ ability to execute their missions? Do Chinese leaders perceive variation in personnel quality between the PLA Army, PLA Navy, PLA Air Force, and other services?

2. **What initiatives has the PLA undertaken to address its personnel challenges, particularly since the 2015 military reorganization?** What are the key demographic challenges the PLA's initiatives have sought to address? Where have the PLA's recruitment and retention efforts fallen short? Assess the extent to which the different PLA services have met their goals for recruiting college graduates.
3. **What types of education or expertise does the PLA most prize in its recruits, and how successfully is it recruiting Chinese citizens with that background?** Describe how officer accession in the PLA occurs via military academies compared with military programs at civilian universities and other non-military institutions. Are certain academic or industrial institutions key pipelines for the PLA's recruitment of high-quality personnel? What factors make PLA personnel with prized experience and expertise most likely to leave the force?
4. **Describe the hybrid conscription-volunteer system the PLA services use to recruit enlisted personnel.** What portion of PLA servicemembers are conscripted into compulsory service, as opposed to voluntarily recruited? How well are the PLA services able to retain their recruits? Are retention rates higher or lower for servicemembers with backgrounds in targeted areas of expertise?
5. **How do personnel issues affect the PLA services' recruitment, retention, morale, and combat readiness?** Please address issues such as compensation, housing availability, and marriage restrictions. What is the effect of China's urban-rural divide on the PLA services' recruitment efforts? What is known about the socioeconomic background of the PLA services' officer corps and enlisted personnel?
6. **What is the structure and impact of the PLA's political commissar system on personnel issues?** What is the role of political work in the PLA, and how do political commissars identify and address personnel challenges? How do the requirements of political work affect the PLA's development of warfighting capabilities, and how do these requirements influence officer promotion in the PLA?

The report should include an **executive summary** of the report's key findings; a list of **recommendations for Congress**; a **brief overview of the sources and analytic methodology used for the report**; and a **brief explanation of the scope and limitations of the report**.

Additional Requirements:

1. Prior to the award of any contract, the contractor must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM).

2. Once the Commission selects a contractor for this project, and a contract is signed, public notice of this may be made on the Commission's website.
3. The Commission's goal is to have a report prepared for review in a timely fashion. In ordinary circumstances, once the Commission selects a contractor and a contract is signed, a draft report—not to exceed 50 pages of text—must be submitted to the Commission for review no later than 60 calendar days from the date the contract is signed. The Commission will then endeavor to provide comments and requests for adjustments within 20 days; subsequently, the final report must be submitted within 20 days of formal receipt of the Commission's comments. The Commission recognizes, under certain circumstances, a contractor may wish to have more time to prepare the first draft of the report under the contract. The contractor, in their contract proposal, should stipulate the time frame for submission of the draft report. It is to be understood; however, that time is of the essence in completing research contracts for the Commission.
4. As work on the report progresses, the Commission's Research Director shall act as the Commission's representative in monitoring the progress, quality, and responsiveness of the report to the major issues of concern identified in this Request for Proposals (RFP). The Research Director shall, on request to the contractor, be entitled to informal briefings on the status of the research work and to readings of the outline and draft in progress.
5. The report shall be free of typographical errors and conform to the Chicago Manual of Style. Upon receipt of all drafts, the Commission will inspect the document for typographical errors and deviations from the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines. At the discretion of the Commission, if a draft contains excessive deficiencies, the Commission will return the draft to the contractor and request the contractor cure the draft of deficiencies within five (5) working days (not counting weekends and Federal holidays). Upon resubmission of the draft by the contractor to the Commission, should deficiencies remain, the Commission, at its discretion, will submit the draft to its copyeditor for correction, the cost of which (\$45.00 per hour) will be deducted from the final cost of the contract. The contract shall be subject to termination if the Commission deems that the work is of unsatisfactory quality.
6. At the Commission's discretion, the report procured via this RFP may be posted on the Commission's website.
7. Each organization or individual responding to this request must warrant they will perform this work solely for the Commission, and the resulting report will not be shared with other parties without the prior written consent of the Commission.
8. The Commission expects contractors to identify all personnel working on the contract, and that there will not be any delegation of responsibilities to other parties without prior written approval of the Commission.

9. At the discretion and request of the Commission, the contractor shall, within a year after publication of the report, agree to participate in up to two (2) separate briefings, and up to one (1) public hearing, held by the Commission, of up to two (2) hours each in the Washington, DC area, supported by at least one (1) individual affiliated with the contractor identified as “key personnel.” This could include, but not necessarily be limited to, briefing the content of the research to Commissioners and Commission staff, appearing as witnesses at a public hearing held by the Commission, and briefing the content of the research to Members of Congress and/or their staff. No additional remuneration will be provided to the contractor for these briefings or a hearing. The Commission will make a good faith effort to schedule briefings and a hearing at times that are subject to mutual agreement.

Primary Selection Criteria:

1. The Commission will determine which organization or individual responding to this request will be awarded the contract based on a comprehensive “best value” analysis of the proposals received, to include costs, technical value, and ability to complete the work satisfactorily and on time, and past performance with the Commission, if applicable.
2. The primary weighting criterion in selection shall be the assessed qualifications and ability of an organization or individual to address the fundamental research points enunciated above (“key research requirements”).
3. The cost and amount of time necessary to complete the report will also be considered as criteria in the selection process.
4. The Commission is a legislative advisory committee not subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).

Proposal submissions should include:

1. A statement of the applicant’s relevant qualifications to satisfy the terms of this RFP. Curricula vitae for personnel intended to work on the project may be included in a separate attachment.
2. Identification of the principal researchers who will be responsible for the preparation of the report. It is understood that the designation of the researchers is a critical element of the proposal, and any changes regarding which individuals will be involved in the report’s preparation must be approved by the Commission in advance and in writing.
3. A description of the research methodology the applicant proposes to employ. In describing methodology, the submission should provide detailed descriptions of the sources and methods that will be used to research the report’s topic and the extent to which Chinese language sources, if any, and other primary materials will be used.

4. A list of any entities for whom you have conducted research or provided consulting services in the past. The Commission understands you may be limited in providing such information by confidentiality agreements.
5. The applicant's responses to FAR 52.204-24, Representation Regarding Certain Telecommunications and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (October 2020) available at: https://www.acquisition.gov/far/52.204-24#FAR_52_204_24 and to FAR 52.204-26, Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services—Representation (October 2020) available at: https://www.acquisition.gov/far/52.204-26#FAR_52_204_26.
6. An estimate of the time the applicant will need to complete the required work.
7. The price the applicant will charge to the Commission to complete the work set forth in this RFP.
8. The proposal shall not exceed eight (8) pages and may be shorter.

Organizations and individuals wishing to submit a proposal in response to this RFP must ensure that the response arrives at the location noted below by **5:30 p.m. (ET) on February 10, 2022**, or it will not be accepted or considered.

Electronic submissions are acceptable. Email attachments should not exceed 5 MB.

Proposals, as well as inquiries or any other correspondence related to this matter, should be directed to:

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