



TM

2022 Cronin Submission Booklet

The Cronin Club

George Cronin Massachusetts 1947	Charles Sullivan New Jersey 1964	Stanley Hanna Maryland 1981	Dugan Petty Alaska 1998	Dean Stotler Delaware 2013-2014
F. Carl Anderson Pennsylvania 1948	Alan Vessey Minnesota 1965	Hugh Carleton Louisiana 1982	David Gragan Texas July-Sept 1999	Deborah Damore Vermont 2015
Franklyn Adams Rhode Island 1949	Francis Brooks Nevada 1966	James Christiansen Utah 1983	Jan Hamik Wisconsin 2000	Paul Mash Utah Jan-March 2016
P.T. Peterson Minnesota 1950	William Finnegan Connecticut 1967	John Spath New York 1984	Joyce Murphy Missouri Sept 2000-May 2001	Larry Maxwell New Mexico April 2016-2018
Frank Free Vermont 1951	Hugh White South Carolina 1968	Jack Pitzer Iowa 1985	Pat Kohler Washington May-Dec 2001	Michael Jones Alabama 2018
William Stevenson Minnesota 1952	John Ayers Washington 1969	Giulio Mazzone New Jersey 1985-1986	Richard Thompson Maine Jan-Mar 2002	Lisa Eason Georgia 2019
Blaine Yoder Nebraska 1953	Thomas Blanco Illinois 1970	Howard White, Jr. Alabama 1987	Denise Lea Louisiana Mar 2002-Sept 2003	George Schutter District of Columbia 2020
John Bush Ohio 1954	John Short Wisconsin 1971	Thomas M. Bostick Georgia 1988	George Street Tennessee 2003-2004	Rosalyn Ingram Florida 2021
J. Stanley Bien Michigan 1955	Ramon Damerell Oregon 1972	Edward J. Erxleben Arkansas 1989	John Adler Arizona 2004-2005	Delbert H. Singleton South Carolina 2022
C.L. Magnuson Connecticut 1956	Frank Pennoni Michigan 1972-73	Wayne A. Casper Arizona 1990	Ellen Phillips Massachusetts 2005-2006	
Charles Byrley Kentucky 1957	Willis Holding, Jr. North Carolina 1974	Robert J. Link Alaska 1990-1991	Voight Shealy South Carolina 2006-2007	
Ira Baker Oklahoma 1958	Gerald Geer Washington 1975	William S. Warstler Michigan 1992	Jeff Holden South Dakota 2007-2008	
John Dyer Maine 1959	Herman Crystal New Jersey 1976	Paula Moskowitz New York 1993	Vern Jones Alaska 2008-2009	
Lacy Wilkinson Colorado 1960	John Fisher, Jr. Tennessee 1977	N. Kent Rose Alabama 1994	Dianne Lancaster Oregon 2009-2010	
Franklin Pierce Tennessee 1961	John Hittinger Florida 1978	Douglas G. Richins Utah 1995	Greg Smith Nevada 2010-2011	
E. Guy Martin Louisiana 1962	Homer Forester Texas 1979	Richard B. Thompson Maine 1996	Ron Bell Virginia 2011-2012	
Henry Knouft Kansas 1963	E.R. (Bud) Roon Colorado 1980	Donald G. Buffum Mississippi 1997	Carol Wilson Connecticut 2012-2013	

Past Gold Cronin Winners

2021 – Wisconsin
Interagency, Data-Driven Collaboration: Wisconsin's Innovative Approach to Specification Development

2020 – None Selected

2019 – Michigan
Circumventing Risk with Contract Management

2018 – Alaska
Continuous Improvement in Statewide Procurement

2017 – Utah
ValuePoint Cloud Solutions Procurement

2016 – Tennessee
Radio Equipment and Services

2015 – Tennessee
Tourist Development – Marketing and Advertising

2014 – Virginia
eVA Mobile Apps

2013 – Mississippi
Driving Efficiency into Business Operations

2012 – Oregon
Direct Dealership Price Agreements

2011 – Oregon
Nationwide Lodging Services

2010 – Minnesota & Wisconsin
Partnership Initiative

2009 – Oregon
Information Technology Managed Service Provider for Hourly and Project-Based Services

2008 – Ohio
Multi-State Procurement of Unique Services

2007 – Minnesota
Spend Analysis System

2006 – New York
Hazardous Incident Response Equipment (HIRE)

2006 – Hawaii (IT)
Compliance Express Program

2005 – Massachusetts (Classic)
Envirocalc: Environmental Benefits & Energy Cost Savings Calculator for Purchasers

2005 – Washington (IT)
WEBS: Washington Electronic Business Solution

2004 – Illinois (Classic)
Transformation of Procurement Performance

2004 – Arizona (IT)
SPIRIT: Automated eProcurement System

2003 – Connecticut (Classic)
Weekly Information Newsletter

2003 – Virginia (IT)
eVA Electronic Procurement Solution

2002 – Alaska
Long Distance Learning

2001 – Idaho
Purchasing Modernization Initiative

2000 – Utah
Vehicle Purchase Program

1999 – Ohio
Natural Gas Purchasing Program

1998 – Missouri
PC Prime Vendor Contract

1997 – Wisconsin
Advantis Credit Bureau Access Program

1996 – North Carolina
Micro-Computer & Peripherals Contract as Developed & Managed on the Internet

1995 – 1994
None Selected

1993 – Minnesota
Document Management System

1992 – Oregon
Vendor Information Program

1991 – Arizona
Contract for Abatement of Underground Storage Tanks

1990 – New York
Contract for Electronic Ballasts

1989 – Missouri
Pharmacy Service Contract for Correctional Facilities

1988 – Kansas
Freight Management Systems

1987 – West Virginia
Natural Gas Contract

1986 – Alaska
Video – "A Better Way To Buy"

1985 – Missouri
Competitive Bidding of Residential Rehabilitation Services

2022 GEORGE CRONIN AWARDS FOR PROCUREMENT EXCELLENCE SUBMISSIONS

Finalists:

Georgia—Procurement Officer Boot Camp	6
Idaho—Help Me Help You! A new take on Requests for Information	11
Michigan—Competitive Proof of Concept: Trying Before You Buy While Complying with Competitive Requirements	20
Minnesota—The Right Step	25
Tennessee—Diversity Intelligence in Tennessee- II (DIT-II) Justification	30

Submissions:

Alaska-Procurement Self-Inspection Program (SIP)	39
Arizona-State Procurement Office (SPO) Academy	44
Connecticut-Implementing Standardized Cross-Functional Sourcing Project Teams to Increase Collaboration	52
Florida-Electronic Routing Process	61
Florida-Prequalification for IT Staff Augmentation Services	76
Florida-Next Generation Vendor Information Portal	83
Massachusetts-Increase Vendor and Buyer Engagement in the COVID-19 Environment	91
Michigan-Bringing Automation and A.I. to Public Procurement	97
Michigan-Investment in Michigan’s Cooperative Purchasing Program Yields Huge Returns	101
New Mexico-Comprehensive Procurement Electrification	107
New York-Centralized Online Management for eProcurement Tool	123
New York-Preferred Source Commodity And Service Application Process	152
Tennessee-Grassroots Recruitment & Agency Collaboration	174
Utah-State Contracting Management Program	179
Washington-Improving Contracting Equity in Washington State	184



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*



2022 George Cronin
Awards for Procurement Excellence
Finalists


TM



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Georgia

Department of Administrative Services
Division of State Purchasing



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

Procurement Officer Boot Camp

TM

Executive Summary

Each year states recognize and celebrate the **critical work of public procurement officers**. As noted by Governor Brian Kemp in his March 2022 Purchasing Month proclamation, *“purchasing has tremendous influence on the state’s economy through...supply chain management and monitoring billions of dollars in goods and services to ensure competitive, fair, open and transparent procurement...and the best value for every taxpayer dollar.”* Over the past few years, state procurement operations have been challenged by the pandemic, supply chain disruptions, rising prices, and the need to support urgent, federal recovery programs. These challenges highlight the **value of experienced public procurement officers**.

And yet, like many states, Georgia has experienced **significant turnover of procurement officers due to retirement or voluntary departure**, compounded by difficulty in recruiting experienced replacements. As early as 2019, Georgia identified a growing trend of attrition at the state agency’s head procurement officer role with more than 20% of state agencies experiencing turnover within a two-year period. These vacancies were often filled by individuals with limited experience, creating **higher risk of compliance issues, reduced purchasing capacity, failure to meet critical agency objectives** and increased reliance on the central procurement office for guidance and to conduct complex solicitations.

While Georgia offers robust training certification programs, completing both basic and advanced certifications typically takes two years, and the curriculum is not targeted to the specific duties of the head procurement officer. Recognizing the need to establish an **accelerated training program targeted to the head procurement officer position**, the Procurement Officer Boot Camp was designed with the following objectives: (1) enhance capabilities for procurement officer role and responsibilities, including management of procurement team; (2) strengthen communication and partnership with the central procurement office; (3) increase knowledge of enterprise programs and key regulatory state entities; (4) facilitate information sharing and networking opportunities amongst participants, veteran procurement officers and the purchasing community and (5) retain new talent at head procurement officer position.

Developed with input from new and veteran procurement officers and through **partnership of nine sister state agencies**, the inaugural Boot Camp was groundbreaking in the level of collaboration and commitment amongst program partners providing subject matter expertise. Successfully launched in fiscal year (FY) 2021 to 18 new procurement officers, the Boot Camp is a seven-session program, featuring pre-work, lecture-based presentations, hands-on activities and participant-led discussions. The Boot Camp offers a robust curriculum of procurement, accounting and financial policy, complex sourcing strategies, IT procurement, contract development, ethics, fraud prevention, compliance tips and more.

Program success measures included **participant feedback and tracking participant performance and retention** with the state entity following graduation. Based on overwhelmingly positive feedback from the FY21 graduating class and the continued commitment of program partners, the Boot Camp was offered for a second year with the FY22 graduating class including 16 new procurement officers plus six up-and-coming buyers nominated to participate. **Delivered virtually and at minimal cost to the central procurement office**, the Boot Camp is readily adoptable by other states.

Offered at **no cost to participants**, the Boot Camp represents exceptional value as a unique and highly targeted professional development opportunity designed to improve compliance, increase procurement capacity, and drive significant cost avoidance savings in reduced attrition and recruitment costs. With 40 graduates over a two-year period and only one leaving state government, Georgia has established a **solid foundation for development of future, head procurement officers**. Accordingly, the State of Georgia is pleased to nominate its Procurement Officer Boot Camp for a Cronin Award.

Innovation

Through the partnership of **nine sister state entities**, the Procurement Officer Boot Camp program is **groundbreaking in the level of collaboration and commitment amongst program partners**.

Across the State Collaboration. The seven-session series was hosted by the Department of Administrative Services through its central procurement office and included more than 50 subject matter expert presenters from the Department, the Attorney General’s Office, the Department of Audits and Accounts, the Georgia State Finance and Investment Commission, the Georgia Technology Authority, the Office of Inspector General, the State Accounting Office, the Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia.



To develop the program curriculum, Georgia gathered information through surveys and interviews with new and veteran purchasing officers at the state entity level, central procurement office and other subject matter experts. The resulting curriculum covers the following subject matter areas:



While procurement policy and processes are a central focus, the Boot Camp’s rich curriculum acknowledges the intersect of the purchasing world with budget, accounting, fraud prevention, ethical behavior, litigation prevention, supplier initiatives, and more. The Boot Camp highlights the roles of other sister agencies and emphasizes the fact that procurement is supported and regulated by a variety of systems, laws and programs, including many outside of the central procurement office.

As a supplement to Georgia’s existing purchasing certification program, the Boot Camp truly “stands out” from other procurement training in its breadth of information, direct access to sister agency subject matter experts and the potential to build bridges for future collaboration and cooperation.

Transferability

Georgia’s central procurement office is responsible for the purchase of more than \$8.8 billion of goods and services each year, providing support and oversight of the procurement activities of close to 100 state government entities, including the Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia. While states differ in their procurement authority and structure, all states’ central procurement office must **accomplish their duties through skilled staff** at the central procurement office level, the state agency level (when procurement authority has been delegated), or a combination of both. Through implementation of the Boot Camp program, states can realize significant benefits by investing in professional development of existing staff.

Georgia's Boot Camp was developed through an internal leadership development program, in which two participating central purchasing staff members accepted a challenge project to develop the Boot Camp program. The two staff members conducted stakeholder information gathering activities, developed the training curriculum, recruited sister agency partners, established participant eligibility, and coordinated all logistics to execute the Boot Camp program including facilitating and presenting sessions.

With executive-level support, the **Boot Camp program can be replicated in other states** by tapping into the knowledge and expertise of public servants from a variety of backgrounds who are passionate about their work and willing to invest in new talent. The following parameters can be adapted by other states:

- **Content Development:** Content was developed based on stakeholder input and delivered through subject matter experts within the central procurement office and from sister agencies. This strategy was efficient in that internal staff and staff from sister agencies were willing to volunteer their time at no cost and greatly expanded the curriculum that could be offered.
- **Delivery Method:** The first Boot Camp was launched in the fall of 2021 and, consequently, was delivered entirely virtually through a combination of Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Based on participant feedback and to eliminate travel barriers, the second series was also virtual with the option for in-person during the graduation session. Virtual delivery was popular amongst both participants and presenters and allowed students to be included from all corners of the state.
- **Engagement and Feedback:** The Boot Camp is designed as an interactive program that incorporates pre-work, live instruction, break-out sessions for small group discussion and other activities to reinforce key concepts. The goal was to provide an engaging environment that delivers useful knowledge and techniques applicable to daily work. SurveyMonkey was used to receive anonymous participant feedback on each session. During the graduation session, students led group discussions on lessons learned and opportunities for program improvement.
- **Session Schedule and Duration:** Most sessions were offered for a portion of the day over a 1-2 day time period. Participants preferred ½ day sessions that allowed time for work hours.
- **Participant Eligibility and Class Size:** Initially limited to new head procurement officers with no previous experience in the role, the 2nd year class was expanded to include seats for nominated participants from the agency or central procurement office. Total class size ranged from 18 - 22.
- **Recognition:** Graduates received a printed certificate, glass display award and recognition through procurement community newsletter and during quarterly procurement officer meeting.

Service Improvement *Excellence*

Stakeholder involvement in development and delivery of the Boot Camp program was key. In addition to offering input in curriculum development, veteran procurement officers demonstrated strong buy-in for the Boot Camp through (1) willingness to be guest presenters and share their most valuable advice and what they “wished they had known” stepping in their roles and (2) during the second year, nominating up-and-coming staff to participate with some indicating interest to be future participants. The Boot Camp provided a forum for senior staff from the university system, technical college system, and state agencies to mentor participants, while also modeling a career in state procurement.

The benefits the Boot Camp provides to **improving service at the both the central procurement office and agency level** are almost unlimited. Here are several examples during the two-year period:

- **Increased Engagement with Supplier Initiatives:** For supplier initiatives sponsored by the central procurement office, one Boot Camp graduate volunteered for a speaker opportunity as part of a multicultural business summit and another Boot Camp graduate has volunteered campus space to host a small business event during FY23.
- **Increased Transparency and Compliance:** two Boot Camp graduates proactively identified and self-reported internal compliance issues (several contracts not competitively bid as required) to the central procurement office and are proactively working to become compliant. By increasing policy awareness and trust, the Boot Camp fosters transparency.

- **Increased Responsibility for Sourcing:** the central procurement office has approved multiple requests from Boot Camp graduates to exceed their delegated purchasing authority for request for proposals projects. With expanded capacity at the head procurement officer level, the central procurement office and state agency can both accomplish more with their resources.
- **Increased Leadership at Agency Level:** one Boot Camp graduate championed her entire leadership team (Commissioner and his direct reports) completing the central procurement office’s one-day Purchasing Basics for Georgia State Government (1020L) course. Another Boot Camp graduate utilized grant funding to establish a training position to support internal use and adoption of the state’s ERP system for contract routing, review and approval.

Cost Reduction

Avoiding high rates of staff turnover or prolonged staff vacancies represents significant cost savings. Georgia has estimated cost reduction benefits of \$4.4 million to \$5.2 million for FY21 and FY22 through increased efficiency and compliance, decreased recruitment costs, and the value of free training.

Increased Efficiency and Compliance: Thirty-two head procurement officers have graduated from the Bootcamp, with responsibility for \$2.6 billion in purchase order (PO) spend and \$17.0 million in p-card spend in F21. These individuals also issued 419 postings (for consortiums and sole sources) and awarded 307 competitive solicitations with an estimated value of \$128.7 million in FY21. The Bootcamp training had a positive impact on this spend and solicitations since it emphasized compliance with State law and policies and promoted effectiveness and efficiency in procurement activities. If the Bootcamp training was able to save the State of Georgia \$1 for every \$2,000 spent, which is a modest improvement of five ten-thousandths of a percent (.0005), then the cost savings realized in FY21 would be \$1.3 million for PO spend, \$64,336 for the solicitations awarded, and \$8,514 for the p-card spend.

Estimated savings in FY 2021	\$1.4 million
Estimated savings in FY 2022*	\$1.4 million

*FY21 figures were used for FY22 since the State of Georgia’s FY22 has not yet closed.

Decreased Turnover: The turnover rate among head procurement officers was 20% in FY21 and will be at least this high again in FY22. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) calculates the cost of turnover to an organization to be six to nine months of an employee’s salary. Of the 40 participants who have graduated from the Bootcamp, only one has left State employment. This turnover rate equates to 6% for FY21 and 0% for FY22. Using SHRM’s turnover calculation, the Bootcamp saved the State between \$835,379 - \$1.3 million in FY21 and between \$796,114 - \$1.2 million in FY22.

Estimated savings in FY 2021	\$835,379 - \$1.3 million
Estimated savings in FY 2022	\$796,114 - \$1.2 million

Free Training: Participants in the Bootcamp are given 40.5 hours of training from nine different state agencies. To determine the value of the training given to the participants, we compared the cost of training given by the University of Georgia’s Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG), a popular source of training for state and local government entities. Classes given by CVIOG, which are comparable to a small portion of training given in Bootcamp cost on average \$30 per contact hour. There have been 40 participants who have completed Bootcamp and received 40.5 hours of training. **The value of this training was \$20,655 in FY21 and \$27,945 in FY22.**

Conclusion

For states facing the “great resignation” and increasing competition for talent, the Procurement Officer Boot Camp program **empowers the central procurement office to mentor and retain existing talent** through partnership with sister agencies and the veteran procurement officer community, delivering tangible service improvement and cost savings to the state.



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Idaho

*Department of Administration
Division of Purchasing*



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Help Me Help You!

A New Take on

Requests for Information

Executive Summary

Idaho has implemented a new process for conducting Requests for Information (RFIs) that has been widely praised by agencies and suppliers alike. Unlike our traditional RFIs, which focused on what suppliers could offer the state, the new RFI asks suppliers what the state can do to help them be able to submit more accurate proposals to the eventual solicitation. The new RFI challenges suppliers to “Help me help you!” This new process meets all of the expectations of the Cronin Award criteria:

1. **Innovation:** This new process is a total transformation of Idaho’s traditional RFI process. It has resulted in 3 significant benefits: increased efficiency in the RFI process, reduced delay and disruption in the solicitation process, and improved competition.
2. **Transferability:** With the possible exception of states that have laws specifically addressing the form of RFIs, the process and benefits of this new RFI would be universally transferable.
3. **Service Improvement:** This process provides significant value to agency partners while significantly reducing the duration and effort required to conduct an RFI.
4. **Cost Reduction:** This new process results in validated cost reduction through staff efficiency and potential cost reduction through improved competition.

Innovation

RFIs have long been a frustration in the Idaho Division of Purchasing (DOP). Though the concept has merit—an opportunity to learn about the available solutions and perhaps gain some insight into the potential bidders—traditional RFIs rarely provided the value for which we hoped. Idaho’s traditional RFIs would provide significant information about the state project and ask suppliers to submit written responses to several questions. Buyers struggled to differentiate the purpose of the RFI, often drafting a “mini-RFP” that invited little different than the eventual proposal. Suppliers often failed to submit responses, likely due to concerns about providing responses that would become public records and the need to focus limited resources on solicitation efforts. When responses were received, they often provided dozens or even hundreds of pages of marketing materials, but little of value.

In 2022, DOP was introduced to a new type of RFI that offered a complete paradigm shift. Based on input from a consultant, DOP developed a new RFI format (see Attachment A - RFI Template) which provides limited, focused information about the state project and asks for *no written response*. Instead, the RFI asks vendors to sign up for a one-hour virtual meeting if they are interested in answering a series of questions for the state. The two most critical questions are:

1. To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP/ITN stage, what is the most critical information for the State to provide about our Current Conditions?
2. To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP/ITN stage, what is the most critical information for the State to provide about our Future State Requirements?

Rather than asking the suppliers about what they can offer the state, the new RFI asks the suppliers to help DOP understand what information the suppliers will need to be able to respond successfully to our solicitation. Instead of the traditional question, “what can you do for us?” the new RFI challenges the supplier to “help me help you!”

This new RFI format has helped the state realize several significant benefits.

1. **RFI Efficiency.** Idaho’s experience with traditional RFIs is that very little value is realized for the effort expended. By comparison, the new RFI process requires limited time investment by the state and participating suppliers, while yielding substantial value. Supplier meetings in the new RFI process are limited to the first five suppliers to respond to the RFI, which limits the total time commitment without reducing the value, since the information provided by suppliers tends

to overlap by approximately 80%. Table 1 provides a side-by-side comparison of two real RFIs completed by DOP.

Table 1

	Traditional RFI for an eProcurement System	New RFI for a K-12 Statewide Longitudinal Data System
RFI Development	40 hours of staff time	10 hours of staff time
Duration of RFI (“on the street”)	1 month	10 days
Supplier Responses	4 responses received 333 total pages submitted 20-30 hours estimated supplier effort	20 responses received 0 pages submitted; 5 virtual meetings completed 15 hours estimated supplier effort
State time to review supplier responses	Approximately 20 hours	Approximately 8 hours (5 hours of meetings, plus time to compile notes and debrief)
Value of Information	Limited. All of the responses provided marketing materials about their specific solution. DOP was able to extract a few pieces of helpful information (e.g., potential cost structures).	Significant. The Agency developed a list of approximately 8 high-level topics that needed to be covered in the solicitation, including data, requirements, and other pressing questions for the potential bidders.

Note: time estimates are total hours across multiple state/supplier employees

2. Reduced delay and agency disruption during the solicitation. During a recent solicitation that did not use this new RFI process, DOP received 121 questions during the Q&A period, approximately 10 of which asked for significant state data. When responding to the Q&A, the Agency provided 9 additional attachments to meet the requests for data. It took several weeks for the state to compile the requested data and respond to all of the questions. The Agency had to dedicate several employees to compiling the data, many of whom needed to pause other priorities to address the Q&A.

A major objective of the new RFI process is to reduce the number of questions submitted during the solicitation and the time and resources required to answer them. By asking suppliers prior to the solicitation what information they need in order to provide an accurate proposal, the Q&A during the solicitation causes less disruption for the agency and a shorter delay for the suppliers.

3. Increased competition. Even though our procurement process invites questions and proposed changes, suppliers consistently tell us that they struggle with solicitations when it appears that the requirements point toward a certain solution that isn’t what they can offer. They may choose to not participate at all, assuming that the state has a preferred outcome; they may try to cram a square peg (their solution) into a round hole (the solicitation requirements); or they may pad their pricing to mitigate the risk associated with unclear or missing information. By inviting suppliers to provide input in advance - not about the specifications, but about what information they need to see to be able to prepare a response - the state is encouraging greater and more valuable participation in the competitive process. Suppliers have been thrilled with this new process, with nearly 100% of participating suppliers thanking DOP for offering them this new process.

Transferability

The new RFI process implemented by Idaho’s DOP could be adopted easily by any state as long as it would not be prohibited by the state’s laws. This new process has provided three major benefits to Idaho: increased efficiency for RFIs (significantly more value with less time invested); reduced delay and agency disruption in the middle of the procurement process; and increased competition. Every state would benefit from these results.

One challenge that many states encounter related to RFIs is the additional time it can add to an already lengthy procurement process. The comparative timeline below demonstrates the relative ease with which states could add this new RFI process to appropriate solicitations compared to a more traditional model.

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Traditional RFI	RFI Development				RFI Posted/ Responses Received				Review of Responses			
New RFI	RFI Development		RFI Posted/ Responses Received		Meetings Conducted/Debrief							

Service Improvement

The Idaho DOP’s vision is that “we are recognized leaders in public procurement by serving as trusted advisors and partners, contributing to Idaho’s strategic initiatives, and delivery outstanding customer service.” One of our strategies for achieving this vision is to demonstrate to our stakeholders the value we can bring through innovative procurement solutions. We don’t want to be seen as roadblocks, paper pushers, or policy police. We want agencies to think of us as strategic partners who can help solve their complex challenges.

This new RFI process has been a great opportunity for DOP to build our reputation as a strategic partner. As we’ve introduced this new RFI process to agencies facing complex procurements, we’ve seen each agency have a “lightbulb” moment when they understand the simple, yet powerful, opportunity this provides. Agencies have been universally appreciative of the fast timeline and significant benefit that this process provides. Using the two RFIs compared in Table 1 above, the benefit in duration and agency effort is easy to see.

- Traditional RFI: Approximately 30 hours of agency staff time over 12 weeks
- New RFI: Approximately 15 hours of agency staff time over 7 weeks

This new process represents a 66% decrease in agency effort and 42% decrease in duration.

Cost Reduction

There are a variety of validated and potential cost reductions that can be achieved through the use of this new RFI process, some more easily measured than others.

1. Efficiency. As detailed above, one of the major benefits of this new RFI process is the efficiency that can be achieved. There are many variables, including job classification/pay grade, that will impact the actual cost reduction, but the examples below provide a realistic scenario of the cost savings that can be achieved.

State Resource	*Example hourly rate	**Hours saved per RFI	Cost reduction per RFI
DOP Purchasing Staff	\$27.00/hr.	6 hrs.	\$162
Agency Staff	\$42.50/hr.	30 hrs.	\$1,275
		TOTAL	\$1,437

* Example hourly rates are not burdened; actual cost savings would be greater

** Hours saved is the estimated difference in total staff hours (across multiple employees)

Estimating a savings of \$1,437 in staff paid time per RFI, a state could easily gain efficiency worth tens of thousands of dollars in staff time per year, depending on how many traditional RFIs are transitioned to this new process.

2. Improved Competition. Though less easily measured, the value of improved competition likely represents significant cost reduction for states. Two benefits of this RFI method related to competition are increased supplier participation and better accuracy in supplier pricing. To form a conservative estimate, Idaho looked at a small sampling of past solicitations and found that the savings between the winning proposal (not always the lowest cost) and the highest offered cost ranged from 1% to 22%. Using 10% as a conservative estimate, the state could realize a \$2 million savings on a \$20 million project (such as the K-12 Statewide Longitudinal Data System example above) if it is able to attract a winning supplier who might have chosen not to participate in a solicitation with missing or vague information. Similarly, if a vendor added even 1% to their cost proposal to mitigate the risks associated with a solicitation lacking in clarity or information, it would cost the state an additional \$200,000 on a project of this size. Extrapolating this savings across several solicitations in a year, state could see actual cost reductions of several million dollars.

Conclusion

Idaho's new RFI process is a simple, innovative way to elicit supplier input, improve efficiency, and increase the quality of competition. It saves state and supplier time, helps solicitations to run more smoothly, and provides a significant opportunity for states to improve the quality of their procurements, resulting in improved competition. It has been universally praised by agency stakeholders and suppliers in Idaho.



Attachment A – RFI Template



State of Idaho | Division of Purchasing Request For Information

RFI [####] For
[RFI Title]

Section 1: Overview & Instructions

1.1 Purpose

The State of Idaho Division of Purchasing (State) is seeking to schedule *online/virtual* strategy discussions from interested Suppliers with experience in [describe required services]. The intent of these discussions is to obtain feedback from Suppliers to assist the State in developing a more accurate Scope of Work and overall approach for an upcoming solicitation for [brief (1 sentence) description of scope]. This is not a solicitation for quotations, bids or proposals. No contract award will result from this RFI. The State firmly believes this process will help it to develop a solicitation that is clear and can be administered more efficiently and effectively; however, participation in these discussions is completely optional (they are NOT mandatory in order to participate in the future solicitation).

