

QBS Board of Directors

Structural Engineers Association of Idaho

Darren Truchot
darren.truchot@bhengineers.com
www.seaidaho.org

Idaho Society of Professional Engineers Joe Canning

jdcanning@centurion.com

American Council of Engineering Companies of Idaho

Tim Haener, P.E. tjh@jub.com
www.acecofidaho.org

Local Highway Technical Assistance Council

Wayne Herbel, M.S.C.E., P.E.
wherbel@lhtac.org
www.lhtac.org

Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors

Joe Jones, L.S.
joe@sawthoothls.com
idahosppls.com

American Society of Landscape Architects, Id-Mt Chapter

Jay Gibbons
gibbons@ssbbgo.com
idmtasl.org

American Institute of Architects

Jared Schmidt jared@lcarch.com
www.aiaidaho.com

Association of Idaho Cities Keith Watts, CPPB kwatts@meridiancity.org www.idahocities.org

Construction Managers

Mike Berard mberard@kreizenbeck.com
www.idahoagc.org

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Qualification Based Selection

A Guide for Idaho Communities

www.idahoqbs.com

208-321-1502



Qualification Based Selection Council

**999 West Main Street
Suite 100-30 Boise ID 83702**

**Phone: 208.321.1502
Email: facilitator@idahoqbs.com
www.idahoqbs.com**

What is QBS?



Qualification Based Selection, or QBS, offers many benefits to governmental entities in selecting outside professional services for needs that require architects, engineers, surveyors, landscape architects, land surveyors and construction managers. It offers a way of obtaining the most qualified professional firm for the project, while still allowing for negotiation of fees within a project's budget.

Professional service providers play a critical role in determining the quality, functionality and operational costs of these facilities making choosing a design firm with the ideal combination of attitude, skills and experience probably the single most important factor in determining a project's overall success and long term cost. It is in the best interest of the public to hire these professionals based on qualifications and then negotiate a fair price for the services to be rendered.

Idaho's local governments spend several million dollars of taxpayers' money each year to develop capital facilities and infrastructure. By utilizing QBS, entities can ensure cost effectiveness, reduce change orders, improve construction quality, and encourage innovation.

QBS—A Smart Alternative to Competitive Bidding

Public section decision makers who have never heard of qualifications based selection (QBS) often ask, "We buy everything else from the lowest bidder, so why shouldn't we choose an architect, engineer, or other professional consultant by low bid, too?" The answer is that most professionals deal in creativity, not commodities. Hiring a professional service provider and determining a fair value of his or her work, is a different situation than pricing computers, vehicles, or janitorial services. When hiring a professional service provider, however, the client is essentially buying solutions to problems that will only be clearly defined or discovered as the design process moves forward.

It is the Law!

For public agencies and political subdivisions, legal requirements regarding the procurement of these important professional services can be found in Idaho Code §67-2320 Professional Service Contracts with Design Professionals, Construction Managers and Professional Land Surveyors and the Federal Brooks Act. This process is known as "Qualifications Based Selection" or QBS.

The specific requirements of § 67-2320 and the Federal Brooks Act (QBS Selection) are mandatory for public agencies and political subdivisions for procurement of ANY contract with Design Professionals (engineers, architects, and landscape architects), Construction Managers and Professional Land Surveyors.

QBS is a simple and competitive process that matches the right design professional service provider to your project.



Where Can I Get More Information and Assistance?

The QBS Facilitator Council is a group of professional design organizations that have joined together to assist governmental entities in complying with the state law (Idaho Code 67-2320) concerning the selection of design professionals based upon qualifications.

The QBS Council can provide you with more information on QBS, as well as any assistance you might need to utilize the process in your agency.

We also can provide the following services at no cost to the public agency:

- Review of your Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for compliance
 - Training
 - A volunteer design professional to sit on your selection panel.
 - AND more!



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