1.2 Format of Virtual Discussion

The format of these informal discussions will be performed virtually online via video conferencing tools (i.e., Zoom, Teams, Webex, etc.). The content and topics of the strategy discussions are shown in Section 3. The State is NOT requesting a formal written response to these questions or topics (as is common in most traditional RFIs). All information will be collected via the conference call/video call, which will be performed on a "1-on-1" basis between each Supplier and the State (not as a group meeting). The State anticipates spending about 1-hour on each call.

The State intends to use information gathered from these discussions to help ensure that the future solicitation is fair and open and provides the information necessary for suppliers to be able to provide accurate proposals. The State plans to schedule discussions with **the first five (5) Suppliers to submit a request** but reserves the right to hold additional discussions in order to capture diverse Supplier perspectives. The State shall not reimburse the Supplier for any expenses incurred responding to this RFI.

The State does not have any requirements of who can attend the meeting, or their role/position. The Supplier can select the best person(s) to attend. The meetings will be led by the Point of Contact identified in Section 4. Suppliers will be permitted 5-10 minutes to introduce their company for context. The remainder of the time will be spent discussing the Supplier's answers to the questions provided in Section 3. Other than general procurement questions, the state will not answer any questions about the project or upcoming solicitation; however, the state will be taking note of questions to ensure that they are answered proactively in the solicitation document.

1.3 Key Dates

The RFI timetable is shown below, but the State may adjust/modify this schedule as needed.

Issue Date of RFI	XXXXXX
RSVP Deadline	XXXXXX
Anticipated Video Discussions	XXXXXX

1.4 Point of Contact

All questions, inquires, or communications regarding this RFI or the [project name] must be directed to the Point of Contact listed below (via email). Suppliers shall not contact any other State employee.

[Name]
[Title]
State of Idaho – Division of Purchasing
Email: [email address]

Section 2: Background Information

2.1 Background Information

[Agency provide background information about the project]

2.2 Unique / Challenging Conditions

[Agency provide information about conditions that are unique to Idaho or particularly challenging.]

2.3 Future Goals & Outcomes

[Agency describe the overall goals and desired outcomes for the project.]

2.4 Upcoming Solicitation

- The State anticipates issuing a [solicitation type] solicitation in the next [timeframe].
- [Briefly describe the solicitation process, if not traditional, and any unique circumstances (e.g. phased implementation, award to single supplier, etc.)]
- The State has estimated that the total spend for the [project title] contract will be approximately \$[budget].

Section 3: Script for Strategy Discussions

A written response to these questions is NOT required. The State will conduct virtual discussions with interested Suppliers to address these items. The supplier can prepare a presentation to assist with the discussion if they would like (but they are not required to do so).

3. To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP/ITN stage, what is the most critical information for the State to provide about our Current Conditions (what critical things do you need to know about our current environment)?
4. To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP/ITN stage, what is the most critical information for the State to provide about our Future State Requirements (are there any goals, objectives, or desired items that we haven't thought of, or should consider)?
5. In general, who are the most critical 3-5 personnel (from the Supplier side) that are essential to the overall success of this program?
6. What would be the 'best' way for the State to collect and compare costing information from suppliers, to allow the State to compare proposals 'apples-to-apples'. Could you provide us with an example(s) of a costing templates that you would recommend using?
7. What are your thoughts about our schedule timelines? Are we being realistic?
8. Are there any other factors/issues/items the State be considering at this time?



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

The logo is a blue circular seal with a scalloped edge, set against a light red ribbon background. It features a white star at the top and bottom, and the text 'GEORGE CRONIN' in a bold, sans-serif font. Below that, '★ awards for ★' is written in a smaller font, followed by 'Procurement Excellence' in a large, elegant, italicized serif font.

TM

Strategy Discussions for [Project Title] *Response Form*

Suppliers that would like to participate in the virtual discussions should complete this form to reserve a time slot. Please identify a point of contact that the State can contact to setup the virtual meeting.

Company Name _____
Point of Contact
name _____
Phone number _____
Email Address _____

Please identify the preferred dates/times for the virtual call (as shown in the table below). Due to the number of Suppliers that may RSVP, please identify at least 2-3 dates/times that will work for your team (so we can try to accommodate everyone). Please RSVP as soon as possible, but not later than 5pm (Mountain Time) on Friday, May 13, 2022. Timeslots will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Once your timeslot is confirmed, the State will provide a link to the conference-call or video-call.

	Date 1	Date 2
XX:XX – XX:XX		
XX:XX – XX:XX		
XX:XX – XX:XX		
XX:XX – XX:XX		
XX:XX – XX:XX		

Please complete and send this form via email to [email address]



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Michigan

Department of *Technology, Management, &
Budget*

Division of Central Procurement



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

**Competitive Proof of Concept:
Trying Before You Buy While Complying
with Competitive Requirements**

Executive Summary

Though there are no one-size-fits-all solutions when it comes to IT procurement. The development and introduction of the Competitive Proof of Concept (CPC) as a solicitation type by Central Procurement Services (CPS, the State of Michigan's main procurement office that is vested with most of the executive branch's procurement authority) has helped solve some specific issues. These include how to deal with suppliers offering "free trials" and how to try out different potential solutions with the ability to move to a full implementation contract if a solution meets the state's needs.

The CPC was developed specifically to fill these gaps in IT procurement, but it can also be a good fit for new or innovative services or even commodities too.

Innovation

The State of Michigan has very strict competitive requirements. Public Act 431 of 1984 (the Management and Budget Act), which provides CPS with its authority, states that it "shall utilize competitive solicitation for all purchases authorized [except in limited emergency situations]." Further, it goes on to say that CPS must determine if "competitive solicitation of bids... [is] appropriate before using any other procurement method for an acquisition." For many years, this was interpreted to mean that the RFP process had to be used for all procurements. In 2015, fresh eyes discovered there was room for different methods of sourcing so long as they were competitive and involved requesting the participation of multiple potential suppliers. Specifically, the use of both terms, competitive solicitation (which is mandatory) and competitive bidding (which is preferred but not mandatory) in statute, gave CPS the opportunity to better define competitive solicitation, as there was no statutory or common law definition for it. New solicitation types were quickly implemented after this review.

By 2017, the need for a way to deal with the increasing number of "free trial offers" and "pilot programs" drove CPS to create the CPC. The CPC is a formal competitive solicitation process that asks for proposals from prospective suppliers to perform a proof of concept for a good or service with the option, at the state's discretion, to enter a full implementation contract after the completion and evaluation of the pilot. The state may select one or more of the submitted proposals and award a contract(s) to cover the proof-of-concept period. Once the proof of concept(s) is evaluated, negotiations with the selected vendor may be conducted for a new implementation contract. This meets with the requirements of the Management and Budget Act because there is competition through requesting the participation of multiple potential suppliers at the beginning of the process (and more at the end of the proof-of-concept phase, if there are multiple proof of concepts).

The CPC solicitation itself is a much smaller document than is typically issued. Long statements of work or requirements are discouraged, both to save time and more importantly to give potential suppliers room to provide their best solutions. As there is a period where end users get to test the solution in their everyday work, there is minimal

downside to this. Detailed statements of work may still be included in any full implementation contract, but because the competition portion is completed, the supplier can assist in drafting them without running afoul of conflict-of-interest policies.

The criteria used to judge the proposals and the finished proof(s) of concept(s) are also rather different. Rather than scoring based on how well a supplier answered each section of the solicitation, proposals are evaluated in a more holistic manner. Though subjective evaluation is often avoided in public procurement, in favor of elaborate point systems, so long as the rationale provided is sound and well documented, it can produce a better outcome.

The CPC is a very different type of public sector solicitation. The competition and final contract development are farther apart in time, the documents drive suppliers to provide solution-based proposals, and the proposals and proof of concepts are evaluated on their overall benefits.

Transferability

If a state, or any other public entity, has the statutory flexibility to add the CPC as a new evaluation method, implementation is simple. CPS has developed the policies and templates needed to implement and is willing to share them with any interested parties. After a review by legal counsel and, any required updates, it is only a matter of training procurement professionals on the process and documents.

Even states that are allowed to sole source procurements could still benefit from putting formal structures around the free trial and pilot process. This could encourage customers to consider other available options. Competition is not just a requirement, it is one of the forces that allows procurement professionals to best add value.

Even if the CPC is not right for a particular state, one important lesson applies: Do not assume that a statute requires what it is commonly thought to require. A fresh set of eyes, lawyer and non-lawyer alike, may find room for creative solutions in any statutory language. This room is commonly found where statutes use undefined terms.

Service Improvement

Anyone who has had to explain to a customer that the Request for Proposal (RFP) process must still be followed in the face of a free trial or completed pilot program of a perfect solution can understand how the CPC can improve service.

The two most important factors customers use to evaluate Michigan's Central Procurement Services are, the time a solicitation takes and satisfaction with the awarded supplier. A proof of concept solicitation can dramatically reduce the effort required in developing a solicitation, while providing the customer an opportunity to truly become familiar with a solution before deciding on full implementation.

Since the introduction of the CPC, CPS's overall Net Promoter Score (NPS) has gone from 61 to 92 (per CPS's KPI Dashboard, FY 2017 versus FY 2021), and CPS's IT Division's NPS has gone from 69 to 84 in the same period. While we do not attribute these gains only to the introduction of the CPC, the seven CPCs completed so far have perfect customer satisfaction results in all three measures CPS uses: NPS (how likely the customer would recommend working with CPS), Customer Effort Score (how easy the process for the customer), and Customer Satisfaction Score (happiness with the overall outcome).

Though these KPI improvements are impressive, the best way to show the service impact is to explain the real ways in which the CPC has helped CPS's customers.

DNR LED Digital Evidence Capture System

Michigan's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) wanted to pilot a solution that allows conservation officers to use existing cell phones as body cameras. Besides the uncertainties surrounding whether this was a workable solution, DNR did not yet know the number of software licenses or the amount of server storage that would be needed. Getting either of these numbers wrong would either drive the cost up unnecessarily or require future contract expansion.

This was a perfect situation for a CPC. Within 73 business days of the requisition being submitted, a one-year, no-cost proof of concept contract was negotiated with the one responding supplier. (The average Complex IT RFP takes 299 business days.) Once the pilot was completed and determined to be a success, a five-year full implementation contract was negotiated and executed.

MDOS Customer Flow Management System

The Michigan Department of State ("MDOS") is the agency responsible for issuing driver's licenses in Michigan. MDOS sought a new customer flow management, or "queuing" solution, as the current supplier (obtained through an RFP) was not providing reliable service.

A CPC was issued to cast the widest net and allow for extensive trials. After evaluation of the four proposals received, one was selected to do a pilot at several branch locations. The pilot contract was negotiated at a cost of \$20,000. After the pilot, the team determined the system would not be a good technical fit. MDOS was able to avoid what could have been a costly and long-lasting mistake, for the cost of \$20,000.

The CPC is not only a service improvement for state agencies, but also for suppliers. The CPC allows an approved vehicle for free trials and pilots that many suppliers are eager to provide. Additionally, responding to a CPC is a much easier process, especially for suppliers not accustomed to working with public entities.

Cost Reduction

When a CPC is used as the means of solicitation, it is almost always going to be faster and less labor intensive than a traditional solicitation. This reduces the administrative costs in comparison with the normal RFP. There are also important cost avoidances, which are best illustrated through direct example.

DNR LED Digital Evidence Capture System

DNR was able to try out the solution for a full year at no cost and evaluate the product's viability. If an RFP had been used, DNR would have had to guess at the number of licenses and storage needed, paid for the product, and then hoped the project was successful. These uncertainties were eliminated by the CPC. Information from the proof of concept was used to determine the correct number of licenses and storage required. DNR was able to ensure that it only paid for what was needed in the resultant five-year contract, and that the solution met its needs. At \$ 45,575.64 per year for licenses and \$ \$3,500 per year for storage, even a minor 5% overestimate would have resulted in \$2,500 in additional costs per year.

MDOS Customer Flow Management System

While the CPC did not result in a contract, the value of avoiding a long-term contract for a product that ultimately did not work is undeniable. The original system's solicitation resulted in a three-year contract costing over \$600,000. Had the CPC not been conducted, and the proof-of-concept supplier been awarded a contract through the RFP process, it would have been at least a year before the problems were identified. The supplier would then be given a chance to remedy the issues, and failing to do so, the cancellation process would be completed. This would have resulted in MDOS spending over \$200,000 to find the solution was unworkable compared to \$20,000 thanks to the CPC (avoiding at least \$180,000 in additional costs).

The ability to truly try before the state buys, with minimal investment or risk, will allow the state to avoid untold costs associated with supplier performance issues. This is particularly valuable in purchases that are cutting edge or otherwise novel, where both procurement and the customer are at an information disadvantage to the potential suppliers.

Conclusion

The CPC is not intended to be magic bullet for IT procurement, however, in the right circumstances it can provide the public sector the speed and flexibility needed to keep pace with innovative new solutions. The CPC gives agencies an opportunity to pilot under a structured process, instead of doing a free trial and then demanding a contract be issued without a solicitation because "it works." Piloting solutions in real world environments minimizes the risks of purchasing mismatched or defective solutions. The process also matches reality for customers who are used to free trials in their personal lives and do not care how well they fit with procurement policies and statutes.



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Minnesota

Department of Administration
Office of State Procurement



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

*Procurement
Excellence*

The Right Step

TM

Executive Summary

Minnesota's Office of State Procurement (OSP) initiated *The Right Step* program as a way to enhance compliance with state contract pricing, terms and conditions. The program entails a review of the first several transactions when a new statewide master contract is established to ensure all contract end users understand and are in compliance with the contract requirements. The reviewer looks for any issues with invoicing, payments, contract language, and provides recommendations to mitigate any findings. After several more transactions, the reviewer checks back in to make sure issues were corrected. As the program's title suggests, this allows contracts to get off on "The Right Step" by quickly and proactively correcting misunderstandings or errors early-on that if unnoticed, could lead to ongoing costly mistakes and overpayments. The program also entails "ad hoc" reviews as necessitated by issues identified by contract staff or end users.

The idea for *The Right Step* was initiated in 2018 when the Office of State Procurement (OSP) asked-- how could we prevent compliance issues that may initially be of minimal concern from expanding into big, time-consuming problems? How could we catch potential fraud or even innocent mistakes that threaten tax-payer dollars and our reputation? What kind of initiative would both encourage stakeholder participation and get at the problematic issues that happen with State contracting? Out of these questions, *The Right Step* program was formulated.

In 2021, *The Right Step* was expanded to not only include contract reviews, but also apply to the evaluation process for Requests for Proposals (RFPs). The same principals apply, where a reviewer checks-in on agency RFP evaluations before the contract is signed. The reviewer examines the RFP, score summaries, and individual score sheets and identifies scoring discrepancies, math and process errors. The evaluation either passes, or the agency is advised to go back and correct errors. The reviewer gives advice and checks back-in to ensure the errors do not persist. This in-depth review continues until the agency is successful in three consecutive evaluations after which, the agency is required to submit evaluation materials for one contract per fiscal year.

Innovation

The Right Step applies compliance principles to procurement activities in a way that gets at the issues and errors that threaten our organizations. The method preserves bandwidth and inspires and empowers stakeholders to participate. Here is why *The Right Step* stands out:

Broad Application. Compliance is often siloed, and agencies handle risks for a particular function, differently and often in isolation. The principles of *The Right Step* apply broadly: 1) catch early & correct 2) re-examine and verify 3) create a pathway to report issues that arise. Every activity has the potential to create risk, and risks vary from function to function. Sometimes we cannot comprehend the risks, until we take that first look, and *The Right Step* provides the framework to do just that.

Impact of Sharing. During the first iteration of *The Right Step*, which entails a review of new contracts, with new vendors, we learned how beneficial sharing information can be. For instance, one might wonder what a contract for cleaning supplies has in common with a contract for software. However, if you find an issue with a pricing formula in the cleaning supply contract, and the same pricing formula is used in the software contract, that is an opportunity to address the issue on a broader scale. If we see the same struggles with invoices, we can apply that knowledge broadly to improve invoicing across all contracts. As a result of *The Right Step*, we made global changes to our contracts to specifically define pricing formulas at the outset of the contract, to ensure all parties are calculating it the same way. We also have made requesting invoicing and transactions documents part of our RFP process so we can get ahead of the invoicing issues that stakeholders struggle with.

We have had similar successes when applying *The Right Step* to evaluations. We saw an agency struggle with a particular nuance of the evaluation process, so we adjusted our scoring sheet summaries to make the process clearer for everyone. After examining the first several evaluations, we were able to give all stakeholders advice on things to watch for and common errors that had potential to derail their process.

Proactive. *The Right Step* in many ways was created out of frustration with compliance issues that overtaxed bandwidth in our division. The Right Step program catches problems early, before they turn into bigger ones thus creating efficiencies. It is much easier to correct a problem when it involves ten or twenty transactions versus thousands. Likewise, it is easier to deal with an evaluation error before a contract is executed, rather than several months into the contracted work. It is also easier to make changes both internally and externally when those involved in the development of the contract are not yet committed to a certain course of action.

Coaching. All components of *The Right Step* use a “coaching” approach to correct and re-examine issues. It is important that agencies are not intimidated by *The Right Step* and that they do not feel penalized in any way when issues are discovered. We execute the program in a way that encourages all parties to be open about their struggles and misunderstandings and be willing to use the things we learn to improve processes. It is viewed as a team effort and agencies are often relieved to have another set of eyes on the contract or evaluation as they move forward.

Transferability

The Right Step has proven to be transferable to different areas of procurement in our division. It would be easy for another state to use and apply.

Replicability. *The Right Step* has been very replicable throughout state government. When issues arise, it has been natural to apply the lessons learned broadly across agencies whether it be refining the way they inspect invoices or how they evaluate cost proposals. Administering *The Right Step* does require employee resources to operate in an effective way. Minnesota dedicates a single FTE to the program, but other states could scale a similar program higher or lower based on available bandwidth.

Benchmarking. *The Right Step* as applied to contract reviews works by examining the first significant transactions. What qualifies as “significant transactions” varies from contract to contract. For instance, you may not learn very much from ten purchases from a contract for office supplies, but you will learn a lot from ten purchases made on a contract for snowplow trucks. It is important to right-size the number of transactions that generate a review, or you may not get the clear picture of how things are going. Once the review starts, it includes a review of the contract, purchase history, ordering details from the end user, and invoices received and paid out. Close attention is paid to payment terms and price calculations, but also things such as “are we receiving what we purchased under contract?” For instance, a vendor may state that the product received will include specific add-ons. The review team makes sure those add-ons are included and priced correctly according to contract terms. If issues arise, the review team works internally or externally depending on the source of the problem.

The Right Step, as applied to evaluations, examines the RFP, individual score sheets, and the evaluation summary score sheet. The review team looks for inconsistencies with the evaluation as compared to what was stated in the RFP, transposition and math errors, the overall format and clarity of what was submitted, details and fairness. The evaluation is scored on a rubric, and agencies receive scores for accuracy, formulas, format/clarity, fairness and details along with a recommendation for moving forward. An agency’s evaluation materials and process need a score of 75/100 in order to pass.

Service Improvement

The Right Step program gives OSP contract owners insight into where vendors and State buyers struggle when using an enterprise master contract. We all have the best intentions when we draft an agreement but until a contract is examined after execution, it is impossible to consider every issue that may arise or where there may be confusion. The Right Step program identifies areas for improvement in master contracts and provides practical recommendations for how those improvements can be made.

It also equips contract administrators with the information needed to have conversations with State buyers and vendors to assure all parties understand the contract and are using the contract as intended. OSP contract administrators have voiced that this process has benefited the State and vendors alike, as it opens the lines of communication and makes vendors aware the State is committed to working toward corrective action that benefits the partnership moving forward.

As part of *The Right Step* for contracts, the OSP compliance team worked with a focus group of OSP contract administrators to develop new content for the State buyer training program. This content has improved State buyer's overall understanding of our master contract program, how to use master contracts, and raises buyer confidence that purchases made under master contracts are in compliance with the contract.

Through *The Right Step* for evaluations, agencies appreciated learning more about areas for improvement and they view it as a benefit to both their agencies and the vendor community. Stakeholders are actively taking our feedback and applying it in order to have a more consistent and fair process.

Agency involvement and engagement is a key part of *The Right Step* process. Through a proactive approach, errors are caught before they balloon into big problems, and agencies are forthcoming and usually relieved to have another set of eyes on their work. The coaching approach is both helpful and encourages dialogue with our agency partners. Agencies see themselves as part of the solution, rather than the problem due to this collaborative approach. *The Right Step* program has increased the frequency with which agencies reach out to us for assistance.

The Right Step has also resulted in impactful process changes. For example, changes have been made to the solicitation and award process regarding how the State vets and approves vendor documents associated with the contract such as invoices. The changes ensure contract transaction documents contain all the information the State needs to confirm contract compliance and that no additional terms or conditions are included.

Cost Reduction

The Right Step contract program has resulted in significant cost savings and recovery by the State. Since its inception the State has recovered, or has an agreement in place to recover, over \$700,000 based on overcharges identified as part of the *Right Step* program. Beyond the recovery of overcharges, this program has prevented improper charges from continuing to occur, saving immeasurable amounts over the life of many contracts. Further, the *Right Step* saves money by avoiding the soft costs involved in tackling these issues had they persisted for years and become major problems spanning multiple contract cycles.

The Right Step as applied to evaluations involves savings on soft costs. In the past misawards have cost agencies both time and money. It involves agency resources to cancel one contract and negotiate another. Some of the work done under the first contract may or may not be of use in the next. It usually takes the second vendor time to get up to speed. And then if things really go awry, actual costs may involve dispute resolution and legal settlements. Through our review, we have discovered a few

evaluations that very easily could have led to either misawards, protests, or litigation. By catching these errors and getting our agencies back on track, we have avoided those costs. Beyond fixing the situation at issue, we can take the lessons learned and apply them moving forward which has the effect of avoiding such issues on a much larger scale.

Through implementation of a *Right Step* program, other states can expect to recover unwarranted charges and overcharges and avoid situations where modest pricing discrepancies cost millions over the life of the contract. States can also expect soft cost savings in the form of staff time and avoiding dispute resolution, including litigation when evaluation errors are caught and corrected.

Conclusion

Many of us grew up hearing the old adage, “a stitch in time, saves nine.” *The Right Step* program gives credence to this sage advice and has helped steer many new contracts and evaluation processes in the right direction and out of harm’s way. The best part about the program is that it is based on very transferable concepts that have broad application and significant, measurable impact. The program proactively protects taxpayers’ dollars and interests by getting both evaluations and resulting contracts off on the *Right Step* and helps ensure they stay that way.



State of Tennessee

Department of General Services
Division of the Governor's Office of Diversity
Business Enterprise

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Diversity Intelligence in Tennessee- II (DIT-II) Justification

Justification

The State of Tennessee's Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (Go-DBE) recently relaunched its Diversity Intelligence in Tennessee (DIT) project to include new features. The DIT project first launched in 2018 to assist Go-DBE's staff with responding to questions about the State's diversity spend in a more timely and efficient manner. The DIT project was also created to provide State agencies with a real-time snapshot of the amount of diversity spend the agency has spent throughout the fiscal year. While the initial launch of the DIT project accomplished the purpose for which it was created, there were several enhancements and changes Go-DBE observed that would make the project more useful not only to internal staff, but also to the general public.

As with most databases with a substantial amount of information, Go-DBE decided to create multiple tiers of information based on the user status - in this case Go-DBE internal staff, State agency employees, and members of the public. The previous version of the DIT project focused on providing information to State employees to make them aware of the amount of diversity spend the agency had accumulated to date in relation to the diversity goal set for the fiscal year. As the topic of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion gained more attention over the last couple of years, so did the public's interest in the State of Tennessee's commitment to diversity. DIT-II, the updated public dashboard, aligns with the Governor's priority of addressing accelerated transformation of rural, distressed, and at-risk counties in the State. With 39 of our 95 counties being in the bottom 25% of the nation's poverty level, the public wanted to see if the State was indeed making an effort to work with these counties. DIT-II now serves as a resource to aid in the State's transparency to its residents. Along with capturing the State's overall diversity spend, DIT-II breaks the spend out by the certification type, business activity and category, and dollar value by county. This snapshot allows the public to see the number of certified diversity businesses the State has contracts with for each county, along with the businesses' industry and amount paid to the business. Other new features of DIT-II incorporate filters that allow users to conduct comparison reports based on fiscal year, month, department, business name, business location, and certification status; granular spend detail reports that allow agencies to identify the diversity businesses it works with; and a State agency ranking feature that ranks agencies based on the amount and percentage of diversity spend expended throughout the State.

The new features continue to bring attention and awareness of the State of Tennessee's commitment to working with diversity businesses. Through the expanded availability and customization of our Tableau dashboards, Go-DBE has made the State's complex diversity statistical information easy to read, understand, and access.



State of Tennessee

Department of General Services
Division of the Governor's Office of Diversity
Business Enterprise

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Diversity Intelligence in Tennessee- II (DIT-II)

Executive Summary

The Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (Go-DBE) is the State of Tennessee's agency to coordinate, assist, and report the Executive branch's diversity spend for Small Business Enterprises and businesses with majority ownership held by minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and service-disabled veterans. Go-DBE was officially signed into existence in December 2003 and delivered its first report on the State's diversity spend in 2005. Since then, the State's diversity program has grown substantially from reporting \$12 million in spend in 2005 to over \$766 million in 2021. As the State moved toward becoming paperless and the use of technology became the new standard, Go-DBE was able to expand its services to assist more diversity businesses to obtain contracts with the State. With an average 3-5% increase in diversity spend every fiscal year, Go-DBE was asked to provide data breakdowns of the diversity spend contracted through the State. Year after year the inquiries became more complex and very time consuming.

Go-DBE needed a way to improve transparency, promote self-service through the use of Business Intelligence (BI) among users, and increase efficiency and employee productivity, all while using the data to make and support management decisions that would continue to grow the diversity program. The Diversity Intelligence in Tennessee-II (DIT-II) project was undertaken to address all of these needs by presenting diversity spend data through a series of related visuals (maps, graphs and tables) using a data visualization software, and creating the ability to interact with the visuals to provide insight into our customer's specific questions. The use of interactive dashboards enables the customer/user to quickly understand the State's metrics and the impact diversity spend has on the State's spend as a whole. The data visualization software also gives us greater flexibility for integrating our data into our existing diversity software, providing real-time, logical and simple results. The speed and accuracy with which this extensive data is now accessed has been reduced from days or weeks to a matter of seconds.

Innovation

The DIT-II project empowers State employees and the public to access the State's diversity spend in a matter of seconds. Never in the history of Go-DBE has the public been able to pull statistical data from a centralized location to visualize and confirm the State's commitment to diversity. The previous version of the DIT project was initially created to shorten Go-DBE's response time to requests for information and serve as a tool for State agencies to keep track of their actual diversity spend in relation to their diversity goal. Prior to the launch of DIT-II, Go-DBE observed several changes and enhancements that would make the project more useful not only to internal staff, but also to the general public. DIT-II moved from being a reactive tool to a proactive resource for those seeking information.

As with most databases containing a substantial amount of information, Go-DBE decided to create multiple tiers of information based on the user status - in this case Go-DBE internal staff, State agency employees, and members of the public. As the topic of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion gained more attention over the last couple of years, so did the public's interest in the State of Tennessee's commitment to diversity. DIT-II moved from being a reactive tool to a proactive resource for those seeking information that aligns with the Governor's priority of addressing accelerated transformation of rural, distressed, and at-risk counties in the State. The public dashboard serves as a resource to aid in the State's commitment to

transparency and identifies any area of deficiency throughout the State. Along with capturing the State's overall diversity spend, the public dashboard breaks the spend out by the certification type, business activity and category, and awarded dollar values by county. This snapshot allows the public to see the number of certified diversity businesses the State has contracts with for each county, along with the businesses' industry and amount paid to the businesses. This information is then used to schedule targeted outreach in specific counties to increase awareness and participation in the State's procurement opportunities. (*See Gibson County Attachment*)

Transferability

Every state is faced with underprivileged communities within their borders who have limited access to resources when compared to others. Realizing these deficiencies "in real time" before it is too late, allowed Go-DBE to redirect our efforts and resources, towards increasing our chances of moving an "at-risk" or "distressed" county to a "transitional" or "attainment" status.

Other states need only consider a few factors and requirements to fully exercise this tools' potential benefits. The first and most important factor to replicate a program with public transparency goals like DIT-II is to have a repertoire of reliable data to pull over a span of time. Having at least 3-5 years of data is necessary to get a clear picture of what may or may not be taking place. As a result of analyzing this tremendous amount of data, an organization will begin to notice trends and patterns over an extended period of time. In our example, Go-DBE utilized data from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) on economic status and distressed areas in Appalachia to identify each county's economic status. We also collected data from the State of Tennessee's Enterprise Resource Planning (Edison) system to capture spend by businesses that have been certified through Go-DBE as a diversity business. Lastly, we tied Edison to the State's diversity system, which provided a cross check of the data and allowed us to pick up spend from diversity subcontractors working on State contracts but not paid directly by the State. Integrating these channels of information gives us a complete picture of who the State is contracted with directly and indirectly, the industry type of the contract awarded, the geographical locations of the awarded businesses, and the total amount paid to businesses. The second step to replicate DIT-II is to invest in an interactive data visualization software that will collect, combine, and interpret information into a format that is easy to read and comprehend. Go-DBE utilized Tableau which did not require build-out or testing time. Along with having the software, it is important to have access to professionals who are knowledgeable of the software selected and can offer support on how to maneuver in the information for the desired output. Third, ask questions. What questions are you expecting the information to answer? Going into the process with specific ideas of what you expect to receive from the data will show the organizational trends (strengths and weakness) and allow you to make decisions to either stay the course or make necessary decisions to address the deficiency. During the State's Legislative Sessions, it became very common for State representatives and senators to request statistical reports on the district they were elected to represent. On several occasions, the State was accused of not contracting with certain regions of the State. In order to see if there was any truth to the accusation, Go-DBE was able to report the businesses in that region that received notification of the procurement opportunity, see if the notification was opened, and see if they submitted a bid or proposal on the opportunity. Providing detailed information to these types of

questions allows for greater transparency to Tennesseans and serves as a way to monitor and track progress.

Service Improvement

The goal of becoming more efficient and effective in our reporting is what drove this project to fruition. One major project that highlights the service improvement brought about by the DIT-II initiative occurred when five State universities transitioned out of the umbrella of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and became independent State Procurement Agencies (SPAs). Prior to the move, the SPAs diversity spend data was not visible due to their data being included in a lump sum figure by TBR. With the SPAs new independence came new rules and requirements for their reporting, particularly as it relates to Go-DBE. While the separation of the five universities was initially thought to be an enormous challenge, it emerged as an opportunity to showcase service improvement brought about by DIT-II. The SPAs are not located in rural or at-risk counties in the State, but they are surrounded by counties that fit that definition. The DIT-II allows Go-DBE to now include procurement opportunities from the State universities to increase the number of opportunities sent and tracked to small and diversity businesses in rural and at-risk counties which will initiate more participation and contract awards.

The service improvement component to the DIT-II is substantial to the State of Tennessee as it has removed the uncertainty of whether an agency is meeting its annual diversity goal. Each year, Go-DBE meets with the heads of each State agency to set diversity goals for the fiscal year. The diversity goals are derived by looking at the agency's current contracts, upcoming procurements for the fiscal year, Go-DBE's database of qualified businesses to do the work, and the agency's historical trends on past attainment of the diversity goals set. Diversity goals vary from agency to agency and can change from year to year. Due to the amount of information gathered for each agency's procurements, it was impossible for Go-DBE to provide real-time statistics for every agency simultaneously because of the high volume of procurements that were distributed and awarded daily across the State. Prior to DIT-II, agencies were notified at the end of the fiscal year during Go-DBE's annual State agency meeting of their progress. Regardless of how hard our agencies worked to meet and exceed their diversity goals, it was difficult for them to gauge where they were without access to consistent status reports throughout the fiscal year. Many of them expressed feelings of inadequacy and failure for missing the mark and repeatedly asked to receive reports more frequently. With the launch of DIT-II, agencies have the ability to access information on the amount of diversity spend accumulated throughout the year, which makes it easier for agencies to report their diversity status to their leadership and increase diversity participation. Go-DBE has gone from providing information to agencies once a year after the fact to making critical, up-to-date information available to them daily. This service improvement now allows agencies to create their own reports, graphs, and spreadsheets at the click of a button and allows Go-DBE to continue to be customer focused on assisting diversity businesses obtain contracts with the State of Tennessee.

Cost Reduction

In the short time DIT-II has been implemented, Go-DBE has already seen a huge Return on Investment (ROI). One of the immediate returns we experienced was a reduction in reporting time. It was not uncommon for complex labor-intensive statistical questions taking staff

several days to collect, sort, and analyze data from multiple sources in order to respond. The DIT-II project has reduced response time by as much as 75% keeping staff from falling behind in their daily duties.

Another related cost savings realized is the increase in diversity businesses participating in the State's competitive solicitations and being awarded contracts. With the goal of utilizing taxpayer dollars efficiently by securing the best products and services at the best possible price, the State of Tennessee's increase of diversity contracting is tied to the State's overall cost saving on contracts. Some of the savings passed on to the State by diversity businesses, is due to the lack of huge overhead costs. The State of Tennessee currently has multiple Statewide Contracts (SWCs) represented by diversity businesses. The State recently awarded eleven SWCs to diversity businesses resulting in a 44% or a \$26.5 million savings to the State.

Lastly, DIT-II enabled us to gain cost avoidance in the validation of our data. Now that DIT-II is in place and thoroughly tested, Go-DBE no longer has the need for external parties to validate information from other agencies, as validation is handled prior to the information being integrated into DIT-II. With the frequency of the data being updated weekly, as opposed to yearly, we are experiencing a real time data surge versus old data. Our staff is now able to use that time on other pressing Go-DBE initiatives, allowing us to increase our productivity and further advance our goals of increasing diversity spend Statewide.

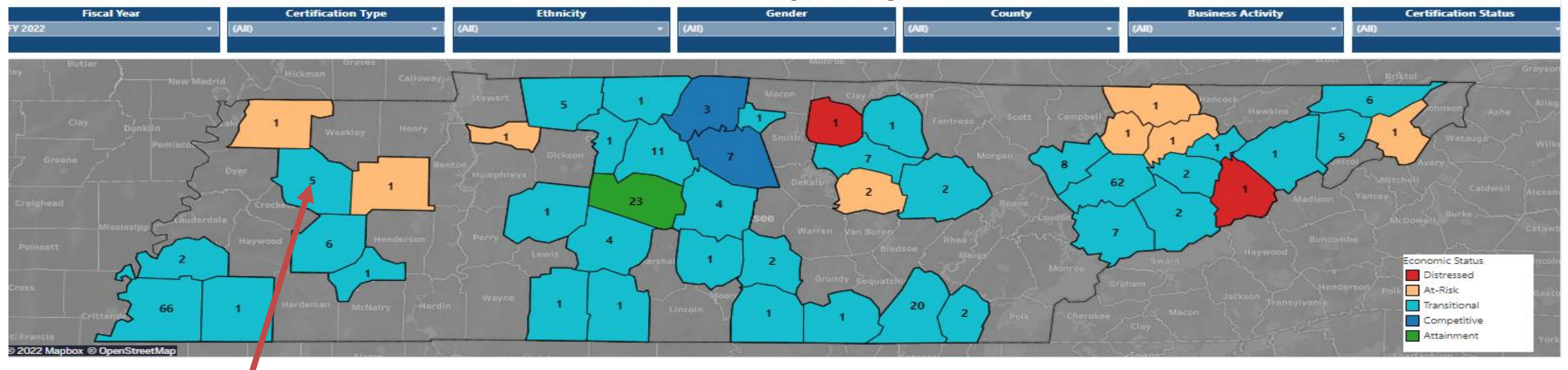
Conclusion

The old adage, "You are only as strong as your weakest link," is typically used when referencing sports, but we think it is also applicable when referencing DIT-II. The State saw a problem with 39 of our 95 counties being in the bottom 25% of the nation's poverty level. Businesses in rural and at-risk counties are suffering to keep their doors open and desperate to find opportunities to compete and generate income for the business, their families, and their communities. The State made a conscious decision to change the outlook of its rural and at-risk counties. The first Executive Order for the State of Tennessee's current Governor was to emphasize the development and success of rural counties. The Executive Order required all 22 executive offices to create a plan of how each would better serve rural counties. Now the State is sharing its progress through the use of DIT-II. DIT-II gives a real-time snapshot of the State of Tennessee's commitment and progress in contracting with small and diversity businesses throughout the State.

DIT-II is innovative in how it is utilizing the data to share its story with the people it impacts most- the public. DIT-II is transferable and can be replicated by organizations serious about making changes to the way they do business. Knowing where to find the necessary data to collect in order to see trends may not be easy initially. However, once identified and located, the process is much easier and more reliable. The ability to respond to inquiries accurately and quickly is a huge plus to improving customer service and relations and the cost reduction in time can be realized immediately. With a deep responsibility to its residents, the State of Tennessee is serious about supporting and uplifting small and diversity businesses who have been historically impeded from opportunities. The DIT-II project is just another way the State is stepping up to show how, when, and where dollars are being spent. We are very proud of this accomplishment and hope that it will enable other states who are serious about making a difference with its underserved communities.

Certified Business Spend by Fiscal Year

In-state TN Businesses only



View when hovering over Gibson County

County:	Gibson
Economic Status:	Transitional
Number of Businesses:	5
Amount Paid:	\$12,739,481
Urban/Rural:	Rural

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number of Businesses	Amount Paid
Hispanic American	1	\$7,873,663
Non-Minority	3	\$3,863,938
African American	1	\$937,412
Native American	1	\$64,469
Grand Total	6	\$12,739,481

Business Activity

Business Activity	Number of Businesses	Amount Paid
Construction	5	\$12,675,013
Medical/Healthcare	1	\$64,469
Grand Total	6	\$12,739,481



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*



2022 George Cronin
Awards for Procurement Excellence
★ awards for ★
Submissions
Excellence

TM



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Alaska

Department of Administration
Office of Procurement and Property Management



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

Procurement Self-Inspection Program (SIP) TM

Executive Summary

The Alaska Self-Inspection Program (SIP) was introduced in 2022 and is a means to proactively identify trends and compliance issues with the goal of improving the quality of the resultant contract files as well as the overall acquisition health of the unit, while simultaneously seeking to minimize protest or appeals with merit. It's an innovative and pro-active methodology used to identify weaknesses before they become systemic issues. The SIP creates an element of accountability, which strengthens the sense of ethics and acts as a deterrent for unethical behavior generally prevalent in procurement fraud cases. This accountability results in fewer occurrences of procurement violations and higher compliances with rules and regulations which in turn leads to a reduction in costs associated with protests, delays, or do-overs.

The SIP process focuses on previous contract actions on active contract files. A thorough checklist was developed specifically for this program, and it is utilized to ensure uniformity and consistency. Through review of those actions and through gap analysis, the SIP program identifies best practices, trends, or areas of concern and generates recommendations for sharing lessons learned, improvement areas and/or effective corrective action plans.

Innovation - The SIP is a new program, created to be pro-active in finding best practices, trends and issues, to improve the quality of contract files and overall acquisition health of procurement units.

Transferability - Although created in Alaska with Alaskan procurement law in mind, the SIP is easily adaptable to accommodate differing state laws and policies which allows it to be easily utilized in any State.

Service Improvement - The SIP results in gains of efficiency and service levels from fewer procurement violations, reduces sustained protests with merit, and minimizes other costly delays and/or do-overs, giving more time back to the departments and procurement professionals.

Cost Reduction – Time is money. By giving more time back to the departments that was previously spent on investigating procurement violations, responding to protests and appeals, or completely re-doing a solicitation, the monetary savings can add up to hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.

Innovation

The SIP program is a pro-active approach to identify trends and issues to improve the quality of contract files and the overall acquisition health of procurement units. It is a tool for identifying weaknesses or inaccurate processes that may have previously gone unnoticed in which such flawed processes contribute to a systemic failure due to a faulty perception of how things “should be done.” By identifying issues early through the SIP program and communicating those findings through training and development, long-term systemic issues can be minimized and corrected.

This is a new program that was developed in the Policy and Oversight (P&O) section of the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) for the State of Alaska. The Alaska SIP is loosely modeled after the United States Air Force Compliance Inspection Program which has been in practice for many years.

One department is audited each month. A department is notified weeks before the planned audit occurs. The department is given the checklist which will be used in the audit and selects the files to be audited. The SIP team audits the files and writes up a report for each file audited. The reports are shared with the CPO for review and comment. After the CPO has reviewed, a copy of the reports is given to and discussed with the department procurement manager so they are aware of any trends or issues that may have been found. The SIP team leader meets with the training officer to discuss problem areas that may require more focused training to create a stronger procurement unit.

P&O conducted a test audit on one department's contract files in January 2022 using the SIP program. It successfully found trends and issues that were previously unidentified weaknesses in that department's procurement unit. Identifying those trends and issues enabled P&O to work in collaboration with the state procurement Training Officer to focus training on those areas to improve the overall acquisition health of the procurement unit.

With this method of pro-active correction, Alaska expects a decrease in the occurrence of procurement violations among state procurement staff; a decrease in the occurrences of vendor protests on solicitations and awards, and fewer costly delays and/or do-overs during the solicitation process, all of which result in more efficiency and savings for the state.

Transferability

The Alaska SIP is easily adaptable. It has not required any extra funding for development or roll out.

The Alaska SIP checklist is a Microsoft word document broken down into three sections: 1) solicitation/award, 2) contract administration, and 3) federally funded contract. Each section lists the items that are required to be present in the file, the statute, regulation, or policy, or for federally funded projects, the CFR relating to that item, and if that item was present in the file or not.

Each file is compared to the checklist for compliance. Each state may differ slightly from another, however, it should be easy to add or delete line items and/or sections on the checklist, depending on the individual state statutes, regulations, or policies.

The findings report was created as a PDF fillable form. It is a blank form that has spaces for the questionnaire sections in the audit. The findings are recorded in each section, along with any required actions or training that may be needed. This form is also easily changeable to coincide with the sections on a particular state's checklist.

Alaska decided on an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of the audited files, the findings, and SIP team comments, as the Excel format is easily searchable for future reference. A new tab on the spreadsheet will be created for each new calendar year of audits. Creating the spreadsheet was a relatively simple process and easy to manipulate until we were satisfied with the data captured.

Service Improvement

Three of the SIP's expected outcomes are demonstrated below:

PROCUREMENT VIOLATIONS:

PROBLEM: Violations are time consuming, and can result in protests, solicitation delays, and do-overs. An average procurement violation investigation and report take 40 hours for the procurement manager to complete, 5 hours or more for the policy chief to review, and another hour of CPO time to review/approve. That's an average of 46 hours to address and correct a violation. This is only the average, there have been procurement violations that have taken several weeks of time to investigate, document, and review, as high as 200 hours total. Historically, Alaska has averaged 10 procurement violations a year. That adds up to 460-2000 hours.

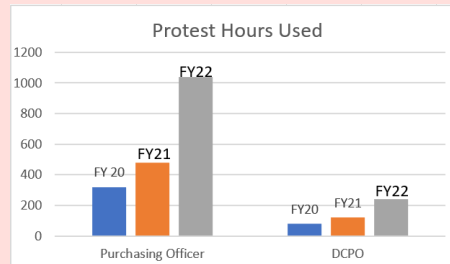
ROOT CAUSE: Lack of knowledge, lack of accountability

RESULT: Creating accountability and applying corrective action, over time, reduces (virtually eliminates) violations and returns those 460-2000 hours to more productive value-added activities.

PROTESTS:

PROBLEM: Protests are time consuming and can result in appeals and court hearings.

A protest averages 100 hours to resolve. On average, 80 hours are spent by the purchasing officer (PO), and another 20 hours are spent by the Deputy Chief Procurement Officer (DCPO) in the drafting and reviewing of the response.



Alaska recorded 13 protests in FY22 to date. That averages out to 1040 hours of PO time and 240 hours used by the DCPO.

ROOT CAUSE: Ambiguous language in the solicitation or “sour grapes” from not winning award.

RESULT: Using the SIP will decrease protests that result from ambiguous language, with a conservative estimate of a 75% reduction. Using the numbers from FY22, this alone gives back 960 hours to be used on more productive value-added activities.

SOLICITATION DO-OVERS:

PROBLEM: Minimum of 76 days for posting, evaluations and scoring, negotiations, notice of award, and award. Besides causing delays for the stakeholders, this also can cause loss of federal funding if deadlines aren’t met.

ROOT CAUSE: Ambiguous language in the solicitation.

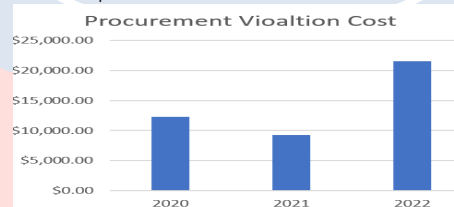
RESULT: Using the SIP, solicitation do-overs will be virtually non-existent, as accountability is increased, and ambiguity is decreased. This returns 76 days that would have been lost due to the re-solicitation process back to the stakeholders, and ensures deadlines are met, and funding is secure.

Cost Reduction

The cost savings listed below are best estimates. They were derived from known costs and estimating a conservative amount of possible savings, based on data collected from the testing phase in Alaska.

PROCUREMENT VIOLATION COSTS: \$21,149/annual savings

Average cost of a procurement violation \$3083.

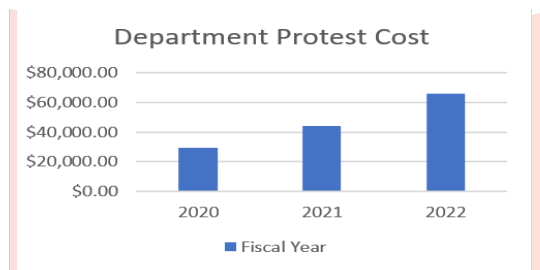


CURRENT DATA: FY22 – 7 procurement violations to date x \$3,083 = \$21,581.

RESULT: Use of the SIP is expected to reduce procurement violations by 98%. Using FY22 numbers, that would mean a savings of \$21,149 a year.

PROTEST/ APPEAL/ COURT HEARING COSTS: \$304,023/annual savings

PROTESTS: Average cost per protest = \$7,360.



CURRENT DATA: FY22 - 9 protests x \$7,360 = \$66,240/year

RESULT: Use of the SIP is expected to reduce protests by 75%. Using FY22 data, this is a savings of \$49,680/year.

PROTEST APPEALS: Average cost per appeal = \$12,000.

CURRENT DATA: FY22 – 4 appeals x \$12,000/appeal = \$48,000/year

RESULT: Use of the SIP is expected to virtually eliminate appeals on protests. Using FY22 data this is a savings of \$48,000/year.

ADMINISTRATIVE COURT HEARINGS: Each hearing cost averages \$53,000 per case.

CURRENT DATA: Alaska has had 31 procurement cases in the last 8 years, for a total of \$1,650,750.

RESULT: Court hearings on protests are generally the result of ambiguous language in a solicitation. Through use of the SIP, Alaska expects to virtually eliminate procurement court hearings, thus saving the state an average of \$206,343.75 a year.

SOLICITATION DO-OVER COSTS:

\$51,675/annual savings

Average cost of a solicitation do-over \$10,335.

CURRENT DATA: Alaska averages 5 do-overs a year among the various departments, for a total of \$51,675.

RESULT: Through the use of the SIP, Alaska expects to virtually eliminate the need for solicitation do-overs, thus saving the state an average of \$51,675 a year.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the SIP was created as a pro-active tool to be used in reaching the gold standard of procurement for the State of Alaska. It is easily adaptable and didn't require any funding for development or rollout.

With this method of pro-active correction, Alaska expects a decrease in the occurrence of procurement violations among state procurement staff; a decrease in the occurrences of vendor protests/appeals/court hearings on solicitations and awards and fewer costly delays and/or do-overs during the solicitation process, all of which result in more efficiency in the procurement unit and cost savings for the State.



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Arizona

Department of Administration
Division of Procurement



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

**State Procurement Office (SPO)
Academy**

Executive Summary

The State of Arizona State Procurement Office (SPO) with the help of subject matter experts (SMEs) across the state's agencies, successfully developed and implemented the SPO Academy. The SPO Academy's purpose is to provide participants with the foundational knowledge and hands-on experience needed to be successful in public procurement. Participants explore the influence of statutes, regulations, policies, and the overall structure of the procurement office and learn about important topics that will make them successful in their procurement role.

The SPO Academy has been delivered through several different methods including instructor-led training (ILT) similar to classroom training, virtual instructor-led training (VILT) in which a learner is able to take training via webinars and video conferencing tools which are led by an instructor, and eLearning including both computer-based learning (CBT) and microlearning. Since the pandemic in 2020 much of the workforce went remote and continues today. The SPO Academy quickly acclimated to the changes and continues to be successful in the delivery of training while reducing costs for the State of Arizona.



Innovation

The State Procurement Office determined the need to develop and implement an effective statewide training program for all procurement staff. In 2019, SPO brought onboard a Chief Learning Officer (CLO) to help with best practices and the development of the program. Prior to 2019, a statewide training program was not available, therefore the program had to be built from the ground up. The SPO Academy incorporates a blended learning approach with opportunities for training to be delivered through CBT and ILT.

A training workgroup was created during the planning stages of the SPO Academy which consisted of procurement staff across the state. During these training workgroup meetings, staff collaborated with feedback and curated content for future training sessions. A list of SMEs was generated from this workgroup and these SMEs would help with presenting SPO Academy content. It was also identified that a training needs assessment would be helpful in determining procurement training needs across the enterprise. The training needs assessment identified what topics procurement staff needed additional training on. Today, a training needs assessment is conducted before the beginning of each fiscal year to determine needs for the new year. Additionally, the state procurement office conducted agency site visits to determine procurement training needs, this helped determine best practices and strategies.

Once data was collected and analyzed, a four-year training roadmap was developed. This training plan consisted of a broad range of procurement topics and included proposed development, piloting, and implementation dates. The SPO Academy includes topics such as Procurement 101, Procurement Ethics, Request for Proposal, Request for Quotation, Protests, Contract Administration, and Negotiation Planning. Today, SPO Academy is moving into its fourth year. Overall, more than 55 state agencies have attended SPO Academy training with a 92% average satisfaction rate, which is measured by feedback surveys after each training session.

Prior to the SPO Academy implementation, a statewide procurement training program was not available. This resulted in inconsistent knowledge and procedures across state agencies. Today, staff seeking delegation must attend and complete training sessions provided by the SPO Academy before their delegation is granted. This ensures agencies across the state receive the same knowledge and best practices for their procurement needs at their agencies.

Transferability

The development and implementation of a training program can easily be adopted by other procurement organizations. An effective procurement training program is a proven way to help new and current procurement staff become familiar and stay current with statutes, regulations, policies, and the overall structure of the procurement office. A training program ensures that the same information is taught to all state agencies across the state. This consistency increases productivity and ensures staff follows the appropriate procedures.

Before the pandemic in 2020, the majority of SPO Academy courses were offered through the traditional face-to-face instructor-led training. These courses were well attended by SPO staff and other state agencies seeking procurement knowledge as they provided opportunities to gain hands-on experience and knowledge sharing across different agencies. As the world quickly changed around us due to the pandemic in 2020, we faced a new challenge: all our current courses would need to be offered virtually. The CLO and SMEs collaborated to make these changes. Thankfully, the CLO had experience conducting virtual training, and a platform to conduct webinars was readily available. Leadership and SMEs were all on board to move forward to a virtual learning environment, training was scheduled (as the SPO Academy couldn't come to a complete stop). Courses were revisited to ensure virtual course offerings were similarly interactive to the in-person courses and participants received the most value from attending a virtual course.

The State of Arizona continues to work from home today, similar to when we converted to virtual training in 2020, so much of our training continues to be offered online. We currently utilize Cisco Webex and Google Meets for all of our webinar training. Webex allows us to track participants to ensure users receive credit for attending a course that goes toward their delegation. To keep our webinar courses engaging, we utilize several different interactive activities such as polling, quizzes, and word clouds. The state procurement office also provides learning opportunities through traditional computer-based training and microlearning. Microlearning training has gained popularity within the last couple of years. Microlearning training is a short 2-5 minute video focused on a specific topic. Microlearning enhances learning and performance through short pieces of content and has been extremely well received by our agency customers.

Service Improvement

Since the implementation of the SPO Academy the state procurement office and SMEs have offered over 40 opportunities for staff to attend courses to gain additional knowledge on public procurement. Over 55 state agencies, commissions, and boards have attended SPO Academy training bringing our cumulative total number of attendees to over 1,700 participants. At the end of each training session, a feedback survey is sent out to all participants. Overall the SPO Academy satisfaction ratings are over 92 percent. The State Procurement Office's vision is: *to be the #1 procurement office in the nation, where adding value is the norm, and customer service is second to none*. In order to fulfill this vision, we take all feedback from participants and are always looking for ways to improve the training offered by the SPO academy. Feedback surveys are always provided to SMEs and reviewed to ensure we go back to the drawing board and make changes prior to the next time the course is offered to address concerns or suggestions. To ensure participation, we provide procurement staff with a SPO Academy calendar so they are aware of what classes are upcoming. Users can then sign up through our Learning Management System (LMS). Reminders are sent to those that have signed up the day before to ensure they attend the training. Before the beginning of a new Fiscal Year, a training needs assessment is sent out to all procurement staff at the state agencies. The needs assessment is utilized to determine training needs including new topics for the new fiscal year. Due to the success of the SPO Academy, procurement staff seeking delegations at their agencies are required to take courses provided by the SPO Academy training team. Approximately 100 staff have requested a delegation. For staff to attain delegation, they are required to take certain SPO Academy training prior to their delegation and additional training within one year of their delegation. The State Procurement Office has also worked with other agencies and assisted them with their own training matrix which includes training provided by SPO through the SPO Academy.

George Cronin
Award
Excellence

TM

Cost Reduction

Procurement staff development is key to cost savings as trained staff will be less likely to make costly errors. A well-trained procurement professional is also more efficient in their role. The development of microlearning reduces overall training development costs by up to 50% as compared to traditional CBT and ILT.

By implementing microlearning into the learning and development of procurement staff, the State of Arizona saved approximately \$2,850 in reduced training time costs (per new/current employee). The State Procurement Office (not including other State agencies), had a turnover rate of 17% in 2021, which directly resulted in a direct time-saving total cost reduction of approximately \$23,000. In addition, the training offered through the SPO academy alleviated new hire training conducted by managers, which resulted in roughly \$4,000 savings per employee; which resulted in around \$32,000 for the calendar year of 2021.

From a training perspective, the cost reduction for developing microlearning compared to CBT is approximately \$2,050 saved per microlearning created, this adds to an approximate total cost saving of \$14,350.

A large, semi-transparent watermark logo is centered on the page. It features a blue gear-like border with a white circle in the center. Inside the circle, the text "GEORGE CRONIN" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below it, "★ awards for ★" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The words "Procurement" and "Excellence" are written in a large, white, cursive font. A small "TM" trademark symbol is located at the bottom right of the gear border.

GEORGE CRONIN

★ awards for ★

*Procurement
Excellence*

TM

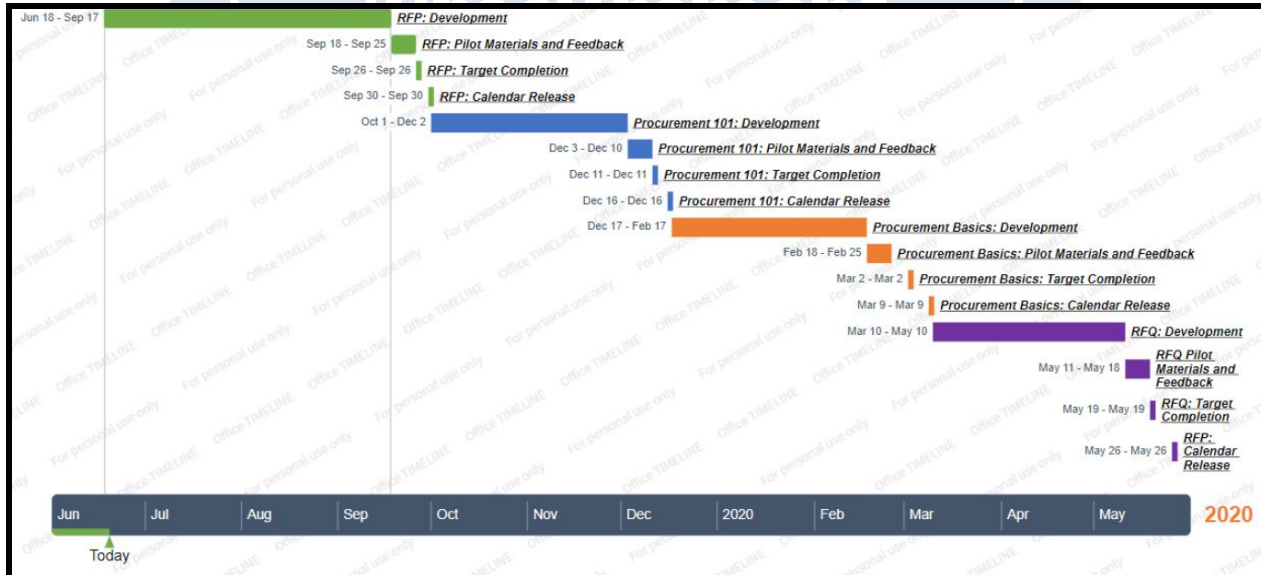
SPO Academy First Year Road Map

Objectives: The State Procurement Office (SPO) Academy will provide participants with the foundational knowledge and hands-on experience needed to be successful in public procurement. Participants will explore the influence of statutes, regulations, policies and the overall structure of the public procurement office as well as learn about the importance of the topic areas below.

Timeframes listed for the training courses are general guidelines. The courses may be delivered through computer based training (CBT) and/or instructor led training (ILT) formats.

SPO Training Menu									
Year	Activities	Topic	Delivery	Description/Objective	Development	Pilot Materials and Feedback	Target Completion	Training Implementation	Audience
Year 1	Develop course outline and training materials	Request for Proposal (RFP): Solicit & Award	ILT (CBT after ILT pilot)	Understand the planning and issuing phases of conducting an RFP	6/18/19 to 9/17/19	9/18/19 to 9/25/19	9/26/19	11/8/19	CPO, Mgr, Buyer, Requisitioner
	Develop course outline and training materials	Procurement 101 - Public Non-Procurement Professionals	ILT	Dive into the specifics of public procurement	10/1/19 to 12/2/19	12/3/19 to 12/10/19	12/11/19	12/12/19	CPO, Mgr, Buyer, Requisitioner
	Develop course outline and training materials	Procurement 101 - Public Procurement Professionals	ILT	Dive into the specifics of public procurement	12/2/19	12/9/19	1/7/20	1/16/20	CPO, Mgr, Buyer, Requisitioner
	Develop course outline and training materials	Procurement 101/Basics	ILT	Understand the basic principles of public procurement	12/17/19 to 2/17/20	2/18/20	2/19/20	2/20/20	CPO, Mgr, Buyer, Requisitioner
	Develop course outline and training materials	RFP Webinar Series	Webinar	Understand the planning and issuing phases of conducting an RFP	3/10/20 to 5/10/20	5/5/20 to 5/12/20	5/12/20	5/13- 5/21/20	CPO, Mgr, Buyer, Requisitioner
	Develop course outline and training materials	RFQ	Webinar	Understand the RFQ process	4/13/20 to 6/11/20	6/11/20 to 6/18/20	6/24/20	6/25/20	CPO, Mgr, Buyer, Requisitioner

SPO Academy First Year Gantt Chart



SPO Academy - Procurement Ethics 2022 (Webinar)



The screenshot shows a Zoom webinar interface. At the top, there are five video thumbnails with names: Jessica Klein, Kelly Wagner, Chuck Grube, John Jimenez, and Call-in User_3. Below the thumbnails is a large white slide with the State Procurement Office logo (an orange circle with a white outline of Arizona) and the text "State Procurement Office" in black. Underneath the logo is the tagline "Where adding value is the norm" in orange. To the right of the tagline is the "ARIZONA" logo with "OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL" and "PROCUREMENT" below it. The main title of the slide is "Procurement Ethics" in large black font, followed by the date "April 21, 2022". Below that, it says "Presented by:" followed by three names: "ADOA Compliance Deputy AD Jessica Klein", "Assistant Attorney General Charles Grube", and "Assistant Attorney General Kelly Wagner". A small number "1" is in the bottom right corner of the slide.

SPO Academy - Negotiations Planning 2022 (In-Person)



State of Connecticut

Department of *Administrative Services*
Procurement



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

**Implementing Standardized
Cross-Functional Sourcing
Project Teams to Increase
Collaboration**

Executive Summary

In 2022, Connecticut's Department of Administrative Services (DAS) implemented a new standardized approach to staffing and launching the solicitation process with agency departments. Historically, there was inconsistency in how DAS Procurement Contract Specialists started a sourcing process for Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or Invitations to Bid (ITBs), particularly in how Contract Specialists engaged relevant stakeholders, such as contract users in other agencies. While subject matter experts were sometimes consulted, DAS Contract Specialists typically viewed their role as transactional in getting the required documentation ready to release an ITB or RFP to the street. In addition, there was rarely intentionality in engaging internal DAS stakeholders as early in the solicitation process as possible, including legal and supplier diversity.

Following a listening tour by leadership within DAS Procurement, new Director Gene Burk sought to improve collaboration within the procurement function, drawing inspiration from his background in fine arts and theater. As Director Burk commented, "Every solicitation needs to be considered like the opening night of a play. There needs to be a plan to successfully get there." Bringing this mentality to procurement, DAS now approaches every solicitation with the same level of care and planning, with Contract Specialists serving as project managers and identifying all the relevant stakeholders from the onset. This approach allows all voices to be heard and supports an exchange of ideas to ensure scopes of work properly communicate state needs, performance requirements appropriately set baselines for accountability, and every solicitation maximizes opportunities for new and more diverse suppliers.

In practice, once a Contract Specialist is assigned an ITB or RFP, the Contract Specialist then recruits a comprehensive sourcing team that includes a DAS assigned attorney, a representative of the Supplier Diversity Team to ensure effective outreach to Small Business Enterprises (SBEs)/Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), and multiple user department representatives with experience utilizing the contract or interest in the new solicitation. Once the sourcing team is established, the Contract Specialist uses a kickoff meeting with templated discovery questions to effectively incorporate key inputs for the RFP or ITB and to establish a project implementation plan that clearly defines roles and responsibilities, as well as target milestone dates to streamline the overall solicitation process through contract award. The Contract Specialist continues to engage this comprehensive sourcing team to stay on task efficiently and effectively through additional virtual touch points throughout the procurement process.

While the new process is still in its early stages, already DAS procurement is seeing significant quantitative and qualitative benefits from the revamped approach. In terms of overall procurement cycle times, DAS Procurement is experiencing approximately a 35% reduction in the number of days from a sourcing need identified to a contract executed. In addition, feedback from user agencies reflect a much more positive experience. One agency department stated, "DAS Procurement was extremely helpful both guiding us through the process, but also giving us a voice to ensure the specifications met our needs. Their project management approach had a big impact both in terms of meeting our ambitious timelines, but also in ensuring a competitive group of respondents."

Innovation

The following details highlight what is innovative about the new DAS Procurement sourcing team approach:

- 1) **Integration with Online Tools.** The sourcing team now manages all ongoing deliverables and communication through Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, and OneDrive, which allows for even greater efficiency and transparency for various internal stakeholders. These platforms are used to provide comments and feedback directly on documents to prevent countless emails back and forth. These tools, combined with regular status meetings, keep project timelines on track and

ensure stakeholders feel included in the process. As one stakeholder commented, “These virtual tools work really smoothly. We can flag issues, while others are still working on key documents speeding up the timeline to get our solicitation ready to hit the street.”

- 2) **Moving Legal Input to the Beginning of the Process.** In 2019, DAS Procurement underwent a LEAN Process Improvement Sprint. One of the top takeaways was that legal staff should be involved earlier in the procurement process. Too often, legal wasn’t engaged until contract negotiations began, which meant significant delays when legal didn’t fully understand the transaction or had concerns about the structure of the proposed agreement. By involving legal at the start of a solicitation, this proactive approach allows legal to flag any high-level concerns to protect the State and to streamline eventual contract execution - making legal expertise a fully-integrated part of the project team, rather than an obstacle to the process.
- 3) **Ensuring Supplier Diversity is at the Table for Every Solicitation.** Contract Specialists were always encouraged to think about creating opportunities for small and diverse businesses. However, there was no formal process to connect individual solicitations to the broader effort by DAS Supplier Diversity to register SBE/MBEs, and solicitation requirements were not written with SBE/MBEs in mind. This new sourcing team model puts the Supplier Diversity Team at the table from the start of the procurement process. This allows Supplier Diversity to impact key decisions such as tailoring the scope to make it accessible for newer entrants, as well as sharing out on likely businesses that could compete for the specific opportunity.
- 4) **Pathways for Additional Stakeholder Engagement.** Since the process is designed to be inclusive, as Contract Specialists identify other important stakeholder roles such as information technology, environmental sustainability, or accessibility for individuals with disabilities, these stakeholders can be seamlessly integrated into the sourcing team.

Transferability

Transferability is at the core of the new DAS Procurement sourcing process. Rather than a massive strategic or technological initiative that involves millions of dollars in new resources, this innovation is simply a cultural and organizational shift to make the sourcing process more collaborative and proactive. As Director Burk commented, “This approach is based on years of experience in the private sector establishing purchasing councils in large organizations to foster partnerships with stakeholders.”

Often public sector procurement gets caught up in historical processes that don’t reflect the needs and changing environment of purchasing. As Director Burk added, “I was quite surprised to learn about the lack of collaboration in public sector procurement, especially the lack of integration of attorneys with the solicitation process.”

Furthermore, the pandemic offered a unique silver lining to reorient all stakeholders towards this new approach. New technological tools such as Microsoft TEAMS made it much more seamless to build larger project sourcing teams that could collaborate via shared documents and virtual meetings rather than having to coordinate in-person discussions prior to the pandemic. In addition, broader equity concerns related to ensuring a more diverse set of suppliers receive state contracts brought additional momentum to formalize the Supplier Diversity Team’s role in sourcing beyond just the administration of the set-aside program.

The sourcing playbook described in the appendix offers a simple roadmap for other jurisdictions to follow in reorganizing their own sourcing approach. By simply redefining key roles such as treating Contract Specialists as project managers, legal staff as proactive thought partners, Supplier Diversity as a strategic entity to help boost solicitation competition, and client agencies as collaborative subject

matter experts, a jurisdiction's sourcing approach can become significantly more efficient, and outcomes driven.

Service Improvement

DAS Procurement's new sourcing process is fundamentally about improving services by making solicitation drafting more strategic, collaborative, efficient, and results-driven. Some areas of improvement include:

- 1) **Writing Better Solicitations.** Prior to its implementation, solicitation writing lacked consistency in collecting input from all stakeholders at the outset of an engagement. This resulted in ITB/RFP documents that were incomplete, inaccurate, and not as robust or comprehensive as they could have been. Now, solicitations are drafted collaboratively, informed by expertise from, DAS, partner agencies, subject matter experts, and more extensive market research. With more effectively communicated solicitations, respondents can more easily demonstrate how they will meet the state's needs increasing the likelihood that awarded contracts will result in successful supplier relationships.
- 2) **Engaging More Diverse Suppliers.** Because of insufficient attention to opportunities for small and diverse businesses, as well as marketing opportunities to the broader supplier community, there was a lack of competition on many bids. Historically, DAS Procurement experienced nearly 20% of its solicitations garnering only one response from the supplier community. In addition, despite a robust certification program for SBE/MBEs with over 2000 companies certified, only about 14% of agency spending on DAS Master Contracts went to SBEs with approximately 6% of overall spending on MBEs. This new approach is showing early signs of progress in increasing competition and awarding additional state contracts to SBEs/MBEs.
- 3) **Improving Collaboration.** With the new sourcing approach, DAS Procurement can break down functional silos to identify and solve problems, as Contract Specialists are empowered with the responsibility to identify relevant internal stakeholders and leverage their input. As one internal stakeholder commented, "This collaborative group allowed us to each feed off each other's comments and ensure we anticipated potential procurement challenges." In one specific example procuring for pheasants, a critical need for CT's conservation efforts, a DAS Procurement Contract Specialist was able to convene a subject matter expert in charge of the program, a representative from the agency business office, the Supplier Diversity Team, and legal, all to discuss ways to ensure as robust of supplier pool applied to the solicitation as possible with a final contract that would be easy to utilize by state agencies. As one user department commented, "Having this full group together meant we covered all potential questions that any one person might not have anticipated. This prevents these issues from arising six months into the process that requires us to start over to and delays the project execution."

Cost Reduction

Since the new sourcing approach just launched, it is difficult to fully quantify likely cost savings. However, DAS Procurement is able to make estimates based on several key performance indicators that are starting to trend in a more efficient and productive direction. These include the following data points:

- 1) **More Efficient Procurement Cycle Times.** By assembling the appropriate team of stakeholders at the outset of the project, DAS ensures all voices are heard and the opportunity exists for stakeholders to share their perspectives and ask questions about a project. Unasked questions and unaddressed issues can result in rework at every stage of the project, reducing the

likelihood of effective outcomes, delaying procurement cycles, and ultimately increasing costs. Early data suggests DAS Procurement cycle times have been reduced by nearly 35% since the introduction of this new process. This increased efficiency both reduces labor hours focused on each solicitation and ensures contracts are executed sooner, allowing agencies and residents to benefit from delivered goods/services in a timelier manner.

- 2) **Increased Competition on Each Solicitation.** Given Supplier Diversity's more embedded role within the sourcing process, DAS Procurement can now take agency requirements and needs to do actual outreach to newer and more diverse suppliers. This often allows the state to secure a better price through more competition, as more suppliers are engaged about the procurement. Agencies that previously only had one or two options now have many more because the Supplier Diversity Initiative is doing that outreach. This also results in having conversations about awarding contracts to multiple suppliers, rather than just one, which allows for side-by-side comparison of costs and gives agencies additional flexibility to save money when issuing purchase orders off a master contract. While it is too early to see significant increases in the number of bids or awards to MBE/SBEs, DAS Procurement now has reporting processes in place to track these KPIs in the coming year.
- 3) **Improved Perception of Central Procurement by User Agencies.** With the new project management approach that formalizes pathways for agency input, DAS Procurement is better positioned to meet its mission of true customer service to its client agencies. Historical surveys demonstrate that DAS Procurement could benefit from an even stronger perception of collaboration from state agencies, especially given the influx of new staff across the state in recent years. By giving user departments a real seat at the table where they are coached on getting these solicitations out the door, it encourages more state agencies to look to DAS Procurement to meet their sourcing needs and potentially reduces the use of inefficient or non-cost-effective procurement methods where individual agencies feel the need to procure on their own.





★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*




TM





Appendix:

CT DAS Solicitation/Sourcing Kickoff Process (Current Draft, to be finalized in July 2022)

The following table captures the steps in the Solicitation/Sourcing Kickoff process:

1.	<p>The Contract Team Leader assigns the Agency’s DAS-BID Request to the Contract Analyst/Specialist</p>
2.	<p>Check to see if an active Statewide Contract exists. If so, it is mandatory for the agency to utilize it to fulfill request.</p> <p> To look for a statewide contract, follow these steps: https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/ContractBoard</p> <p>If YES, a statewide contract exists - the Contract Analyst/Specialist will notify the agency via email or conversation to purchase from it. Then Contract Analyst/Specialist will deny the DAS-BID in Core-CT adding a standard notation to the requestor: <i>DAS has identified an alternative contract to support this request</i> (Contract Specialist shall detail the contract number) and save a PDF copy of this step for solicitation/contract file.</p> <p>NOTE: The agency may respond that the contract does not meet their needs and provide documentation as to why and/or how.</p> <p>If NO, a statewide contract does not exist - Go to next step.</p>
3.	<p>Check to see if there is a NASPO ValuePoint Cooperative contract or other additional contracting opportunities (see NASPO section) that may be utilized for the procurement.</p> <p> Go to the NASPO website to search: https://www.naspovaluepoint.org/categories/</p> <p>If YES, go to the NASPO [link to section], the Contract Analyst/Specialist will notify the agency via email or conversation to purchase from it. Then Contract Analyst/Specialist will deny the DAS-BID in Core-CT adding a standard notation to the requestor: <i>DAS has identified an alternative contract to support this request</i> (Contract Specialist shall detail the contract number) and save a PDF copy of this step for solicitation/contract file.</p> <p>If NO, go to next step.</p>
4.	<p>Approve DAS-BID in Core-CT. If determined to solicit, Contract Specialist must approve and enter standard notation to the requestor of next steps in the process stating: <i>DAS has accepted this request and will communicate next steps via email and/or invitation to a Solicitation Kickoff Meeting within the following week.</i></p> <p>Determine solicitation type: ITB, RFP, or RFQA</p>

<p>5.</p>	<p>Create the solicitation/contract folder. This folder will be the roadmap for the contract for its entire lifecycle and will continue to be used during Contract Administration.</p> <p> The Contract Analyst/Specialist will COPY “sample” Contract Folder Set Up Template (which will include all prescribed folders) into the appropriate year, revise the top folder name to the contract number format. See sample below for folder set up:</p> <div data-bbox="548 478 854 642" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Contract Folder Set Up Template</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMMUNICATION CONTRACT CORE SOLICITATION </div>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Enter high-level information into CTsource to initiate that process. General header information and documents from the DAS-BID are entered at this time.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Enter the solicitation/contract information into the Contract Reporting Tool located in Microsoft Teams</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Establish the Sourcing Team. Members of the Sourcing Team include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Analyst/Specialist - Leads and facilitates meetings • Client Agency/Subject Matter Experts - Represents the agency in the solicitation; provides subject matter expertise to support the development/revision of the solicitation • Legal - Supports contract development and provides clarification for informational and planning purposes • Business Outreach Team - Provides guidance and outreach to direct solicitations to the appropriate supplier resources
<p>9.</p>	<p>Schedule the Sourcing Team Kickoff Meeting generally within two (2) weeks of receiving the new DAS-BID Request. This date depends on availability of Sourcing Team members’ schedules.</p> <p> See Sourcing Team Kickoff Meeting process and templates [link to Forms & Templates]</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Initiate draft Solicitation/Contract template from CTsource. Using the information gathered during the Kickoff Meeting, begin drafting the solicitation. Save draft documents in solicitation/contract folder and share with kickoff team members for feedback and agreement.</p> <p> See Solicitation/Contract template for guidance. [link to Forms & Templates]</p>

	 <p>See Market Research for guidance.</p>
11.	<p>Submit solicitation/contract through CTsource approval workflow. Approvals must be obtained from the Contract Team Leader and Legal prior to posting to the public Bid Board.</p>
12.	<p>RFP process only --- Evaluation Team and Scoring Workbook The Contract Analyst/Specialist emails the Evaluation Workbook to the Evaluation Team (identified during the kickoff meeting) to approve scoring criteria. The solicitation cannot be posted until this step is complete.</p>  <p>See Developing the Evaluation Workbook [link to Resources] for guidance.</p>
13.	<p>Verify documents prior to posting.</p>  <p>See Bid Documents</p>
14.	<p>Post and manage the solicitation. Once final approval has been provided for the solicitation/contract documents, the Contract Analyst/Specialist posts and manages the solicitation.</p> <p>Solicitation management may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating a bidders' Pre-Solicitation Meeting/Site visit (if provided through the solicitation). • Receiving and responding to potential bidders' written inquiries regarding the solicitation (Questions & Answers Period). • Processing solicitation addenda, as required.  <p>See CTsource: Solicitations - Posting, Managing and Evaluating [link to CTsource Quick Guides] for guidance Note: The Contract Analyst/Specialist is the ONLY single point of contact for all communications with potential bidders after the bid opening.</p>
15.	<p>Facilitate a bidder's Pre-Solicitation Meeting/Site Visit (incl. virtual), if applicable. Generally, bidders Pre-Solicitation Meeting/Site Visits are allowed, but not required, however in some instances, this may be mandatory.</p>

	<p>The purpose of a bidders' Pre-Solicitation Meeting/Site Visit is to explain the procurement process and scope of work to potential bidders and allow them to ask questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oral responses to questions and other statements made during the bidders' Pre-Solicitation Meeting/Site visit must be stated in writing as an addendum to the solicitation. <p>Note: All Questions & Answers (Q&A), regardless of how asked, need to be shared to all bidders via an addendum.</p>
16.	<p>Manage Questions & Answers (Q&A)</p> <p>Questions are submitted by prospective bidders directly in CTsource and/or by email [link to CTsource Quick Guides]. The Contract Analyst/Specialist works with the Sourcing Team, as needed, to develop appropriate responses to submitted questions. Generally, there is a closing date for Q&As and all are compiled after the closing date to be posted as an addendum.</p> <p>Note: It is at the discretion of the Contract Analyst/Specialist to determine if additional time should be given for submission of bids based on the Q&As received.</p>
17.	<p>Manage the addenda. An addendum is typically used to communicate material changes to the solicitation, correct minor defects, answers to Q&A, and provide information or clarification to potential respondents. No alterations or changes to any requirement or specification within the solicitation may be made without posting the addendum. If the solicitation must be amended, the Contract Analyst/Specialist should consider the impact to prospective bidders and determine if additional time should be given for submission of bids.</p>



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Florida

Department of *Management Services*
Division of State Purchasing



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

Electronic Routing Process

TM

Executive Summary

The Division of State Purchasing established the Electronic Routing Process (ERP) to increase the use of available technology; eliminate the use of paper, printing, and photocopying; reduce the time spent by staff on administrative tasks; and expedite the routing process for procurement and contract management documents. The ERP provides a uniform process for the internal review and approval of documents using Microsoft Word, OneDrive, and DocuSign.

Prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the division was gradually introducing the use of technology, such as integrated software tools, collaboration platforms, and cloud-based storage, into its standard operating procedures. In March 2020, the abrupt need for social distancing and teleworking capabilities required an expedited, systemic approach to the deployment of technology, resulting in the development and implementation of the ERP.

Innovation

The ERP was established to increase the use of available technology; eliminate the use of paper, printing, and photocopying; reduce the time spent by staff on administrative tasks; and expedite the routing process for procurement and contract management documents. The ERP provides a uniform process for the internal review and approval of documents using Microsoft Word, OneDrive and DocuSign.

The ERP was established through a collaborative effort by division leadership and procurement and contract management staff. The solution required research and testing of available options, including collaborative authoring and version history functionality provided in Microsoft 365 applications; secure storage of files and access control capabilities provided by Microsoft 365 via OneDrive and SharePoint; and electronic routing and secure signature solutions provided by DocuSign. The most efficient and secure options were included as part of the ERP; the ERP was implemented through multiple trainings, and additional efficiencies were implemented as recommended by staff.

Transferability

Yes, the ERP can be adapted and transferred for use by other departments, divisions and agencies depending on their technological resources and business processes. The ERP can be implemented systemically or for a specific document or process; the ERP could be adapted for interagency use, which may require collaboration between information technology staff.

Service Improvement

Implementing the ERP reduced the routing process time by 50%, from a maximum of 20 days per document to a maximum of 10 days per document. The previous routing process required hard copies of all documents and routing forms, office supplies (e.g., folders and envelopes), and extensive administrative intervention, such as the use of tracking logs and manual delivery of documents to recipients. The ERP offers an efficient method to track the progress of all documents, identify any changes made by the recipients and quickly review and approve documents, whether working in the office or remotely.

Cost Reduction

The division estimates an annual cost savings of \$29,096. The cost savings estimate is primarily comprised of salaries; using the reduction in routing process time noted above, the division determined the average number of hours staff spent per day preparing the routing folder (e.g. printing, copying and organizing), monitoring the routing process, responding to reviewer comments and modifying documents

accordingly (including reprinting and recopying), and preparing final approved documents for execution (updating documents, then printing, copying, and organizing); cost savings were calculated using current average salaries. Additional cost savings were calculated using the cost of paper and the cost of using leased printers/copiers. In addition, the ERP has been a welcomed addition by Florida leadership and the vendor community by making the procurement and contracting process easier and faster. Also, the ERP reduces human error and serves as a tracking mechanism for the Division of State Purchasing.

Conclusion

The State of Florida included the State Purchasing Electronic Routing Process and the State Purchasing DocuSign Instructions for reference.



State Purchasing Electronic Routing Process

STEP 1: VERIFY YOUR ONEDRIVE SETTINGS

- Verify your OneDrive settings are set so that the files you share cannot be reshared by others¹ (i.e. your files are only shared with the individuals you specify, as long as you follow the instructions in this document). Open your OneDrive [online](#). Click on the **Settings** icon (⚙️) at the top right of the screen, then select **OneDrive settings**. Select **More Settings** on the left side of the screen, then select **Return to the old Site settings page** at the bottom of the screen. Under *Users and Permissions*, select **Site permissions**, then select **Access Requests Settings** at the top of the screen. Verify that the **Allow members to share the site and individual files and folders** checkbox is **NOT** selected. Click **OK**.
- Verify your OneDrive settings are set so that Microsoft Office files open in installed programs (e.g. Word, Excel, etc.), rather than the online apps, which provide limited functionality. Open your OneDrive [online](#). Click on the **Settings** icon (⚙️) at the top right of the screen, then select **OneDrive settings**. Select **More Settings** on the left side of the screen, then select **Return to the old Site settings page** at the bottom of the screen. Under *Site Administration*, select **Site libraries and lists**. Select **Customize Documents**, then click **Advanced settings**. Next to *Opening Documents in the Browser*, under *Default open behavior for browser-enabled documents*, select **Open in the client application**. Click **OK**.

STEP 2: CREATE A NEW FOLDER IN YOUR ONEDRIVE

- Create a new folder in your OneDrive for the project you are working on (e.g. solicitation, MAPS, contract amendment/renewal/extension, etc.). Use a descriptive name for the folder (e.g. “2021 Motor Vehicles ITB”). This folder will be referred to as the **main OneDrive folder** throughout these instructions.

ELECTRONIC ROUTING (ONEDRIVE) PROCESS OVERVIEW

STEP 3: INTERNAL REVIEW (PRIOR TO FORMAL ROUTING)	STEP 4: FORMAL ROUTING	STEP 5: FINALIZE DOCUMENTS AND STEP 6: DOCUSIGN
<p>All documents are located in the main OneDrive folder with <i>Track Changes</i> turned on.</p> <p>Share the main OneDrive folder with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Bureau Chief • Data Analyst¹ • Contract Management¹ 	<p>Documents from the internal review phase are copied to a new subfolder named <i>Internal Edits and Comments</i> with <u>internal edits</u> NOT accepted.</p> <p>Documents for routing are located in the main OneDrive folder with <i>Track Changes</i> turned on and <u>internal edits</u> accepted (except templates and routing form).</p> <p>Share the main OneDrive folder with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Counsel (OGC)² • Deputy Director • Division Director 	<p>Documents from the formal routing phase are copied to a new subfolder named <i>Routing Edits and Comments</i> with <u>routing edits</u> NOT accepted.</p> <p>Final documents are located in the main OneDrive folder with <u>routing edits</u> accepted (except templates, which are saved as PDF files to create final versions).</p> <p>Documents located in the main OneDrive folder should be the same versions that are uploaded to DocuSign (if applicable).</p>

¹ Data Analyst and Contract Management are included for solicitations only.

² General Counsel (OGC) is excluded for MAPS and Agency ACS's.

STEP 3: INTERNAL REVIEW (PRIOR TO FORMAL ROUTING)

- Upload documents for the project you are working on to the **main OneDrive folder**. Please note that you may continue to add documents after sharing the folder; any added documents will be viewable by all individuals with whom the folder is already shared without the need for additional sharing.
- When you are ready for your supervisor and bureau chief to review, verify all Word documents have *Track Changes* turned on and locked (this has already been completed for solicitation templates; this will need to be completed for all other Word documents). In order to do this, open the *Review* tab in the Word document, open the menu under the **Track Changes** button, then select **Lock Tracking**. Enter a password and email the password to your supervisor.
- Share the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with your supervisor and bureau chief. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, then select **Manage access**. This will open up a box on the right side of the screen; click on the **Grant access** icon (+) next to *Direct access*, then select your supervisor and bureau chief. In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace [bracketed text] with the appropriate content, then click **Grant access**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for internal review.

- For solicitations only, at the time indicated by your supervisor or bureau chief, share the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with the Data Analyst and Contract Management. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, then select **Manage access**. This will open up a box on the right side of the screen; click on the **Grant access** icon (+) next to *Direct access*, then select the appropriate individuals. In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace [bracketed text] with the appropriate content, then click **Grant access**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for internal review. Please let me know when you have completed your review. Please note that we intend to begin the formal routing process on [date]. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

ROUTING FORM AND SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS (STEPS 4 AND 6)

	Purchasing Analyst	Purchasing Analyst Supervisor	Bureau Chief	General Counsel (OGC)	Deputy Director	Division Director	Secretary or Deputy Secretary
MAPS	R	R	R		R	R, D ³	D ³
Requests for Information (RFI)	R	R	R	R	R		
Solicitations/Addenda	R	R	R	R ⁴	R		
Solicitation Awards	R	R	R	R	R	R, D ⁵	P ⁵
RFP/ITN Justification/ Appointment Memos	R	R	R	R	R	R	P ⁶
Contract Documents	R	R	R	R	R	R, D ⁷	D ⁷ , P ⁷
Agency ACS's	R	R	R		R	R	P ⁷

³ Final signatory is **Division Director** if annual spend is ≤ \$500K or **Deputy Secretary** if annual spend is > \$500K.

⁴ **General Counsel (OGC)** does not review timeline revisions.

⁵ Final signatory is **Division Director** if annual spend is ≤ \$100K or **Secretary** if annual spend is > \$100K.

⁶ **Secretary** signs RFP/ITN justification memos and evaluator/negotiator appointment memos.

⁷ Final signatory is **Secretary** for enterprise and agency ACS's; for other contracts, final signatory is **Division Director** or **Deputy Secretary** if annual spend is ≤ \$100K or **Secretary** if annual spend is > \$100K.

STEP 4: FORMAL ROUTING

- When you are ready to begin the formal routing process (as directed by your supervisor or bureau chief), save a copy of all documents from the internal review phase (without tracked changes accepted) for future reference:
 - Create a subfolder in the **main OneDrive folder** entitled “Internal Edits and Comments”, then **follow these instructions to disinherit sharing permissions from the main folder**: (1) click on the three dots to the right of the subfolder, (2) select **Manage access**, (3) click **Advanced**, and (4) click the **Stop Inheriting Permissions** button at the top left of the screen. Click **OK** if prompted to confirm.
 - Move all documents (without tracked changes accepted) to the new subfolder: (1) select the checkbox to the left of each file, (2) click **Move to** at the top of the screen (**NOT Copy to**), (3) in the box that opens on the right side of the screen, navigate to the *Internal Edits and Comments* folder, then (4) click **Move here**. [NOTE: If the “Internal Edits and Comments” subfolder does not appear in the box that opens on the right side of the screen, click your browser’s refresh button, then try these steps again.]
 - Save a copy of the documents that need to be included in the formal routing process in the **main OneDrive folder**: (1) select the checkbox to the left of each file in the *Internal Edits and Comments* folder, (2) click **Copy to** at the top of the screen (**NOT Move to**), (3) in the box that opens on the right side of the screen, navigate to the **main OneDrive folder**, then (4) click **Copy here**. [NOTE: Any working files or reference materials that do not need to be included in the formal routing process will be kept in the *Internal Edits and Comments* folder.]
- In the **main OneDrive folder** (not the *Internal Edits and Comments* folder), accept all changes and delete all comments in Word documents (except solicitation templates) and Excel files:
 - To accept changes in Word documents, open the *Review* tab in the Word document, open the menu under the **Track Changes** button, select **Lock Tracking**, enter your password, then click **OK**. Open the menu under the **Accept** button and click **Accept All Changes**; to relock the document, select **Lock Tracking** again, enter your password (twice), and click **OK**. Please note that *Track Changes* is not an option for Excel files.
 - If there are comments in Word documents that are intended for review by General Counsel or the Deputy Director, the other comments will need to be deleted individually; right-click on each comment and click **Delete Comment**. If there are no comments that are intended for review by General Counsel or the Deputy Director, open the *Review* tab, open the menu under the **Delete** button, then click **Delete All Comments in Document**. Comments in Excel files must be deleted individually.
- Save a copy of the [SP-Form-00 Routing Form](#) in the **main OneDrive folder**; the most recent version of the routing form is located on SharePoint in the [Routing Forms folder](#) under *Documents and Forms*. Open the routing form, then click **File** and **Save As**. Navigate to the **main OneDrive folder**, add the name of the project you are working on to the end of the file name (e.g. “SP-Form-00 Routing Form - Motor Vehicles ITB”), then click **Save**. Complete the routing form as needed to prepare for formal routing, then save and close the file.
- Reshare the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with your supervisor and bureau chief. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, then select **Manage access**. This will open up a box on the right side of the screen; click on the **Grant access** icon (**+**) next to *Direct access*, then select your supervisor and bureau chief (it is okay that they are already listed under *Direct access*). In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace **[bracketed text]** with the appropriate content, then click **Grant access**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for formal routing. The Purchasing Analyst Supervisor is the first approval required on the routing form. Please let me know when you have completed your review and we are ready to continue with the next step in the routing process.

- When the supervisor review has been completed, review edits and comments before sharing documents with the next reviewer. *Resolve* each commentⁱⁱ after it is addressed to indicate that it is no longer outstanding; all comments do not necessarily need to be *resolved* before sharing documents with the next reviewer.
- If the project you are working on requires OGC review, when you are ready for them to review (as directed by your supervisor or bureau chief), share the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with **OGC Contract and Procurement Review, Kristen Larson, and Brittany Dambly**, and reshare it with your supervisor and bureau chief. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, select **Manage access**, then click **Advanced**. At the top of the screen, click **Grant Permissions**; this will open up a box in the middle of the screen. Select the appropriate individuals (it is okay that your supervisor and bureau chief have already been given permissions). **Uncheck (deselect) the Share everything in this folder, even items with unique permissions checkbox**. In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace [bracketed text] with the appropriate content, then click **Share**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for OGC review. Please respond via email informing me of who will be assigned to review these documents. I will then share the respective OneDrive folder with the assigned OGC attorney and follow up via email informing them of the same. Thanks in advance.

- OGC will email you and your supervisor the name of the attorney assigned to the review. Once notified, share the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with the assigned attorney using the same process above (i.e. **Manage access > Advanced > Grant Permissions > Uncheck (deselect) Share everything in this folder, even items with unique permissions**); use the following language in the *Add a message* field:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for OGC review. Please complete the routing form and notify me via email when your review is complete. Please do not hesitate to contact me or [your supervisor's name] if you have any questions. Thanks in advance.

- When the OGC review has been completed, please notify your supervisor and bureau chief. Review edits and comments before sharing documents with the next reviewer. *Resolve* each commentⁱⁱ after it is addressed to indicate that it is no longer outstanding; all comments do not necessarily need to be *resolved* before sharing documents with the next reviewer.
- When you are ready for your bureau chief to review (as directed by your supervisor or bureau chief), reshare the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with your supervisor and bureau chief. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, then select **Manage access**. This will open up a box on the right side of the screen; click on the **Grant access** icon (+) next to *Direct access*, then select the appropriate individuals (it is okay that your supervisor and bureau chief are already listed under *Direct access*). In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace [bracketed text] with the appropriate content, then click **Grant access**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for the Bureau Chief to review. Please complete the routing form and notify me via email when your review is complete and we are ready to continue with the next step in the routing process. Please do not hesitate to contact me or [your supervisor's name] if you have any questions.

- When the bureau chief review has been completed, review edits and comments before sharing documents with the next reviewer. *Resolve* each commentⁱⁱ after it is addressed to indicate that it is no longer outstanding; all comments do not necessarily need to be *resolved* before sharing documents with the next reviewer.

- When you are ready for the Deputy Director to review (as directed by your supervisor or bureau chief), share the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with the Deputy Director and reshare it with your supervisor and bureau chief. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, then select **Manage access**. This will open up a box on the right side of the screen; click on the **Grant access** icon (+) next to *Direct access*, then select the appropriate individuals (it is okay that your supervisor and bureau chief are already listed under *Direct access*). In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace [bracketed text] with the appropriate content, then click **Grant access**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for the Deputy Director to review. Please complete the routing form and notify me via email when your review is complete. Please do not hesitate to contact me or [your supervisor's name] if you have any questions. Thanks in advance.

- When the Deputy Director review has been completed, please notify your supervisor and bureau chief. Review edits and comments before sharing documents with the next reviewer. *Resolve* each commentⁱⁱ after it is addressed to indicate that it is no longer outstanding; all comments do not necessarily need to be *resolved* before sharing documents with the next reviewer (if applicable). Please note that, if the Deputy Director is the final reviewer, all comments must be *resolved* before finalizing the documents.
- If the project you are working on requires Division Director review, when you are ready for them to review (as directed by your supervisor or bureau chief), share the **main OneDrive folder** (not individual files) with the Division Director (or designee) and reshare it with your supervisor and bureau chief. Click on the three dots to the right of the folder, then select **Manage access**. This will open up a box on the right side of the screen; click on the **Grant access** icon (+) next to *Direct access*, then select the appropriate individuals (it is okay that your supervisor and bureau chief are already listed under *Direct access*). In the *Add a message* field, copy and paste the following text, replace [bracketed text] with the appropriate content, then click **Grant access**:

Please be advised that the [project title] is ready for the Division Director to review. Please complete the routing form and notify me via email when your review is complete. Please do not hesitate to contact me or [your supervisor's name] if you have any questions. Thanks in advance.

- When the Division Director review has been completed, please notify your supervisor and bureau chief. Review edits and comments before finalizing the documents. *Resolve* each commentⁱⁱ after it is addressed to indicate that it is no longer outstanding; all comments must be *resolved* before finalizing the documents.

STEP 5: FINALIZE DOCUMENTS

- Save a copy of all documents from the formal routing phase (without tracked changes accepted) for future reference:
 - Create a subfolder in the **main OneDrive folder** entitled “Routing Edits and Comments”.
 - Move all documents (without tracked changes accepted) to the new subfolder: (1) select the checkbox to the left of each file, (2) click **Move to** at the top of the screen (**NOT Copy to**), (3) in the box that opens on the right side of the screen, navigate to the *Routing Edits and Comments* folder, then (4) click **Move here**. [NOTE: If the “Routing Edits and Comments” subfolder does not appear in the box that opens on the right side of the screen, click your browser’s refresh button, then try these steps again.]
 - If applicable, create final versions of documents that are based on locked templates for which passwords are not provided (e.g. the solicitation template): Open the Word document, open the *Review* tab, locate the drop-down menu in the *Tracking* section, then select **No Markup**. Click **File** and **Save As**. Navigate to the **main OneDrive folder**. Locate the drop-down menu under the file name (the file name does not need to be changed) and change the selection from *Word document (*.docx)* to **PDF (*.pdf)**, then click **Save**.

- Save a copy of documents that need to be finalized (excluding those referenced above) in the **main OneDrive folder**: (1) select the checkbox to the left of each file in the *Routing Edits and Comments* folder, (2) click **Copy to** at the top of the screen (**NOT Move to**), (3) in the box that opens on the right side of the screen, navigate to the **main OneDrive folder**, then (4) click **Copy here**. [NOTE: Any documents that do not need to be included with the finalized documents (e.g. the routing form) will be kept in the *Routing Edits and Comments* folder.]
- In the **main OneDrive folder** (not the *Routing Edits and Comments* folder), accept all changes and delete all comments in Word documents and Excel files:
 - To accept changes in Word documents, open the *Review* tab in the Word document, open the menu under the **Track Changes** button, select **Lock Tracking**, enter your password, then click **OK**. Open the menu under the **Accept** button and click **Accept All Changes**. Please note that *Track Changes* is not an option for Excel files.
 - To delete all comments in Word documents, open the *Review* tab, open the menu under the **Delete** button, then click **Delete All Comments in Document**. Comments in Excel files must be deleted individually.

STEP 6: DOCUSIGN

- For **CONTRACT DOCUMENTS**, please follow the instructions in the *Contract Documents* section of the [State Purchasing DocuSign Instructions](#), in addition to the following:
 - For contract documents for which the Secretary is the agency signatory, when setting up the recipient list for the DocuSign envelope as described in page 2 of the DocuSign instructions, use your supervisor as the first **ALLOW TO EDIT** recipient (first overall recipient of the envelope).
 - For contract documents for which the Secretary is not the agency signatory, when setting up the recipient list for the DocuSign envelope as described in page 2 of the DocuSign instructions, use your supervisor as the first **ALLOW TO EDIT** recipient (first overall recipient of the envelope) and your bureau chief as the second **ALLOW TO EDIT** recipient (after the contractor and before the agency signatory).
 - For new contracts ONLY, if the contract allows subcontractors, dealers, or resellers, upload the [Subcontractor/Dealer/Reseller Forms Notice](#) as the last file in the DocuSign envelope.
- For **INTERNAL DOCUMENTS**, please follow the instructions in the *Internal Documents* section of the [State Purchasing DocuSign Instructions](#).

ⁱ If needed, you may set your OneDrive to allow a specific individual(s) (e.g. your supervisor or bureau chief) to share files in your absence. Open your OneDrive online. Click on the **Settings** icon (⚙️) at the top right of the screen, then select **OneDrive settings**. Select **More Settings** on the left side of the screen, then select **Site collection administrators**. Next to your name, start typing the name of the individual you want to add, then select their name from the drop-down list; you may add multiple individuals. Click **OK**. [NOTE: To remove access when you return, go back to the **Site collection administrators** page and remove the individual(s) by clicking the small **x** to the right their name(s); **BE CAREFUL NOT TO REMOVE YOUR OWN NAME**. Click **OK**.]

ⁱⁱ To *resolve* comments in Word documents, hover over the comment and click **Resolve**, or right-click on the comment and click **Resolve Comment**. To *resolve* comments in Excel files, hover over the cell that contains the comment, click on the three dots at the top right corner of the comment window, then click **Resolve thread**.

CHANGE LOG: State Purchasing Electronic Routing Process

REV. DATE	CHANGE DESCRIPTION
04/29/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added instructions for Bureau Chief review to the formal routing process.
08/10/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated delegation chart pursuant to Amended Delegation of Authority for the Department of Management Services (#022-2021), effective 7/13/21 under Secretary J. Todd Inman. Removed MFMP Sourcing and Analysis Specialist from the internal review process. Removed Administrative Assistant II from the OneDrive notification for OGC.
08/12/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised instructions to maintain version history in the <i>Internal Edits and Comments</i> folder. Revised instructions for the OSC review to remove the request for an assigned attorney <u>if</u> an attorney has already been assigned to a project, as requested by the Special Counsel. Updated DocuSign section to accommodate the new Secretary's signing preferences.
09/09/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated delegation chart pursuant to Additional Delegation of Authority to . . . the Deputy Secretary of Business Operations for the Department of Management Services (#024-2021), effective 8/18/21 under Secretary J. Todd Inman.
10/01/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated delegation chart to remove OGC from the routing form for Agency ACS's; this was added on 8/10/21 as an anticipated change due to the new requirement for the Secretary to approve Agency ACS's (subsection 287.042(16), F.S.), but it was never implemented.
11/04/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated delegation chart to remove OSC from the routing form for Agency ACS's.
01/11/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed all references to Special Counsel/OSC as a result of the OGC/OSC reorganization.
01/30/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added OGC Contract and Procurement Review to the OneDrive notification for OGC.
03/10/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated delegation chart to add Division Director to the routing form for Agency ACS's. Removed <i>STEP 5: FORMAL ROUTING (DIVISION DIRECTOR ONLY)</i> and added Division Director to <i>STEP 4: FORMAL ROUTING (EXCEPT DIVISION DIRECTOR)</i>; the documents reviewed by the Division Director will include all edits and comments from the formal routing process. Added instructions to review edits and comments before sharing documents with the next reviewer in the formal routing process, and to <i>resolve</i> comments as they are addressed. Added <i>STEP 5: FINALIZE DOCUMENTS</i> to save a copy of all documents from the formal routing phase (<u>without</u> tracked changes accepted) and create final versions of documents; this process was previously included in <i>STEP 5: FORMAL ROUTING (DIVISION DIRECTOR ONLY)</i>.

Table of Contents

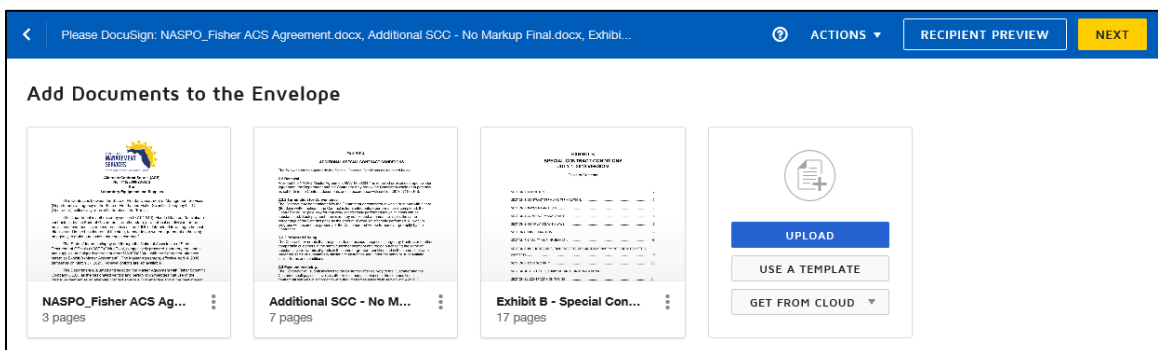
Contract Documents	1
PURCHASING ANALYST/CONTRACT MANAGER <i>(The final contract is ready for signatures.)</i>	1
ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THREE-PARTY CONTRACTS	3
BUREAU CHIEF/SUPERVISOR <i>(The final contract is currently routing through DocuSign.)</i>	4
PURCHASING ANALYST/CONTRACT MANAGER <i>(The contract has been signed by all recipients.)</i>	4
Internal Documents	6
Self-Sign Documents	6
Additional Information.....	7

Contract Documents

These instructions are primarily for two-party contracts; for three-party contracts (e.g. assignment agreements) please refer to the [ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THREE-PARTY CONTRACTS](#).

PURCHASING ANALYST/CONTRACT MANAGER *(The final contract is ready for signatures.)*

1. Log on to [DocuSign](#), click **START**, then click **Send an Envelope**.
2. Click **UPLOAD** and select files to upload to DocuSign **OR** drag and drop files from File Explorer to DocuSign; the contract and attachments can be uploaded to DocuSign individually **OR** combined into a single PDF file and uploaded to DocuSign. Word and PDF files can be uploaded directly to DocuSign; Excel files should be converted to PDF before uploading to DocuSign. **(NOTE: Do NOT upload scanned PDF files to DocuSign unless there are no other options and the exception has been discussed with the lead web editor and approved by your bureau chief or supervisor.)**



3. Select the **Set signing order** checkbox, then enter your bureau chief or supervisor's **Name** and **Email**; please verify the appropriate routing with your bureau chief or supervisor. Click **NEEDS TO SIGN** and select **Allow to Edit**.

Add Recipients to the Envelope

As the sender, you automatically receive a copy of the completed envelope.

[Import a bulk list.](#) Send copies of this envelope to many people at once. ⓘ

Set signing order

1 **Name *** **ALLOW TO EDIT** MORE ▾

Email *

4. Click **ADD RECIPIENT**, then enter the contractor's **Name** and **Email**; for **Role**, enter *Contractor*. (NOTE: You are not required to verify the final signatory for the contractor; the recipient will be able to reassign the signature to another individual if needed.)

*** * * STEPS 5 - 6 ARE REQUIRED ONLY IF THE SECRETARY IS NOT THE AGENCY SIGNATORY * * ***

5. Click **ADD RECIPIENT**, then enter your bureau chief or supervisor's **Name** and **Email**; please verify the appropriate routing with your bureau chief or supervisor. Click **NEEDS TO SIGN** and select **Allow to Edit**.
6. Click **ADD RECIPIENT**, then enter the agency signatory's **Name** and **Email**; for **Role**, enter *DMS*.

7. For **Email Subject**, enter the contract name, contract number, and contractor name, e.g. *Laboratory Equipment and Supplies (41120000-20-ACS) - Fisher Scientific Company L.L.C.*

Message to All Recipients

Custom email and language for each recipient

Email Subject*

Characters remaining: 14

8. Click **ADVANCED OPTIONS** at the top right of the page.

9. Under **Recipient Privileges**, deselect the **Allow recipients to sign on paper** checkbox **AND** verify that the **Allow recipients to change signing responsibility** is the only checkbox selected under **Recipient Privileges**, then click the **SAVE** button.

Recipient Privileges

Allow recipients to sign on paper

Allow recipients to change signing responsibility

Allow recipients to edit

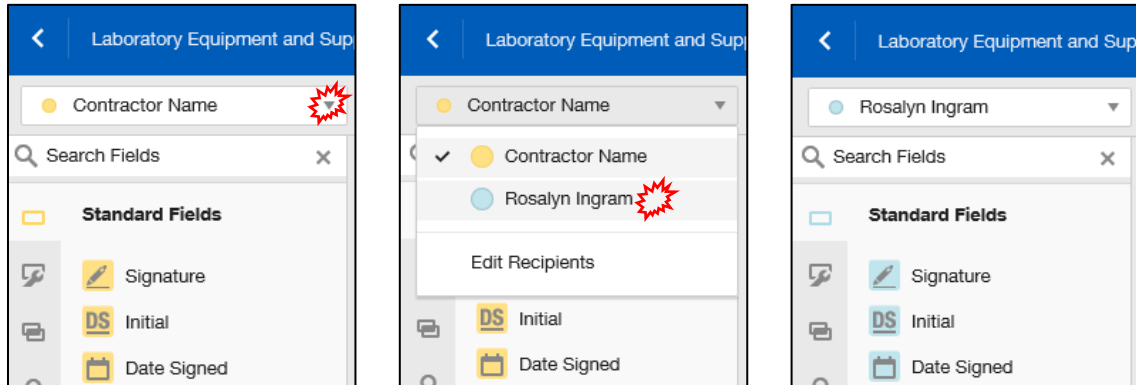
Recipients must be signers to view signed documents

10. Click **NEXT** at the bottom right of the page. Do **NOT** click **SEND NOW**.

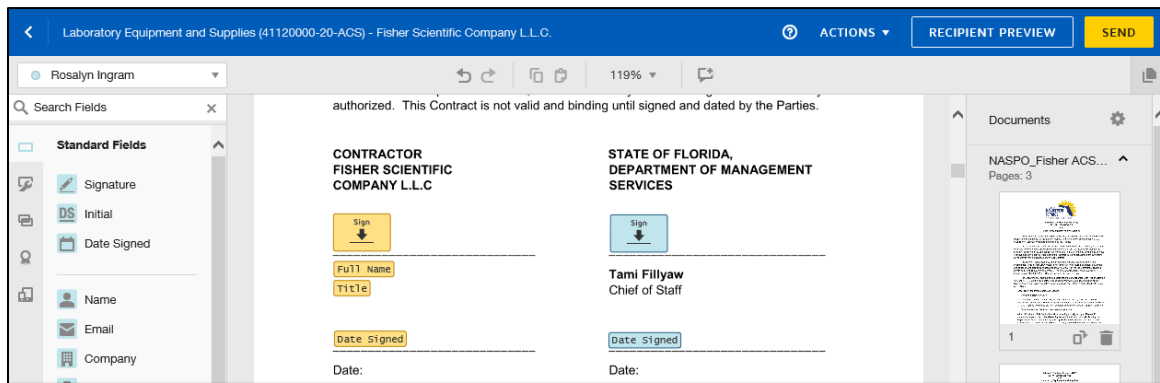
11. Add (drag and drop) Signature, Name, Title, and Date Signed fields for the contractor where applicable; the name and title for the contractor should be blank on the uploaded document.

***** STEPS 12 - 13 ARE REQUIRED ONLY IF THE SECRETARY IS NOT THE AGENCY SIGNATORY *****

12. At the top left of the page, change the selection to the agency signatory's name.



13. Add Signature and Date Signed fields (drag and drop) for the agency signatory; please note that the fields are different colors for each recipient (e.g. yellow for *Contractor* and blue for *DMS*).



14. Click **SEND**. (NOTE: The envelope will be sent to the first recipient after you click **SEND**. To save the envelope as a draft and continue at a later time, click **ACTIONS** at the top of the page, then click **SAVE AND CLOSE**. When you are ready to continue, click **Manage** at the top of the screen, open the **Drafts** folder, and click the **CONTINUE** button next to the envelope.)

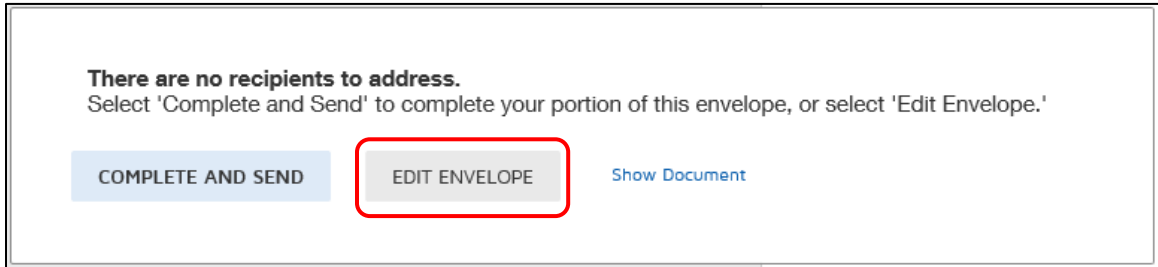
ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THREE-PARTY CONTRACTS

For three-party contracts (e.g. assignment agreements), follow the instructions in the [preceding section](#) with the following modifications:

- Complete **Step 4** twice and enter a different **Role** for each recipient (e.g. *Assignor* and *Assignee*).
- Complete **Step 11** for the first recipient created in Step 4 (e.g. *Assignor*).
- Complete **Steps 12 and 13** for the second recipient created in Step 4 (e.g. *Assignee*), then again for the agency signatory (if the agency signatory is not the Secretary).

BUREAU CHIEF/SUPERVISOR *(The final contract is currently routing through DocuSign.)*

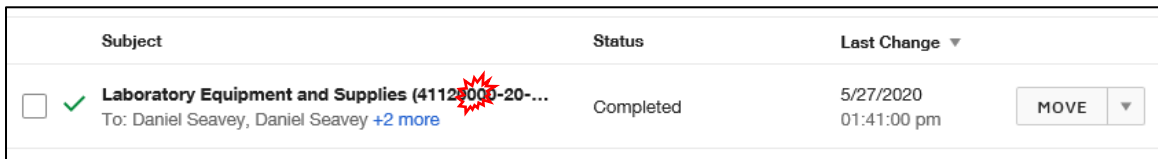
1. Click on the link in the email notification **OR** log on to [DocuSign](#), click **Manage** at the top of the screen, then click the **MANAGE** button next to the envelope in the **Inbox**.
2. Click **EDIT ENVELOPE**.



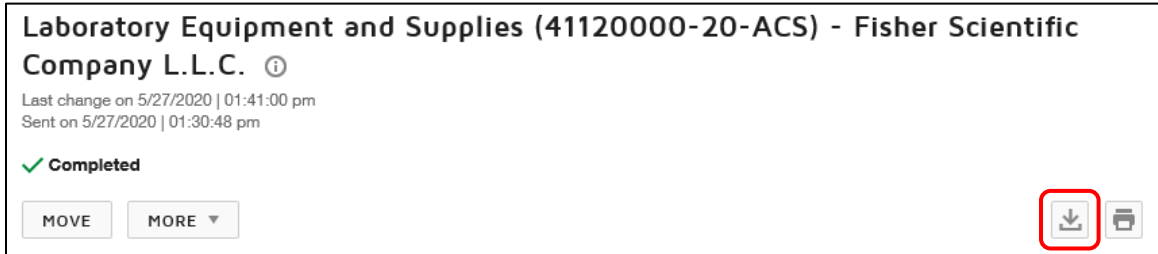
3. The bureau chief/supervisor may make the following changes **OR** request that the purchasing analyst/contract manager make the following changes:
 - a. Add, remove, or reorder documents; please note that no changes can be made to the documents after the first recipient (i.e. contractor) has signed the contract.
 - b. Modify recipients; please note that only future recipients can be modified. **(NOTE: If needed, the agency signatory can be changed to another individual if the original recipient has delegated signature authority in their absence.)**
 - c. Modify message to recipients; please note that changes apply to future recipients only.
4. Click **NEXT**.
5. The bureau chief/supervisor may add, remove, or move fields **OR** request that the purchasing analyst/contract manager add, remove, or move fields; please note that only fields for future recipients can be modified.
6. Click **CORRECT**. **(NOTE: The envelope will be sent to the next recipient after you click CORRECT; please note that the bureau chief/supervisor cannot save changes and continue at a later time.)**

PURCHASING ANALYST/CONTRACT MANAGER *(The contract has been signed by all recipients.)*

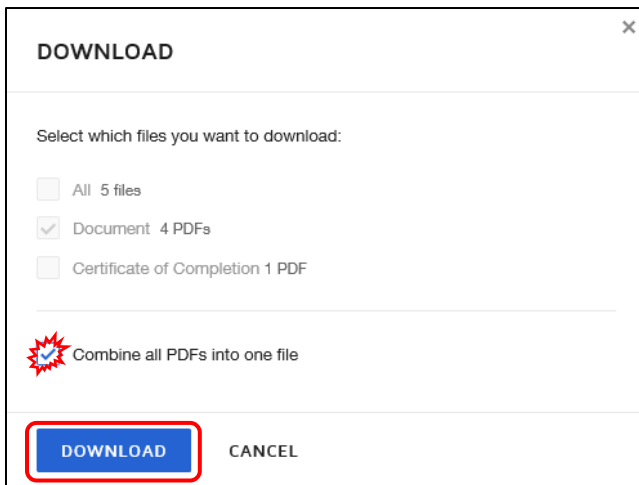
1. Click on the link in the email notification and click **CLOSE** **OR** log on to [DocuSign](#); click **Manage** at the top of the screen, then click the subject line of the envelope in the **Inbox**.



2. Click on the **Download** icon.



3. Select the **Combine all PDFs into one file** checkbox and click the **DOWNLOAD** button.



4. The resultant PDF file is the complete contract (including all attachments); save the PDF file to the appropriate location on the G:\ drive. (NOTE: A second PDF will need to be created for the website using **Acrobat Adobe Pro** to exclude the price sheet, master agreement, and any other attachments that are posted separately or not relevant to customers; do not overwrite or delete the complete contract PDF file. Please contact the lead web editor for assistance, if needed.)
5. Return to DocuSign and click the **Download** icon again.
6. Select the **Certificate of Completion** checkbox only (i.e. deselect all other checkboxes) and click the **DOWNLOAD** button.
7. The resultant PDF file is the DocuSign **Certificate of Completion**; save the PDF file to the same location where the complete contract is saved on the G:\ drive.

Internal Documents

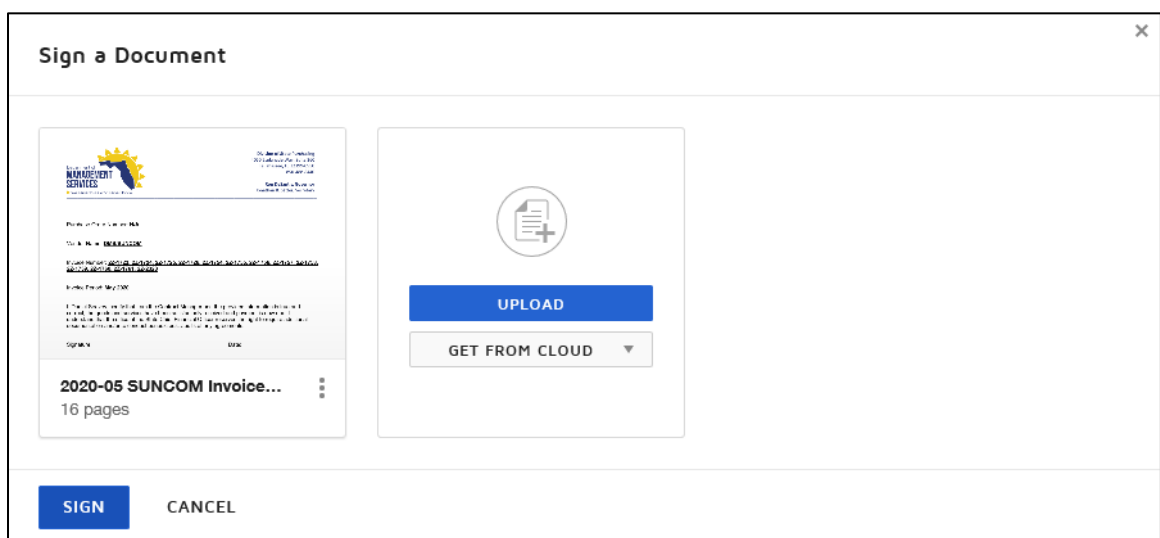
For internal documents, if only one signature is required **AND** the signatory has a DocuSign account, the self-sign method is preferred as a cost savings measure; please refer to the [Self-Sign Documents](#) section for additional information and instructions. If more than one signature is required **OR** utilization of an envelope is required as part of an established process, follow the instructions below:

For internal documents (e.g. Agency ACS requests, evaluator/negotiator memorandums, justification memorandums, MAPS, etc.), follow the instructions in the [Contract Documents](#) section, **excluding** any instructions to add the contractor as a recipient or add signature fields for the contractor. You may add as many **NEEDS TO SIGN** recipients as needed; you may also include your bureau chief or supervisor as an **ALLOW TO EDIT** recipient, if required by your bureau chief or supervisor.

Self-Sign Documents

DocuSign can be used to self-sign documents that you create **AND** documents that are sent to you for signature outside of DocuSign, either electronically or in hard copy; this method is preferred whenever possible as a cost savings measure.

1. Log on to [DocuSign](#), click **START**, then click **Sign a Document**. Do **NOT** click **Send an Envelope**.
2. Click **UPLOAD** and select files to upload to DocuSign **OR** drag and drop files from File Explorer to DocuSign; multiple files can be uploaded to DocuSign individually **OR** combined into a single PDF file and uploaded to DocuSign. Word and PDF files can be uploaded directly to DocuSign; Excel files should be converted to PDF before uploading to DocuSign. **(NOTE: You should upload any files that need to be attached to the signed document as part of the final PDF file; for example, if approving an invoice for payment, you should upload the contract manager certification statement and any required supporting documentation in addition to the invoice.)**



3. Click **Sign**, then click the **CONTINUE** button.

4. Add (drag and drop) Signature, Date Signed, and other fields where applicable; you may add fields to any page, and you may add the same type of field multiple times (e.g. more than one Signature field). You may use a Text field to add information that is not already included in the uploaded file(s) (e.g. the date an invoice was received).
5. Click the **FINISH** button.
6. You will be given the option to send your signed document to one or more recipients via DocuSign; enter the **Full Name** and **Email Address** for each recipient, modify the **Subject** and **Message** of the email, then click the **SEND AND CLOSE** button. Otherwise, if you do not want to send your signed document via DocuSign, click **NO THANKS**.
7. Complete **Steps 2 through 7** starting on [Page 5](#) to download and save the final PDF file and Certificate of Completion.

Additional Information

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

The Data Analyst (Daniel Seavey) coordinates with OIT to manage employee DocuSign accounts as part of the division's onboarding and offboarding processes; if an employee is unable to access DocuSign using their [@mydms.fl.gov](#) user ID and network password, please contact the Data Analyst.

EMPLOYEE SEPARATIONS

Whenever an employee separates from the division, whether or not they remain with the agency, all of their DocuSign envelopes are transferred to their direct supervisor's DocuSign account; this is done by the Data Analyst as part of the division's offboarding process and does not require a special request.

ENVELOPE SHARING

Envelope sharing is set up for all procurement and contract management bureau chiefs and supervisors; envelope sharing allows bureau chiefs and supervisors to view envelopes, as well as take certain actions on pending envelopes, in an employee's DocuSign account when the employee is not available. Bureau chiefs have access to DocuSign envelopes for all staff in their respective bureaus; supervisors have access to DocuSign envelopes for their direct reports. If you are unable to access DocuSign envelopes for your staff, please contact the Data Analyst.

The following links provide instructions from DocuSign regarding shared envelopes:

- [How to view shared envelopes](#)
- [How to take action on shared envelopes](#)
- [How to return to your own envelopes from a shared view](#)



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Florida

Department of *Management Services*
Division of State Purchasing



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Prequalification for IT Staff Augmentation Services

Executive Summary

The Florida Department of Management Services, Division of State Purchasing issued a legislative bill request for the 2021 Legislative Session requesting authority to establish an annual Information Technology Staff Augmentation Prequalification process. During the 2021 Legislative Session, the Legislature enacted House Bill 1137 relating to information technology procurement. House Bill 1137 amended Section 287.0591, Florida Statutes, to add language that requires the Department of Management Services to prequalify firms or individuals, provide criteria for qualification or disqualification from state term contract eligibility, and authorize prequalified firms or individuals to respond to requests for quotes for IT Staff Augmentation Services.

State Purchasing successfully established and implemented an annual solicitation for IT Staff Augmentation Services, wherein responsible and responsive vendors would be awarded prequalification to provide services on the state term contract through an Invitation to Bid.

Innovation

Prior to the IT Staff Augmentation Services Prequalification process, the state of Florida would exhaust countless hours and resources soliciting for these IT services. Collectively, the procurement team exhausted a total of 1,024 hours, which equates to more than two hundred thousand dollars, on a bi-annual basis. The state recognized the impediments of the current process and put forward the IT Staff Augmentation Services Prequalification process as a proposed solution to overcoming these impediments.

In accordance with the legislative criteria, the state configured its existing process into a more simplified process by establishing bidder requirements that are fair and conform to the legislative criteria. A project implementation plan as well as a stakeholder communication plan were developed and approved by the department.

Transferability

Not only can this process be transferred to other states for IT Staff Augmentation services, but also to other service contracts. Florida would be happy to work with other states to walk through our processes and assist with the transition to pre-qualification.

Service Improvement

As a direct result of this process, the state achieved significant cost savings. In fact, the state was able to reduce the number of hours and resources exhausted on this process by 50%. The previous process would have taken eight to twelve months to complete, whereas the new prequalification process takes only three to four months to complete. This process allows the state to improve the quality of service to taxpayers in three ways:

- State of Florida customers have access to a much larger pool of vendors to select from for these services.
- More frequent opportunities for vendors to do business with the state.

- The state increased competition among vendors providing these types of services by allowing customers to compare pricing through the prescribed request for quote process. State agencies are required to issue a request for quote to at least 25 prequalified vendors which further increases the opportunity for vendors to provide services and creates further cost savings for the state.

Cost Reduction

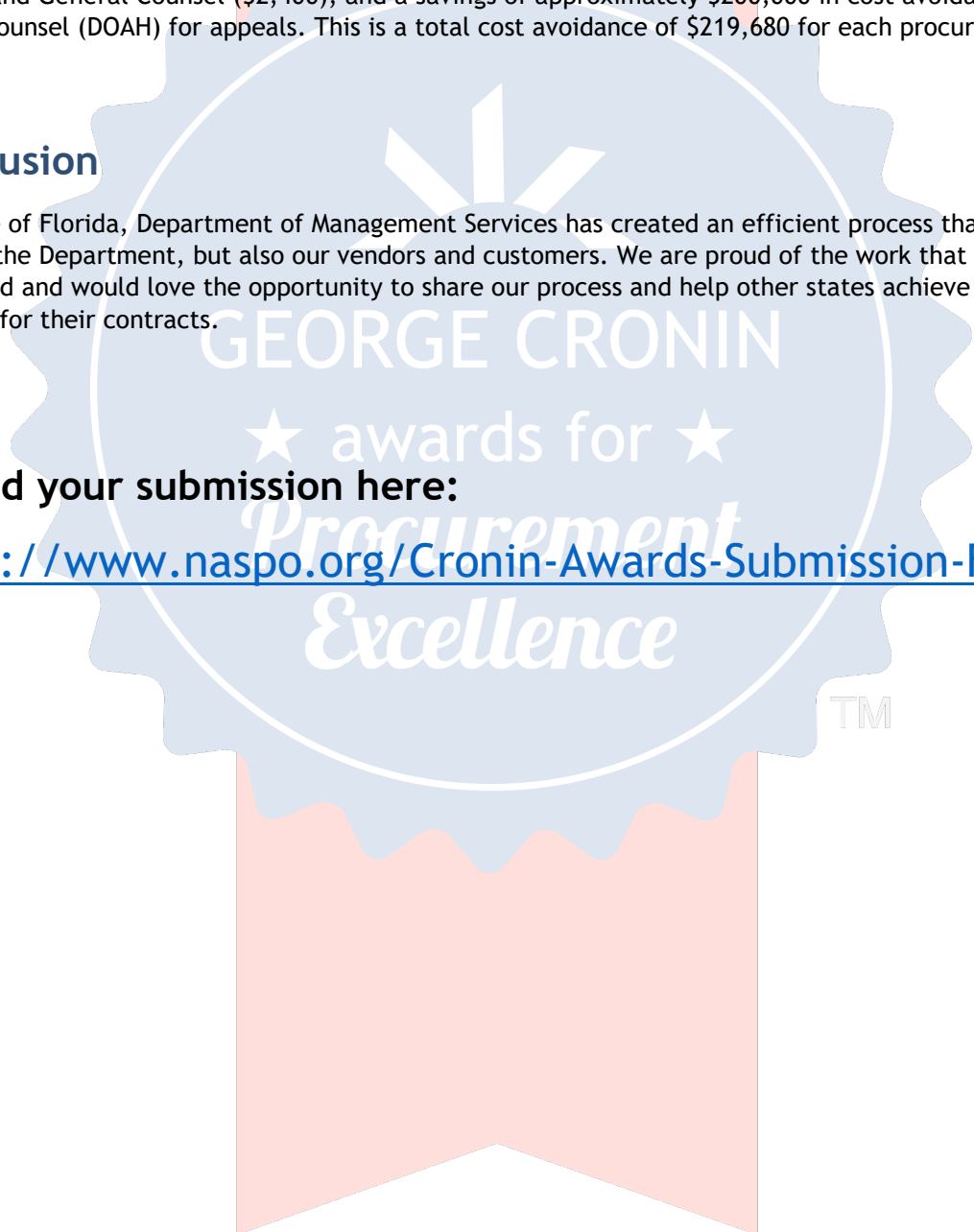
The state identified the total number of hours spent conducting the old process in comparison to the new process to determine the total amount of time and dollars exhausted. Please see attached for a detailed breakdown of hours and dollars exhausted for the old and new processes. The state has seen a time savings of 720 hours for the procurement officer (\$17,280), 48 hours for our offices of Special Counsel and General Counsel (\$2,400), and a savings of approximately \$200,000 in cost avoidance from outside counsel (DOAH) for appeals. This is a total cost avoidance of \$219,680 for each procurement.

Conclusion

The state of Florida, Department of Management Services has created an efficient process that not only benefits the Department, but also our vendors and customers. We are proud of the work that has been completed and would love the opportunity to share our process and help other states achieve a similar outcome for their contracts.

Upload your submission here:

<https://www.naspo.org/Cronin-Awards-Submission-Form>



Resource and Costs Savings Breakdown

How much has the Department exhausted in time, dollars, and resources?

Previous IT Staff Augmentation Solicitation Process:

- **State Purchasing** – Resources and time exhausted
 - Procurement Officer – **828 hours**
 - 6 hours per week
 - All procurement tasks from start to finish
 - Data Analyst – **40 hours**
 - Reviewing scoring and pricing methodologies
 - Price sheet development
 - Price sheet conversion to system for upload (website)
- **Office of Special Counsel** - Resources and time exhausted
 - OSC Attorney – **36 hours**
 - 12 hours:
 - Reviewed evaluation recommendation memo, notice of intent to award
 - Reviewed final contract
 - Researched certification, perjury, and personnel legal issues including searches
 - Liaised with SP, OGC & OSC regarding history and legality of final contract issues
 - Revised certification form
 - 12 hours:
 - Reviewed recommendation for award memo
 - Reviewed vendor emails and intents to protest
 - Reviewed and revised VBS and MFMP language
 - Met with MFMP, SP, and OGC to review and revise and discuss issues
 - Discussed ongoing issues with Procurement Officer
 - 12 hours:
 - Researched page case law
 - Reviewed vendor emails
 - Researched and reviewed conflict of interest issues for first bid.
 - Reviewed training documents. Met with evaluators for training
 - Discussed ongoing issues with SP
 - Met with SP, OGC
- **Office of General Counsel** - Resources, time and dollars exhausted (**132 hours Total**)
 - OGC Assistant General Counsel – **40 hours**
 - Responsiveness checks
 - Q&A and other addenda
 - Reviewing and editing RFP
 - Meetings with State Purchasing regarding legal issues
 - OGC Deputy General Counsel – **12 hours**
 - Responsiveness checks

- Q&A and other addenda
- OGC Litigation Attorney – **80 hours**
 - Gathering information
 - Reviewing outside counsel work products
 - Discussing case with outside counsel
 - Drafting final order
 - Reviewing invoices
- Outside Counsel – **\$200,000.00** spent on Outside Counsel representation at DOAH

New IT Staff Augmentation Prequalification Solicitation Process:

- **State Purchasing** – Resources and time exhausted
 - Procurement Officer – **108 hours**
 - 18 weeks at 6 hours per week
 - All procurement tasks from start to finish
 - Data Analyst – **40 hours**
 - Reviewing scoring and pricing methodologies
 - Price sheet development
 - Price sheet conversion to system for upload (website)
- **Office of Special Counsel** - Resources and time exhausted (**80 hours Total**)
 - OSC Attorney –**80 hours**
 - Reviewed legislation
 - Assisted with identifying a solution
 - Met with SP to propose solicitation
 - Assisted with development of solicitation documents
 - Assisted with responses to vendor questions
 - Reviewed notice of protest and performed legal research
- **Office of General Counsel** - Resources and time exhausted (**40 hours Total**)
 - OGC Assistant General Counsel – **40 hours**
 - Meeting with State Purchasing to review criteria and solicitation requirements
 - Responsiveness checks
 - Q&A and other addenda

Comparison Table by Resource:


Departments Resource Commitment			
Resource	Time Commitment (Old)	Time Commitment (New)	% Time Reduction
Procurement Officer	828	108	86%
Data Analyst	40	40	0%
Office of Special Counsel and Office of General Counsel	168	120	28%
Departments Financial Commitment			
Outside Counsel (DOAH)	\$200,000.00	\$0.00	100%



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Florida

Department of Management Services
Division of State Purchasing



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

Next Generation Vendor Information Portal™

Executive Summary

For 18 years, the Florida Department of Management Services (DMS) Division of State Purchasing maintained three legacy applications for eProcurement vendor services: 1) the Vendor Information Portal (VIP) provides a vendor registration and account maintenance portal for doing business with the State and manages billing and collections for the 1% transaction fee that funds the State's MyFloridaMarketPlace (MFMP) eProcurement system; 2) the Vendor Bid System (VBS) was the State solicitation system for agency and eligible user advertisement posting and notifications; and 3) the Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) system was used to manage certification of minority-, woman-, and veteran-owned businesses. All three platforms were on-premise solutions maintained on separate hardware that the State had to host and manage. The applications dated as far back as 1997, with outdated user interfaces, functionality, and each application requiring its own set of interfaces with other State systems as well as its own service support teams. The applications serviced more than 108,000 vendors and over 400 agency and eligible users (Florida counties, cities, public schools/universities, and other Florida government organizations).

In 2020, DMS issued an ITN and negotiated a contract to build a cloud-based, Next Generation MyFloridaMarketPlace (Next Gen MFMP) eProcurement system, including an upgrade to the Vendor Information Portal that consolidated the functionality of VIP, VBS, and OSD into one cloud-based application. Support staff would also be reduced to the team already supporting the State's MFMP eProcurement system and cloud-platform service provider, eliminating the costs of hosting and maintaining on-premise solutions and separate DMS IT support staff for OSD and VBS. The Department negotiated an aggressive timeline, with all activities from design through deployment and change management scheduled for completion within nine months during the same year that the rest of the State eProcurement system was being overhauled.

Work began on July 1, 2021, with DMS resources managing the initiative. A co-creation approach was leveraged to design the system with ample input from stakeholders and the Florida vendor community through surveys and workshops. The result is an innovative platform with a modern, intuitive look and feel that gives vendors a one-stop-shop for registration and account maintenance, billing, certification, and solicitation needs, including a virtual agent powered by ServiceNow for self-service assistance. The system is hosted on cloud architecture that reduces the management cost, responsibility, and risk for DMS, with improved security and licensing that allows DMS the flexibility to scale-up computing resources for future needs. Preparation for deployment included developing a consolidated, searchable multimedia training guide for Next Gen VIP powered by Articulate Rise eLearning software and live, instructor-led trainings delivered to over 2,000 users. Change management activities also included regular communications to the more than 108,000 vendors and 400 plus agency and eligible users. The design and change management approaches can be leveraged by other agencies looking to realize the cost savings and improved internal management of consolidating legacy applications into one modern, cloud-based solution. Development, testing, and deployment were completed successfully and on-time, with Next Gen VIP made available to agency employees, eligible users, and vendors on March 28, 2022.

Innovation

[Next Gen VIP](#) consolidated the State of Florida's VIP, VBS, and OSD systems into a single application providing self-service tools for registration, account maintenance, performance rating reviews, transaction fee billing and reporting, Office of Supplier Diversity certification, and posting of competitive solicitations advertisements. The system also includes a Virtual Agent powered by ServiceNow providing in-app support for commonly asked questions.

Beyond application consolidation, Next Gen VIP dramatically improved the user experience, with a new and intuitive look and feel. The number of screens required for registration was also reduced significantly. New dashboards in Next Gen VIP provide quick access to real-time data including administrative, registration, advertisements, transaction fee information, and vendor spend analytics. The advertisements dashboard for agency customers and eligible users provides insight into advertisement statuses and reminders, as well as the ability to create and manage user accounts in-app (an improvement on VBS, which required coordination with DMS for user management). Vendor dashboards provide visibility into personalized activity such as revenue from state agencies and transaction fee payments and statuses in one spot.

New in-app notifications provide vendors automated notices regarding transaction fee compliance and certified business enterprise status updates. Vendor account profile management improvements, include the ability for each account contact to have unique login credentials and the ability to add multiple solicitation contacts (previously VIP vendor accounts had shared login credentials and only one solicitation contact). Commodity Code search capability was improved with a new predictive search engine that anticipates the search needs of vendors by suggesting commodity codes as the vendor types in the search bar. This innovation improved the vendor experience, allowing vendors unfamiliar with Florida's commodity codes to identify codes applicable to their business quickly.

Feedback gathered from surveys and workshops also drove design decisions for the Office of Supplier Diversity functionality. OSD business processes were improved by Next Gen VIP, with vendors able to apply, renew, view their status, and download their OSD certificate directly through the application, including uploading documentation directly through Next Gen VIP, an improvement on the former OSD process. OSD employees now manage the entire certification process in the application, from reviewing all necessary questionnaire responses and supporting documentation to certification approval or rejection.

The Next Gen VIP application was built on Oracle Cloud Infrastructure GovCloud, a top-in-class cloud-architecture solution. Migrating to the cloud reduces the management cost, responsibility, and risk for DMS, with improved an improved licensing structure that allows DMS the flexibility to scale-up computing resources for future needs. Back-end improvements to system architecture include improved cyber-security controls to keep sensitive State data safe. System architecture improvements also impact end-users on the front-end, with faster system performance and improved profile security through the implementation of multi-factor authentication (MFA) for admin profiles.

Transferability

Other states would benefit from identifying legacy systems that can be consolidated into a single, cloud-based system. Initiatives can use a similar design approach leveraged by DMS including surveying the user community, creating detailed design documentation, and facilitating regular stakeholder meetings that involve prototypes and critical discussions that seek opportunities to use the new tool as a vehicle for business processes improvement. Additionally, states would benefit from mirroring the change management approach used by DMS. The change management approach began with the development of an MFMP change network, a council of Agency Customers throughout the State who sponsor and advocate for Next Generation MFMP to foster commitment and collaboration. For Next Gen VIP, change network responsibilities included promoting trainings, acting as liaisons for communications, and participating in stakeholder prototypes and meetings. The communications campaign for Next Gen VIP included developing numerous communications sent to over 108,000 vendors (38% open rate), agency customers, and eligible users. Some communications were sent to the general userbase, while more specific communications were delivered to targeted user groups, determined by factors such as role or activity in VIP. Other states would also benefit from using the Rise eLearning software or similar to create consolidated multimedia guides that are easy to navigate and maintain. Next Gen [VIP Cloud Transformation](#) project information and organization change management activities including meetings, the agency change network, FAQs, communications, and the multimedia training guides are all publicly available from the [Next Generation MyFloridaMarketPlace](#) webpage for other states to review and replicate.



Service Improvement

The Next Gen VIP application services more than 108,000 vendors doing business with the state, as well as 449 agency customers using the platform for solicitations, OSD functionality, and searching for vendor information. Stakeholder involvement in Next Gen VIP was critical to the 111 detailed design documents created during the initiative, with DMS facilitating surveying of vendors, OSD, and agency solicitation user groups. Additionally, DMS conducted workshop sessions with agency user groups so that Next Gen VIP not only met user needs, but also provided opportunities for business process improvements. For example, improved functionality provided agency system admins with more control over their users, while OSD certification management was transformed into an entirely online process occurring in a single place. Other enhancements driven by user feedback included additional field validations to reduce bad data and improvements to advertisement notification functionality, providing vendors both in-app notifications and an easier experience signing up for commodity-code based notifications. Feedback not implemented has been pinned as potential system enhancements for the future, and the program plans to continue the feedback mechanisms instituted, such as an annual vendor survey, to keep the system responsive to user needs and State business practices.

Previously, VIP training documentation consisted of numerous job aids, online trainings, and a YouTube channel. The disparate materials made it sometimes difficult for users to pinpoint the information they needed. Next Gen VIP change management efforts rectified this by consolidating all information into three searchable, comprehensive guides for vendors, agency customers, and advertisement administrators. The guides were developed through Articulate Rise eLearning software, which provided modern functionality such as in-guide videos and interactive process flows that walk through various scenarios. The interactive functionality allowed DMS to strengthen the amount and type of material available to the agency customers and the vendor community. The single source of information developed in Articulate Rise is easier for DMS to manage and update in response to program or application changes, while also ensuring that end-users are always accessing the most up-to-date information. Change management activities included numerous communications to keep vendors and agency customers informed, and instructor-led trainings were developed and delivered to 2,195 users. Migration of user data was conducted to facilitate easier end-user change, with all active accounts and competitive solicitations migrated to the new platform for go-live.

Next Gen VIP also provides customers with an in-app virtual agent powered by ServiceNow. The virtual agent provides answers to common inquiries, with over 1,600 sessions conducted since deployment. Every question answered by the virtual agent is a call or an email a user does not have to send to the State of Florida eProcurement helpdesk, providing faster answers to end-users and reducing helpdesk call volume for improved helpdesk self-service to customers.

Cost Reduction

The state hosted all three applications on on-premise hardware managed by state resources. With consideration to the VBS and OSD applications, upgrades and these applications standing alone would have added costs for the state. Consolidation of these applications also provides a unique experience for vendors to have a single point of entry to register to do business, report billing and transaction fees, and request certification which saves time, provides ease of use, and promotes more business activity.

Other cost savings include the savings associated both with consolidation of the applications and associated hardware, and the savings associated with reducing the required support teams from three to one. DMS IT Staff was reduced with the support migrating away from DMS saved 2.5 FTEs which is an estimated salary cost savings \$169,000.

While the dollar amount of cost savings of moving to the cloud cannot be fully estimated, DMS will also realize savings through the Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model that the Next Gen VIP architecture is built on. The cloud-based platform eliminates costly hardware maintenance and upgrades and reduces security and disaster recovery risks.

Both VIP and Tableau offer data via dashboards to provide visibility and tracking of spend for the State of Florida. This visibility could provide cost savings across the state with this level of insight in procurement activities.

Overall, these added benefits of application consolidation, enhanced security features, and greater visibility provide risk mitigation that avoid potential costs for the State of Florida.



Conclusion

Next Gen VIP was successfully designed, built, and deployed on an aggressive timeline. The platform gives Florida a much-needed upgrade to a consolidated, modern platform that meets vendor and agency customer needs. With easy-to-upgrade architecture and a stakeholder feedback framework for future enhancements, Next Gen VIP is a platform built for the present and future. Preliminary feedback from both vendors and agency customers also indicates the Florida Department of Management Services Next Gen VIP has been a resounding success. As one agency customer commented, “Great job on the new VIP. Advertising on the ‘new VBs’ is very user-friendly. Thank you!!”.

Upload your submission here:

<https://www.naspo.org/Cronin-Awards-Submission-Form>

Appendix – Supporting Documentation

★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

TM



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Operational Services Division

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

GEORGE CRONIN

★ awards for ★

Increasing Vendor and Buyer Engagement in the COVID-19 Environment

*Procurement
Excellence*

TM

Executive Summary

Increasing Vendor and Buyer Engagement in the COVID-19 Environment

Over the last few years, buyer organizations and businesses have needed to shift their processes to keep in step with fallout from COVID-19. Likewise, Sourcing Managers have needed to be nimble – thinking and responding to a quickly evolving landscape and being in position to efficiently handle new-found challenges, such as managing expedited procurements of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 test kits and staying abreast of the next supply chain issue.

The Operational Services Division (OSD), the state procurement office for Massachusetts, has managed through some challenges over the last two years, but COVID-19 also has afforded opportunities to take a closer look at past customer interactions and make improvements. Even as OSD was unceremoniously thrust into the COVID-19 procurement frenzy, the agency transformed several strategic sourcing processes into what would become our “new normal” – moving meetings to a virtual format; embracing process standardization; and using internal and external partnerships – to improve engagement with our vendor and buyer audiences.

Conducting business remotely, foreign to so many at first, was a major shift that ultimately empowered OSD to broaden and bolster our reach. At the height of the pandemic, engaging with customers virtually was vital. The agency quickly researched and purchased software to facilitate online meetings and staff worked swiftly to learn the ins and outs of these virtual platforms. The first two virtual meetings provided Executive Departments and municipal buyers guidance and resources to acquire desperately needed PPE.

Embracing the value of our virtual voice, OSD moved our buyer and vendor training courses online, and several recurring sourcing meetings, as well: Strategic Sourcing Team (SST) meetings, Bidders’ Conferences, Awarded Vendor Onboarding meetings, and Buyer Contract Kickoff events. Of note, buyer participation at the virtual Contract Kickoff events soared as compared to predecessor in-person events. During these meetings, the Sourcing Managers and, at times, members of the SST share information about newly launched contracts and the meetings also provide awarded vendors the opportunity to briefly address the buyer audience. Overwhelmingly, buyers and vendors embraced options to attend remote meetings, saving them time and the expense of travel.

As OSD brought in talent from across the agency to bolster our online presence, their input underscored opportunities to standardize and enhance these meetings. Presentation templates for the various meeting purposes were designed to ensure message consistency and to introduce time-saving elements both for Strategic Sourcing and Legal staff in terms of preparation time and legal review. The creation of these presentation templates prompted additional initiatives to standardize bidder communications, such as Intent to Award notices, Apparent Successful Bidder messages, Unsuccessful Bidder outreach, and communications with unsuccessful bidders requesting Procurement Debriefing meetings.

An essential element of the standard presentation templates was the inclusion of tactical partners, both external and internal, whose expertise would add value for our audiences. Working with our sister agency, the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), ensured prospective vendors were well-versed in the Commonwealth’s Supplier Diversity mission and that they understood their supplier diversity requirements. It also helped spread the word about the agency’s partnership with Procurated, a supplier ratings platform. The initiative to standardize presentation templates also included internal resources

from OSD Marketing, Training, the OSD Help Desk, and the agency's Environmentally Preferable Products Procurement Program to ensure the right messages were shared with customers.

The agency learned that convenient access to agency webinars, coupled with consistent, effective messaging, engendered more engaged audiences. SST members appreciated the opportunity to collaborate remotely to build successful contracts. Potential bidders had quick and easy access to information they needed for successful quote submissions. Awarded vendors were provided the tools to successfully manage their Commonwealth contracts. Finally, with a few clicks, buyers were able to learn about new contracts and "meet" the awarded vendors. The standardized approach streamlined the agency's Strategic Sourcing process – from inception through contract utilization.

Innovation

Flexibility and agility were essential components to effectively manage the Strategic Sourcing process during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and in the ensuing months. These attributes remain critical in our ever-evolving landscape. Recognizing that the sourcing process and subsequent use of contracts are contingent on active engagement by the vendor and buyer communities, OSD took steps to secure meeting software that would enable continuity of the strategic sourcing process and the effective flow of information to customers.

At the beginning of the sourcing process, the selection and participation of Strategic Sourcing Team members is crucial. SSTs need the associated industry expertise and experience necessary to identify the best product and service solutions and to draft Requests for Response that draw the right complement of vendors. When in-person meetings were no longer viable, some of the initial dilemmas facing the agency were ensuring that existing SSTs could continue their work uninterrupted and that new Sourcing teams could be formed. In the past, OSD required a witnessed wet signature from SST participants to confirm their agreement with team membership terms: conflict of interest, confidentiality, non-disclosure, and public records. During the COVID-19 emergency, OSD developed a form that SST members could execute electronically. This practice was shared with Chief Procurement Officials throughout Massachusetts. While so many SST members previously traveled to Boston to attend meetings, sessions easily migrated to a virtual format, helping to boost attendance and participation in SSTs.

In a move toward standardization, the OSD Sourcing unit, in consultation with the Marketing unit, the Training team, and OSD Help Desk staff, developed presentation templates to ensure consistency of information, brand, and approach for Bidders' Conferences, Awarded Vendor Onboarding meetings, and Buyer Contract Kickoff events. Each of these sessions are described below.

Bidders' Conferences

Bidders' Conferences, hosted by Sourcing Managers, offer the vendor community the opportunity to meet with the Sourcing Team to learn about current state bidding opportunities. During these meetings, bidders are provided an overview of the available bid, bid evaluation criteria, contract sales potential, contractor expectations, procurement calendar, bid response expectations, the state's focus on sustainability, and bid submission guidance from the OSD Training unit. In addition, bidders learn about the state's Supplier Diversity mission and receive a detailed walk-through of the Supplier Diversity Plan form bidders must include with their quote submission.

Vendor Onboarding

Following the evaluation of bidders' responses and subsequent awards, OSD onboards contractors and ensures that they have the necessary information to successfully fulfill their contract requirements. A second meeting template was developed for this purpose. At these Awarded Vendor Onboarding meetings, Sourcing Managers reinforce expectations related to the use of COMMBUYS, the state's eProcurement system, share opportunities for training and resources to market their contract, describe reporting and sustainability requirements, as well as other contract-specific expectations. Additionally, a representative from the Supplier Diversity Office reviews the state's mission to promote equality and diversity in state contracting and details vendors' quarterly responsibilities to report progress against their contractual diverse expenditure goals. Finally, contractors are introduced to OSD's partnership with Procurated, a ratings and review platform, and their opportunity to claim a page on the Procurated site.

Buyer Kickoff Events

Statewide Contract Buyer Kickoff Meetings are events celebrating the culmination of many months of work by SSTs, and they represent OSD's opportunity to convey the contract's value to the public community and to maximize contract use. The presentation template developed for this purpose enables Sourcing Managers to showcase the products and services offered on contract, highlight changes from the predecessor contract, spotlight contract benefits and opportunities to purchase from small and diverse vendors, and describe how to make purchases and find contract resources. Additionally, awarded vendors are given an opportunity to showcase their business to the buyer community by presenting a slide during the meeting. The PRF70 Advertising, Marketing and Event Planning Services Contract Kickoff attracted 249 buyers, a sizable increase from in-person Contract Kickoff events of the past. In fact, average attendance at buyer kickoff events increased 67% in response to the agency offering a remote meeting format (Refer to In-Person and Virtual Buyer Event Attendance in Appendix).

New Standardization Opportunities

Given the success of the various online meeting templates, the agency looked to standardize additional documents used during the bid evaluation and award process. Sourcing leadership worked with the OSD Marketing unit to develop templates to standardize the following communications: Intent to Award templates, Apparent Successful Bidder announcements, Unsuccessful Bidder communications, and correspondence with unsuccessful bidders requesting Procurement Debriefing meetings. Templates for each of these processes means less time needed to draft and seek approval for these recurring communications.

Transferability

Other state procurement offices may adopt OSD's approach to engaging prospective bidders, awarded vendors, and the public buyer community with the purchase and subsequent use of virtual meeting software. The Operational Services Division has found many uses for our investment beyond the aforementioned value, including quarterly meetings with Chief Procurement Officers and state fleet managers, as well as public buyer meetings to share PPE purchasing guidance or options to procure COVID-19 test kits. Moreover, the agency's Spotlight webinar series for municipalities was well received. The three-part series covered: Information Technology Statewide Contracts, Tradespersons Statewide Contracts, and Frequent Calls into the OSD Help Desk. Our buyer and vendor communities are accustomed to meeting with us online, facilitating greater access to our customers.

The other piece of the implementation is pulling in expertise within the procurement office and working with external partners, as needed, to identify the information required to:

- Recruit knowledgeable and experienced procurement professionals from Executive Departments and municipal organizations to serve on the Strategic Sourcing Teams
- Encourage potential bidders to pursue Statewide Contracting and giving them the information and tools to facilitate successful quote submissions
- Enable Statewide Contractors to effectively market their contract and fulfill contract requirements
- Secure buyer contract engagement to maximize purchases
- Develop templates for repetitive bid-related messages

See the Appendix for meeting templates and messages developed by the Operational Services Division, along with attendance numbers that demonstrate the uptake and success of our virtual buyer events.

Service Improvement

All business changes should be explored through the lens of our customers, and OSD's standardized online approach affords easier access to the information needed by our buyer and vendor communities.

Moving Strategic Sourcing Team meetings to an all-virtual format removed a barrier to attracting the expertise that is crucial to developing competitive procurements – the time commitment required from members was not lengthened by the need to travel. Virtual meetings enable SST members to participate in active discussions with a few clicks of the mouse and teams are steadily working toward their objectives, as before.

Similarly, vendor and buyer groups responded positively to being able to easily attend online meetings. In the beginning, the agency would assist one or two participants who may have experienced sound difficulties, but technical issues quickly faded after a few months as the world acclimated to these technologies.

For prospective bidders, the Bidders' Conference provides information and tools to maximize vendors' opportunities for success. To set the meeting topics for the Bidders' Conferences, Sourcing, Help Desk, and Training staff at OSD met to discuss the types of questions that bidders pose and identified frequent quote pitfalls. The Training unit additionally created a short, online tutorial that describes how bidders access and use the Q&A feature in COMMBUYS to submit bid questions to the SST. This concerted effort to give potential bidders the information and resources they needed to successfully submit a quote improved OSD's opportunity to attract vendors to Statewide Contracting.

Once vendors are selected for contract awards, the agency must ensure they clearly understand the business opportunities afforded to them, as well as their contractual responsibilities. Vendor Onboarding Meetings formalize the onboarding process, detailing the tools contractors have available in terms of marketing lists, Statewide Contract logos, and training, for example, as well as describing what is expected vis-à-vis COMMBUYS, notifications to the agency, quarterly reporting, contract scope, and partnerships with diverse businesses. The Onboarding Meeting template ensures critical topics are covered, while granting Sourcing Managers the latitude to include details that may be specific to their contracts. Meeting recordings, afforded through the virtual format, are available to share with

additional vendor staff and may be reshared as vendor Contract Managers change – a frequent occurrence.

The buyer community has been extremely receptive to our virtual format. In the past, OSD averaged 66 buyers at contract kickoff sessions when they were held in person. Now that buyers access these meetings virtually, uptake has grown – the agency averaging 110 buyers at these events – a 67% increase. Moreover, feedback captured during and following these events are a testament to their value. Buyers learn the scope of the contract, participate in a Q&A session with the Sourcing Manager and, at times, the Sourcing Team, and learn about products and services from the awarded vendors themselves. Buyers appreciate these “face-to-face” meetings with contractors: vendor presentations are at the end of the agenda, yet attendance numbers remain consistent through the end of the event. Meeting recordings, available online, preserve the information shared.

Embracing the idea of conducting business online, OSD also adopted the use of electronic signature software which facilitates the execution of contract documents for Statewide Contract vendors and the agency, and prospectively will help reduce costs for the agency in two ways: 1.) office space no longer will be devoted to storage for paper files and 2.) sending contracts electronically reduces or eliminates postage costs.

Developing templates Sourcing Managers can pull off the shelf widens their access to a resource that is often in short supply – time – allowing them to focus on their myriad other responsibilities, such as contract management and fielding inquiries from the buyer community

Cost Reduction

OSD’s standardized online approach to meetings is connected to some significant time savings for Sourcing Managers, OSD’s procurement staff, and Legal personnel. In the past, Sourcing Managers often found themselves repurposing templates they may have developed previously, researching new processes, and updating links to finalize slides for these various sessions. New Sourcing Managers sometimes were starting from scratch. Once developed, Marketing and Legal staff needed to review and provide feedback on each of these individual presentations.

With standardized, pre-approved templates, Sourcing Managers have no need to *create* presentations. Instead, they just need to tailor the slides to fit the nuances of the contract. Time spent for marketing reviews also are significantly curtailed with this approach and legal review often is confined to a handful of slides.

Similarly, the standardization of various repetitive bid messages has saved the agency time. The agency pulled in Sourcing leadership, Marketing, and, subsequently, the Legal unit to develop templates that are repetitively used during and after bid award. Following the development of these templates, Sourcing Managers have an arsenal of standard templates to share Intent to Award announcements and messages to Apparent Successful Bidders and Unsuccessful Bidders. Sourcing Managers also may pull from their files pre-approved language to facilitate responses for procurement debriefing requests. These templates ensure less staff time is needed to distribute these messages, while allowing Sourcing Managers to tailor messages, as needed. The time savings associated with the templates allow Sourcing Managers to focus on numerous other aspects of the vendor onboarding process.

OSD's adoption of electronic signature software will pay dividends over time with the reduction of floor space needed for the storage of contract documents and the elimination of postage costs. OSD's meeting software purchase, though a cost, was and remains a strategic and essential investment to effectively communicate with customers in today's business environment. Simply – it's a cost of doing business.

Conclusion

At the heart of effective communication is being able to connect to your audiences and relay messages that have value. Even as opportunities to make connections were strained during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Operational Services Division was able to implement strategies that improved the flow of communication – measured both in access and quality. Through our multi-pronged initiative, our reach has widened: new prospects are bidding on contracts, we are welcoming first-time vendors to Statewide Contracting, and we are seeing use of our contracts grow through the buyer community, particularly with municipal organizations.

Appendix

[In-Person and Virtual Buyer Event Attendance](#)

[VEH110 Bidders' Conference](#)

[FAC116 Vendor Onboarding Meeting](#)

[PRF70 Contract Kickoff Event](#)

[Intent to Award Notification Template I](#)

[Intent to Award Notification Template II](#)

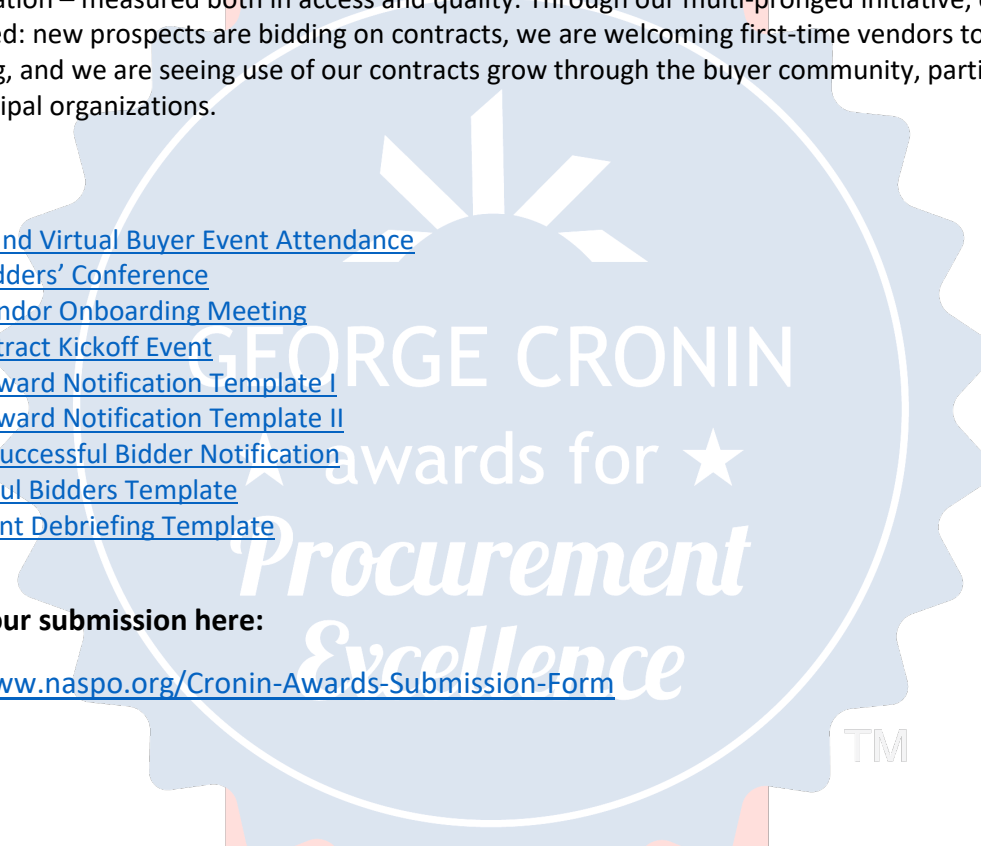
[Apparent Successful Bidder Notification](#)

[Unsuccessful Bidders Template](#)

[Procurement Debriefing Template](#)

Upload your submission here:

<https://www.naspo.org/Cronin-Awards-Submission-Form>





State of Michigan

Department of *Technology, Management, & Budget*

Division of Central Procurement

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

**Bringing Automation and A.I.
to Public Procurement**

Executive Summary

Computer automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the subject of science fiction no longer. It is here, it is capable, and it is ready to be implemented for those bold enough to be on the cutting edge of technology.

The State of Michigan's Central Procurement Services (CPS) has begun implementation of machine learning and other automation tools to remove repetitive tasks, create administrative efficiencies, and improve sourcing event outcomes. Further, there is ample room for growth as this is an ever-evolving technology, and we are laying the necessary foundation to continue to develop processes that can utilize AI.

Innovation

Successful implementation of AI would stand out as a substantial innovation in public procurement. It may eventually be as impactful as robotics and mechanical automation has been in industrial settings. To be certain, no one is doing it yet. In Michigan's case, we have started with relatively simple automations, including:

- Utilizing complex logic to compile and compare pricing sheets offered in a state-wide vehicle solicitation to identify the overall best price (comparing pricing for 87 different vehicles across all proposals)
- Building Python scrips to perform standard automated spend analysis
- Integrating the change notice process into CPS's central database, and auto populating approximately 80% of fields on change notices and State Administrative Board forms

Additionally, CPS has completed testing on more advanced tools:

- Use of AI (deep learning and natural language processing) to analyze content of contracts and extract information (insurance, governing law, etc.)
- Use of machine learning to predict reasonable timelines for solicitations and change notices.

Transferability

Michigan has a dedicated Technology and Reporting Section, with three full-time employees and a manger, to support and drive new technology solutions. To date, CPS has implemented its automation programs with software products and tools that are standard issue within the State of Michigan or otherwise free to use (Microsoft Access, Python code, etc.) This is efficient from a cost standpoint and demonstrates transferability.

Eventually, every state will need to implement automation and more advanced AI programs to keep up. However, the timetable for this will likely be driven by the resources dedicated to procurement in each state.

Service Improvement

Any automation of tasks saves time, either time it takes to finish a sourcing event or time staff can spend on other tasks. In the three instances that Michigan has so far implemented, the majority of improvements have been most directly felt by the employees of CPS.

The automation of vehicle pricing eliminated a time-consuming portion of the bid evaluation, freeing up that time for the buyer. Spend analysis automation cut the time needed to complete an analysis from a month to about 20 minutes. The automation of the change notice process cut the number of fields that need to be populated by the buyer by approximately 80%. This not only frees the buyer from having to enter repetitive information but eliminates the risk of typos or other errors in these fields, improving the quality of the work product.

In addition to the improvements experienced by the staff of CPS, agency customers also get to enjoy quicker turnaround times on change notices. Further, automation of vehicle pricing will lead to quicker sourcing events in that category in the future. This type of automation can and will be applied to other categories in the future.

Agency customers benefit from general service improvement with buyers freed from many tedious tasks. First, buyers can now devote more time towards customers, thus improving our outward facing customer service. Second, our buyers will be happier with their jobs, as many of the monotonous tasks will be taken off their plates, and happier employees generally perform better work.

Cost Reduction

So far, Michigan's efforts at automation have only resulted in administrative savings. However, these are not insignificant. The automation of spend analysis alone took a previously month-long process and condensed it to 20 minutes. As a result of this, CPS realized administrative savings of \$9,299 (The data analyst who runs these reports costs CPS \$9,317 per month, or approximately \$17.85 per 20 minutes). The administrative savings of the automated change notice and Administrative Board processes likely has even greater savings, but CPS cannot calculate this because all available data is a result of the automation and there is not a baseline to calculate savings.

In the future, CPS expects hard savings to be realized as pricing sheet comparison automation becomes more common-place and other technologies are introduced.

Conclusion

The implementation of automation tools to remove repetitive tasks, create efficiencies, and improve sourcing events has already begun in Michigan. CPS is already realizing administrative savings from these changes. CPS is testing more advanced artificial intelligence tools to use in the near future. Michigan believes that shifting easily

automated tasks off of buyers' workload will be one of the only ways to deal with the increased expectations on public procurement in the future.





State of Michigan

Department of *technology, Management, & Budget*

Division of Central Procurement

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

**Investment in Michigan's
Cooperative Purchasing
Program Yields Huge Returns**

Executive Summary

The Michigan Delivering Extended Agreements Locally (“MiDEAL”) program was implemented in January 2004. It was based on Michigan’s Extended Purchasing Program born in 1984, which allowed municipalities (as well as other state governments) to leverage the state’s purchasing power by buying off certain state contracts. MiDEAL end users include any city, village, township, county, school district, intermediate school district, non-profit hospital, public university, community college, and junior college. The benefits extend beyond the cost savings achieved through better pricing and can save untold hours of labor investment in the solicitation and contract negotiation processes.

Though this program has existed in some form for many years, Michigan has begun investing more into the program, including hiring a manager level position to directly oversee it. These investments have proven fruitful and 2021 saw the implementation of substantial refinements and improvements to the program.

To make a cooperative purchasing program work efficiently, you need participation from all sides. Increasing potential customers increases the value to the venter community; increasing the number of products and services available increases the number of customers. This is a symbiotic relationship, one that must be cultivated. Michigan accomplished this while maintaining the State of Michigan’s strict competitive solicitation requirements. Adhering to these strict requirements has not harmed the program, in fact, since MiDEAL contracts are competitively solicited, MiDEAL members can trust that the contracts generally meet or exceed their jurisdiction’s requirements.

Innovation

Cooperative purchasing programs are nothing new, but Michigan’s recent program improvements stand out as substantial innovations.

Perhaps what makes Michigan’s program most unique is that there are two full-time employees to administer the program, including a manager level position. Further, as a direct result of the vendor-paid administrative fees, the positions are fully funded at no additional cost to the taxpayers.

Michigan has put much of its energy into outreach and engagement to increase the numbers of participants from local units and vendors. This has been accomplished by providing consistent and intentional messaging to the membership throughout the year. This messaging includes:

- MiDEAL’s YouTube channel with new videos including:
 - MiDEAL’s first-ever commercial, “MiDEAL Advantage: Program Overview” (315 views)
 - Vehicle Purchasing Program (708 views)
 - Road Salt (371 views)
 - Podcast: Cybersecurity Assessment Program (244 views)

- New Website Overview (88 views)
- MiDEAL Training Series
 - Intro to Records Management (151 attendees)
 - Learn how to Manage Risk by Determining the Best Contract Type and Price Model and Payment Structure (36 attendees)
 - FOIA Overview (193 attendees)
 - Posting Bids to SIGMA VSS for MiDEAL Members (53 attendees)
- Improved MiDEAL website with refreshed contract pages for a consistent look and additional contract overviews
- Monthly “All Access” communications – featuring new contracts, change notices and expiring contracts
- Virtual “Contract Roadshow” Series – spotlighting contract themes
- “Quick Tips” communications – to get the most out of a membership, i.e., navigating the contract portfolio, accessing the MiDEAL contract excel spreadsheet
- “Program Spotlights” – highlighting programs offered through the state and applicable associations
- “Vendor Spotlight” – sending messages out on behalf of the vendor
- Quarterly check-in with new members to see if they have any questions about their membership and remind them to schedule a MiDEAL member orientation
- Over 75 virtual orientations with members to walk them through their membership and how to locate and use contracts in the program

These efforts resulted in an increase in the number of members receiving relevant communications from 1,447 to 2,332 individuals.

Michigan has also engaged the MiDEAL vendor community to help market their contracts to MiDEAL members, resulting in a growth in contract usage by members. Michigan achieved this with an annual vendor outreach strategic plan. This plan included the following highlights:

- Collaborating with the top selling vendors to market their contracts to the MiDEAL member community
- Communications to vendors with low or zero sales reminding them that their contract is also open to MiDEAL members
- Marketing ideas offered to vendors to get more business from the MiDEAL program; including access to MiDEAL member contact information, creating a vendor webpage specific for MiDEAL members to access info about services and products available in their contract, and allowing use of the MiDEAL logo on vendor websites and marketing materials

In total, these efforts have resulted in a stronger and more engaged membership, with a growth in membership, from 1,245 to 1,309 organizations– a new record of for the program. Efforts to work with MiDEAL vendors have helped to increase the number of MiDEAL contracts with spend from 113 to 146 contracts during 2021 alone. In turn, the increased contract usage has been a key part, along with accounting improvements, of

the 96% increase CPS has seen in revenue from the program between FY 2018 and FY 2021 (from \$1.86 million to \$3.63 million per CPS financial statements).

Transferability

All states should have the basics (contracts, vendors, local units of government) needed to set up a cooperative purchasing program, though some states might need new statutory authority to do so.

For state's that have existing programs, implementation of Michigan's innovations simply requires the will to do so. All states should have existing email and/or message delivery services like GovDelivery. The content of the various communications can be developed or even borrowed from Michigan to the extent necessary to suit individual needs. Similarly, YouTube is a ubiquitous tool that is free for states to utilize to share their content. All that is needed to develop content is someone with a bare minimum knowledge of the communication tools and hopefully an energetic and photogenic presenter!

Service Improvement

Service improvement is at the heart of the enhancements made to the MiDEAL program. As detailed in the Innovation Section, CPS has undertaken a large effort to expand communication and training opportunities for MiDEAL members, by using different means of communication such as websites, e-mail, live video streams, interactive online forums and YouTube. This variety is critical because CPS recognizes that different people prefer to receive information differently.

As a result of these efforts, the number of MiDEAL members increased from 1093 to 1,309 (nearly a 20% increase per member data) from FY 18 to present. It should be noted that there was no significant change in the number of entities that qualify for MiDEAL during this time. Additionally, it resulted in a 61% increase (from 1,447 to 2,332 individuals per information obtained through GovDelivery) in the number of individuals within local units of government receiving relevant communications about MiDEAL.

Additionally, Michigan's efforts to engage the MiDEAL vendor community to help market their contracts to MiDEAL members, resulted in a growth of contract usage by members.

By offering members and vendors a much more personal and engaging program, Michigan has enhanced its service to these customers. Though simple in concept, these changes have produced objective results; increasing the number of MiDEAL contracts with spend from 113 to 146 contracts during 2021 alone. In turn, the increased contract usage has been a key part of the 96% increase CPS has seen in revenue from the program between FY 2018 and FY 2021.

Cost Reduction

MiDEAL is a revenue generating program and from a budget perspective it reduces the costs of CPS to the state's general fund, freeing that money up for other uses. In fact, the revenue generated by MiDEAL represents 43% of Central Procurement Services's (CPS) annual operating revenue.

As result of investing in the MiDEAL program:

- Associated annual revenue has increased 96% between FY 2018 and FY 2021 from \$1.86 million to \$3.63 million (per CPS's FY 2018 and 2021 financial statements), and this revenue has allowed Michigan to further invest in CPS
- Total additional FY 2019, FY 2020 and FY 2021 revenue equaled \$4.09 million more than expected based on FY 2018
- Prior to this, revenue was relatively stable for the three preceding years (between \$1.7 and \$2.0 million) and FY 2018's revenue is almost exactly the average of those four years (off by just -\$5,200)
- The enhancements to the MiDEAL program produced a Return on Investment (ROI) of 991.6% for FY 2021 (the increased cost of staffing was \$178,794 for FY 2021, and the increased revenue was \$1,772,980, all other costs of enhancements have been covered by NASPO/Valuepoint cooperative outreach funds)
- A similar ROI is projected for FY 2022

Further, Members (local units of government etc.), experience cost reductions in two ways. First, there are direct cost savings from taking advantage of the State of Michigan's pricing on its MiDEAL contracts. Secondly, Members realize administrative savings by not having to solicit for the contracted goods or services themselves. Sadly, Michigan does not currently have a way to track these savings (however, Michigan is working on a major database replacement that may help us provide this information in the future).

Conclusion

By investing under \$180,000 per year in the pre-existing MiDEAL program, the State of Michigan has helped increase annual revenue by 96% from \$1.86 million in FY 2018 to \$3.63 million in FY 2021. This represents an annual ROI of 991.6% (per FY 2021 financial statements).

Beyond the money saved, it has resulted in increased savings to MiDEAL members and increased sales to MiDEAL vendors.

Further, service to MiDEAL's customers has been enhanced as evidenced by:

- 20% increase in MiDEAL members from 1093 to 1,309
- 61% increase in the number of individuals receiving relevant communications about MiDEAL from 1,447 to 2,332
- 29% increase in the number of MiDEAL contracts with spend from 113 to 146

By breathing new life into a well-established program, the State of Michigan has been able to create a win for MiDEAL members and vendors, as well as generate increased revenue to further enhance its procurement activities.





GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of NEW MEXICO

GENERAL SERVICES Department
STATE PURCHASING Division



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Procurement Excellence **COMPREHENSIVE PROCUREMENT™ ELECTRIFICATION**

Use this template to help guide you as you prepare your submission for review by the Cronin Awards Committee. It is recommended that you keep the headings as they are provided in this template. This will make it easier for committee members as they review submissions. Feel free to delete the guideline text as you go through this template, it is just there to help you understand how the committee evaluates each category.

Executive Summary

The Cronin Awards evaluation consists of four categories, each one examining a different aspect of the project's impact, and each weighed separately to provide an overall score (more details available in the methodology subsection). Submissions are limited to four pages, although optional supporting material can also be submitted as a separate document when needed to showcase images, examples, or documentation that is too large to fit within the four-page submission itself.

It is useful to committee members for a submission to begin with a concise introduction/executive summary that describes the purpose and scope of the project and gives a brief overview of the implementation process. The introduction should also include a summary statement of the content of each of the four categories and a comment on the results of the project. If there is anything in the submission to which committee members should pay particular attention, it is helpful to mention it in the introduction. This executive summary should not exceed one page and is included as part of the total pages for the submission.

New Mexico comprehensively electrified its procurement process including the following:

- 1. Only electronic bids and proposals - No paper submissions accepted**
- 2. Only virtual pre-proposal and vendor meetings – no inperson**
- 3. Only virtual bid opening events – no inperson**
- 4. All DocuSign execution of contracts and all documentation previously requiring wet signatures**
- 5. All permanent records are now kept electronically in PDF - No paper**
- 6. State Purchasing Trainings are now all virtual no inperson**
- 7. All professional services contracts are submitted and processed electronically (this used to be 1000's of paper files annually)**
- 8. Eliminated the need for a file room**
- 9. Reduced the need for paper copies by 90% - we now scan.**
- 10. Postage and shipping costs for vendors and the state have been greatly reduced or eliminated in most cases.**

II. IPRAs that once took days to prepare are now responded to simply by placing a web link in our response that identify the relevant electronic documents.

Innovation

(30 points) - Unusual or unique approach, scale, or magnitude of effort; conceptual originality. This category should answer the question, “What makes this project stand out as a notable contribution to the procurement function?” It is intended to capture the nature and impact of changes in your state operations, but it also rewards path-breaking ideas or efforts that may not have been considered or attempted elsewhere. Because substantial originality is so rare, this category offers the highest potential point total to a submission that is able to point out differences and to distinguish itself from closely similar projects completed or underway in other states.

New Mexico took a comprehensive approach to electrification by eliminating all paper, wet signatures, and the need to attend meetings in person.

Transferability

(30 points) - primarily an external focus that assesses the practical ability by other states to replicate or use as a benchmark, considering expected resources required and generality of the legal or structural environment in which the entry was implemented. A project or initiative that can be used broadly by other states as a template will receive a higher score than one with benefits that appear to depend on the particular geography, environment, governmental structure, or particular needs of the submitting state. In some cases, it may be necessary to explain how an apparent state-bound effort can be adapted for greater transferability.

New Mexico’s approach is extremely simple - eliminate all paper, eliminate wet signatures, and eliminate the need to attend meetings in person. The concept is extremely easy for any state to replicate and is very transferable.

Service Improvement

(25 points) - an internal focus that assesses the extent to which transactions or service delivery is made more effective or efficient; includes consideration of nature of stakeholder involvement by agencies/users in development & implementation of program or project; change management strategy sufficient to promote adoption. Every purchasing organization provides a service to other state agencies, and this category is intended to assess results—the impact of the project on improving the delivery of those services. More weight is given to specifics than to generalities. When metrics are provided, it is beneficial to include a short (non-technical) explanation of how those metrics were produced. Also, committee members look favorably on descriptions of the input, participation, and adoption by stakeholders.

Eliminating paper removes the drag on processing all phases of the procurement process making for a much more efficient procurement, often saving weeks of handling time. Just eliminating the wet signature requirement by using DocuSign has shortened the execution phase by about one week on average. In fact, DocuSign was so successful at State Purchasing that it was rolled out to all agencies throughout the state and embraced almost universally. Moreover, participation in virtual meetings has increased because the inperson requirement was removed. Often travel involving up to 300 miles from the remote corners of New Mexico to Santa Fe was a barrier for many vendors as the cost and lost work time was prohibitive.

*George Cronin
Award for
Procurement
Excellence*

TM

Cost Reduction

(15 points) - validated or potential for cost reduction, including considerations of savings from improved efficiency. Although cost reduction may not be quite as highly weighted as the other three categories, well-documented estimates or projections of savings is often the determining factor between otherwise generally equal submissions. Cost savings figures are given more weight when they are objective and include an explanation of how they were derived. Although increases in efficiency are less open to precise calculation, the manner or method by which the increase is realized should be described. In general, undocumented claims of very large cost reductions are less likely to receive higher scores than smaller, but significant and well-supported cost savings estimates.

Eliminating:

- 1. Paper**
- 2. File room**
- 3. Permanent record storage**
- 4. Expense of mailing or delivering documents for wet signature**
- 5. Excess time in signing documents that can be executed from a boat in the Caribbean or from home.**
- 6. Driving and time savings by vendors to attend inperson meetings and trainings**

Also, we happily saw the collateral use of DocuSign spread to most non-procurement matters and by all other agencies throughout the state once it was successfully launched by State Purchasing's pilot program.

We experienced more efficient processing because of quick location of virtual files.

We discontinued the physical file-tracker location system.

IPRAs that once took days to prepare are now responded to simply by placing a web link in our response that identify the relevant electronic documents.

Conclusion

2 Attachment documents provided

Project Status Report



DocuSign®

Project Information

Project Name	E-Signature		Report Date	5/6/2022
SoNM Lead	Daniel E. Garcia		DocuSign Lead	Steve Lind
Report Period	4/18	to	5/6	Project Start Date
Project Hours	960		Project End Date	12/31/2022
Hours Burndown	218 of 960 (23%)		Duration Burndown	18 of 52 weeks (35%)

Status Area	Previous Period	This Period	Additional Comments
Overall Project Status			
Services Status			
Adoption			
Resources			
Product			
Steering Committee			

Executive Summary

Implementation of DocuSign E-Signature solution for gathering electronic signatures at the State of New Mexico

Achievements for this Period

- **May Steering Committee** - Monthly meeting conducted; topics discussed included:
 - Envelope usage by month increased marginally from March to April
 - Outreach & Engagement efforts are continuing and being expanded
 - Significant environmental/resource savings are continuing to be realized
- **Webinar on Contracts/Procurement** – Webinar series continues with this event which featured speakers from GSD. Small number of attendees, but good engagement and Q&A with a representative from NMCD.
- **Round the Roundhouse May Article/Advert Published** – Newer visual format utilized to increase eyes on service capabilities.
- **Trainings and Support for Agency Users** - Conducted live demonstrations/trainings/walkthroughs for various staff members at agencies including DMA, ERB and GSD
- **DCA / NMSL** – Testing and revisions completed for Grant Notification & Agreement template. Additional use case requirements captured from user survey.
- **HSD** – Conducted meeting with HSD HR group to review capabilities related to New Hire Packet process for onboarding employees.
- **NMENV** – Testing and revisions completed for contract templates for Procurement group
- **New SLA Completed:** Office of the State Auditor (OSA)
- **Service Level Agreements (SLAs) completed for a total of 41 agencies** (See table, below)

Activities in Progress

- **DCA / NMSL** – Awaiting feedback to finalize Grant Notification & Agreement template; additional use case development will follow.
- **HSD** – Follow-up needed to determine customizations required for HSD’s usage of the New Hire Packet.
- **PRC, SOS & OSA** – CSA team now scheduling initial meetings for new agency launch programs
- **New Features Announcement** – ‘Scheduled Send’ and ‘Delayed Routing’ features to be announced to DS user base; currently pending completion of distribution list
- **Support Site** - DoIT Knowledge Base now under development
- **DocuSign Notary:** Continuing to pursue a pathway to enabling this much-requested component

Project Status Report



DocuSign®

Summary of Planned Activities During this Engagement

The New Mexico Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is leading a collaborative effort to: define, document system design for and implement enterprise E- Signature services for NM State agencies; establish a centralized Center of Excellence (support site) to facilitate enterprise-wide adoption; and identify and prioritize use cases across participating agencies.

Initially, participating agencies included:

- General Services Department (GSD), State Purchasing Division (SPD) and DoIT concerning procurement documentation
- Department of Health (DOH), Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Human Services Department (HSD) and State Records Center & Archives (SRCA)

Project Budget (Current Customer Success Architect Services Agreement Signed 1/12/2022)

- CSA Services Billings: \$21,574.08

KEY Risks, Issues & Action Items:

I/R/A	Issues/Risks	Owner(s)	Remediation / Comment	Target

Engagement Quick View:

Agency / Department Name	SLA Completion	Comments / Next Steps
Department of Information Technology	Signed 2019 Q4	Expansion
Aging & Long Term Services Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
Children Youth and Families Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing	Signed 2020 Q4	
Department of Cultural Affairs	Signed 2020 Q4	
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Signed 2020 Q4	
Educational Retirement Board	Signed 2020 Q4	
General Services Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
Human Services Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
Indian Affairs Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
New Mexico Higher Education Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
New Mexico Medical Board	Signed 2020 Q4	
NM Commission for the Blind	Signed 2020 Q4	
NM Public Schools Insurance Authority	Signed 2020 Q4	
NM Spaceport Authority	Signed 2020 Q4	
Regulation and Licensing Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
State Investment Council	Signed 2020 Q4	
State Personnel Office	Signed 2020 Q4	
Tourism Department	Signed 2020 Q4	
Board of Examiners for Architects	Signed 2021 Q1	
Department of Finance and Administration	Signed 2021 Q1	

Project Status Report



DocuSign

Department of Health
 Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
 Early Childhood Education and Care Department
 Governor's Commission on Disability
 New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions
 NM Environment Department
 NM Livestock Board
 State Treasurer's Office
 Board of Licensure for Professional Eng.
 Economic Development Department
 Office of the Governor
 State Records Center and Archives
 Department of Veterans' Services
 Public Education Department
 NM Retiree Health Care Authority
 New Mexico Department of Transportation
 Department of Military Affairs
 Public Regulation Commission
 Secretary of State

Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q1
 Signed 2021 Q2
 Signed 2021 Q2
 Signed 2021 Q2
 Signed 2021 Q2
 Signed 2021 Q2
 Signed 2021 Q3
 Signed 2021 Q4
 Signed 2021 Q4
 Signed 2021 Q4
 Signed 2022 Q1
 Signed 2022 Q2
 Signed 2022 Q2

Office of the State Auditor

Signed 2022 Q2

Department of Public Safety
 EXPO New Mexico
 Public Employee's Labor Relations Board
 New Mexico Corrections Department
 Department of Game & Fish
 Legislative Finance Committee
 Board of Veterinary Medicine
 NM Racing Commission
 Public Employees Retirement Association
 Taxation & Revenue Department

Work in Progress
 Work in Progress
 Work in Progress
 Outreach in Progress
 Outreach in Progress
 Outreach in Progress
 Declined
 Declined
 Declined
 Declined

Onboarding
Outreach
Declined

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

KEY

GREEN	Everything is on course, for satisfactory completion on time/budget
AMBER	There is some risk to the project completing satisfactorily on time/budget, but actions are in place to fix the problems
RED	There are major risks to the project and without significant changes/action it will not complete satisfactorily on time/budget

Status Instructions - The 'Overall Project Status' is determined as follows:

Project Dimensions		Overall Project status
All GREEN	?	GREEN
If ANY dimension is RED	?	RED
Mix of GREEN/AMBER	?	AMBER

E-Signature Steering Committee

Monthly Meeting – May 5, 2022

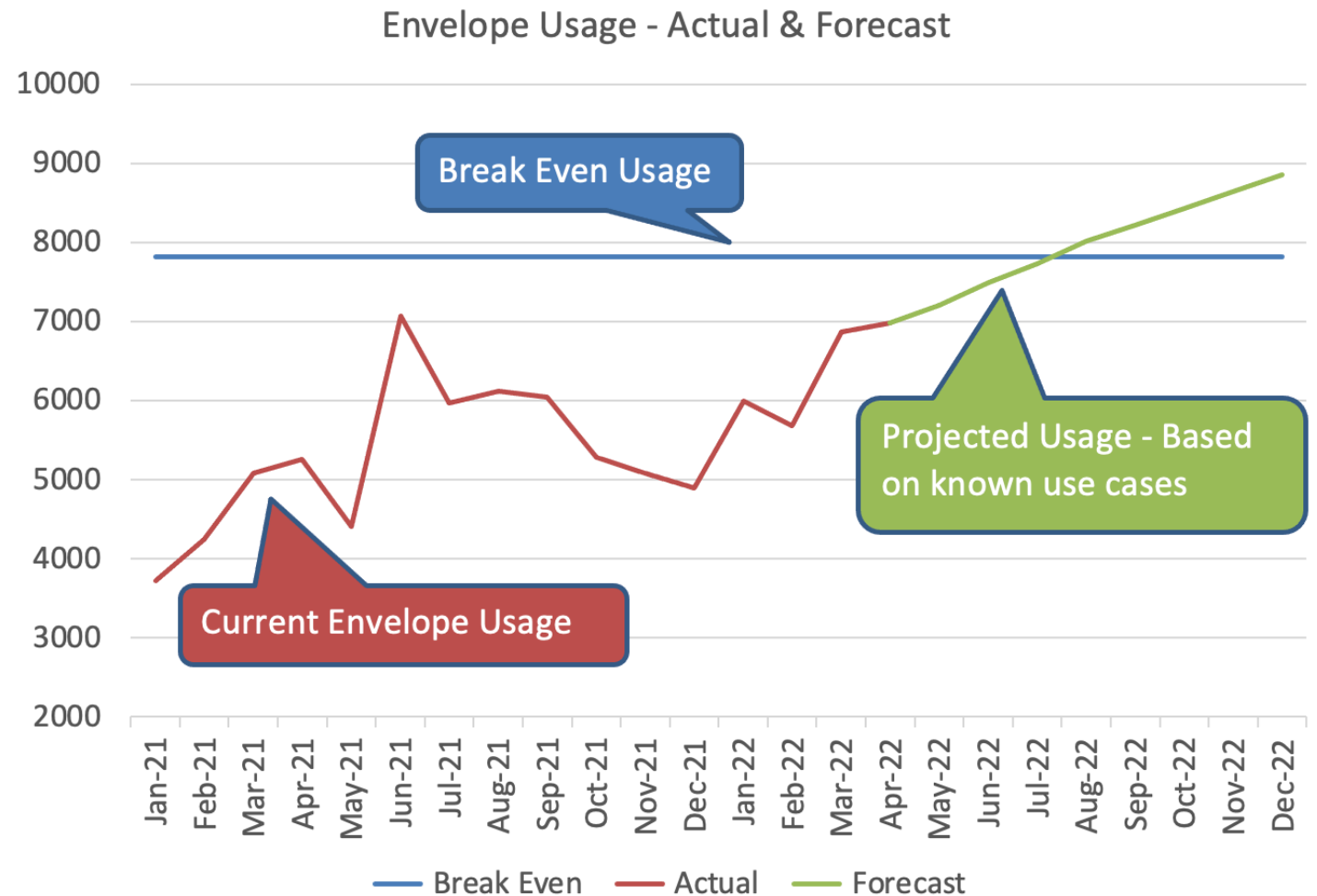
Agenda

- Envelope Usage
- Program Status
- DocuSign Notary Component Update
- New DocuSign Features
- Environmental Impact Update
- Next Steps

E-Signature Envelope Usage

USAGE: PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

- May 2021 4,408
- June 7,070
- July 5,970
- August 6,121
- September 6,047
- October 5,285
- November 5,078
- December 4,891
- January 2022 5,986
- February 5,675
- March 6,867
- April 6,982



E-Signature Program Status

May 2022

Project Start: Dec 11, 2019	Budget:	Project Length: 48 Month / 12 Month (PS)
	Department: DoIT, GSD	CSA Services Spend to Date: \$21,574.08

Status	Overall	Scope	Usage	Schedule
Project Completion	Current Contract End		Actual	
	DocuSign: Nov 2023 Cust. Svc. Architects: Dec 2022		N/A	

High Level Scope:
Implement DocuSign electronic signature solution across SoNM Executive agencies and support enterprise-wide adoption. Identify, prioritize and develop use cases across participating agencies.

Reporting Date: May 1, 2022
Executive Sponsor: Andrea Martinez
Program Manager: Daniel E. Garcia

Overall status is **GREEN** this period; SLAs completed with 41 agencies, work with DCA, GSD, NMDOT and NMENV proceeding

Previous Month Program-Level Accomplishments

- 1. Webinar: Contracts Focus**
Featured GSD CPO & CFO as speakers
- 2. Round the Roundhouse Article/Advert**
New more visually friendly format
- 3. Outreach, Training and Demos**
CFB, DCA, DMA, GSD, NMDOT, NMENV
- 4. Usage is Up**
Increased envelope consumption continues
- 5. New Agency SLA Completed**
Office of the State Auditor (OSA)

Usage Highlights Top 10 Agencies

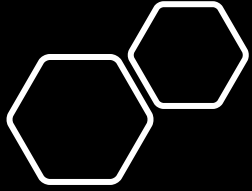
Agency	Env Qty
DVR	2,772
ERB	1,211
PED	1,176
NMDOT	422
GSD	226
NMDWS	195
DOH	191
NMHED	172
DoIT	124
DFA	117

Planned Activities for This Month

- 1) Training, Demonstrations and Use Case Workshops:**
Continue our team's efforts
- 2) New Agency Engagement:** Continue activities
- 3) Outreach, Communications & Support:** Continue Execution
- 4) Notary Component:** Continue Pursuing Enablement of this Feature

Top Issues/Risks

Issues/Risks (I, R) & Mitigation (M)	Owner
(I) Low template usage across agencies, (M) to proceed with offering of project management and DocuSign CSA assistance. Previously required agencies to supply PM, technical admin, and Business Analyst resources.	



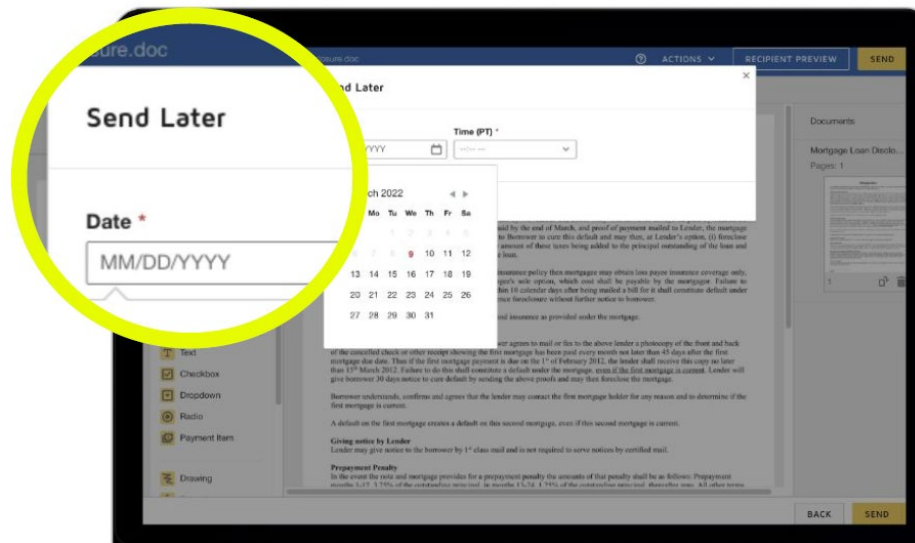
DocuSign Notary Component Update

- ▶ Projected Availability: September '22
- ▶ DS Teams Now Working on Design & NM Legislation Review
- ▶ New Mexico was 22nd in DocuSign's Review/Processing Queue
- ▶ SoNM Pricing & Contracting Processes Must Also Take Place
- ▶ Next Update from DocuSign Team: May Steering Committee

New DocuSign Features Available

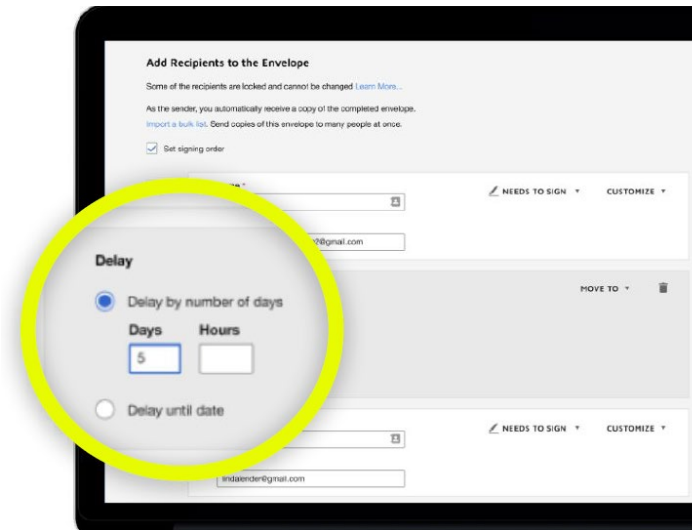
➤ Scheduled Send

Users now have the flexibility to schedule an agreement to be sent at a specific day and time— improving the customer experience and response rates.



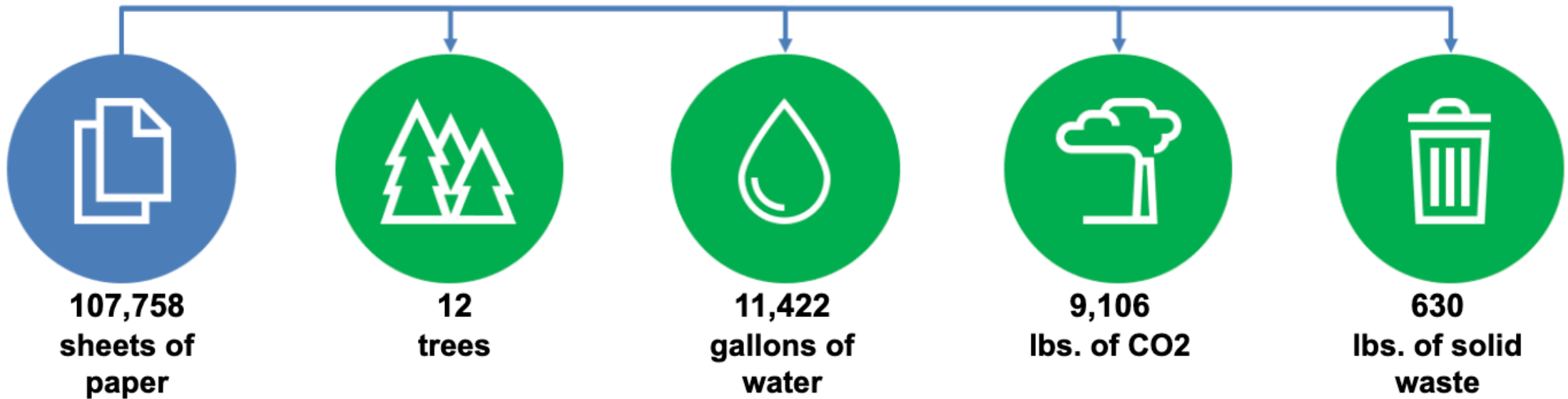
➤ Delayed Routing

Users can add timing delays during the routing process of an envelope. This is useful when regulations may require a delay before signing.



Environmental Impact Update for April

State of NM use of DocuSign has helped replace over **107,758** sheets of paper, saving trees, water, CO² and solid waste.



Next Steps

1) Training, Demonstrations and Use Case Workshops

Continue our team's efforts

2) New Agency Support & Engagement:

Kick off new agency support & engagement activities

3) Outreach & Communications:

Continue Execution for Targeted Agencies/Users

4) Notary Component:

Continue Pursuing Enablement & Purchase of this Feature

Engagement Quick View

Agency / Department Name	SLA Completion	Comments / Next Steps	Agency / Department Name	SLA Completion	Comments / Next Steps
Department of Information Technology	2019 Q4	Expansion	NM Environment Department	2021 Q1	Expansion
Aging & Long Term Services Department	2020 Q4		NM Livestock Board	2021 Q1	
Children Youth and Families Department	2020 Q4		State Treasurer's Office	2021 Q1	
Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing	2020 Q4		Board of Licensure for Professional Eng.	2021 Q2	
Department of Cultural Affairs	2020 Q4		Economic Development Department	2021 Q2	
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	2020 Q4		Office of the Governor	2021 Q2	
Educational Retirement Board	2020 Q4		State Records Center and Archives	2021 Q2	
General Services Department	2020 Q4		Department of Veterans' Services	2021 Q3	
Human Services Department	2020 Q4		Public Education Department	2021 Q4	
Indian Affairs Department	2020 Q4		NM Retiree Health Care Authority	2021 Q4	
New Mexico Higher Education Department	2020 Q4		New Mexico Department of Transportation	2021 Q4	
New Mexico Medical Board	2020 Q4		Department of Military Affairs	2022 Q1	
NM Commission for the Blind	2020 Q4		Public Regulation Commission	2022 Q2	
NM Public Schools Insurance Authority	2020 Q4		Secretary of State	2022 Q2	
NM Spaceport Authority	2020 Q4		Office of the State Auditor	2022 Q2	
Regulation and Licensing Department	2020 Q4		Department of Public Safety	Work in Progress	Onboarding
State Investment Council	2020 Q4		EXPO New Mexico	Work in Progress	
State Personnel Office	2020 Q4		Public Employee's Labor Relations Board	Work in Progress	
Tourism Department	2020 Q4		New Mexico Corrections Department	Work in Progress	Outreach
Board of Examiners for Architects	2021 Q1		Department of Game & Fish	Outreach in Progress	
Department of Finance and Administration	2021 Q1		Legislative Finance Committee	Outreach in Progress	Declined
Department of Health	2021 Q1		Board of Veterinary Medicine	Declined	
Developmental Disabilities Planning Council	2021 Q1		NM Racing Commission	Declined	
Early Childhood Education and Care Department	2021 Q1		Public Employees Retirement Association	Declined	
Governor's Commission on Disability	2021 Q1		Taxation & Revenue Department	Declined	
New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions	2021 Q1				

Thank you.

NM DEPARTMENT OF
INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY





State of New York

Office of General Services
Procurement Services

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Centralized Online Management for eProcurement Tool

Award Submission Contact: James Jasiewicz | eMail: james.jasiewicz@ogs.ny.gov | (518)486-5238

Executive Summary

In 2017, the NYS Statewide Information Technology Umbrella- Manufacturer Based Contract (Manufacturer Umbrella Contract awarded in 2015) received a NASPO Cronin Silver award. While it solved many contract limitations, the subsequent success has created administrative, vendor and Authorized User (AU) processing challenges. Consolidating multiple IT contract areas and services into one contract area greatly increased the demand on staff to support a broader and more flexible contract scope. Most notably is the increased workload for staff to manually process hundreds of product list updates for thousands of SKUs while maintaining Reasonableness of Price (ROP) review. ROP reviews are required for potential post audit by the NYS Comptroller (auditor) and for federal reimbursement requirements (common issues faced by all procurement organizations). All pricing updates were emailed or mailed (flash drives) to the team who would manually open the spreadsheets (some too large to access), review ROP, determine updates (new SKUs or pricing increase/decrease), verify all SKUs are within contract scope, and email contractors any necessary clarifications. Also, For the RFQ process AUs prepared RFQs and contractors responded to RFQs manually. The Centralized Online Management for eProcurement Tool (COMeT) solved the need for manual review of over 200 comprehensive price lists (over 3 million SKUs annually), built an electronic solution for ROP review, reduced internal review process time by 50%, reduced contractor and user processing times, allowed improved technology “Speed to Market”, and allowed the reallocation of staff resources to other contract areas.

In short, COMeT is a cloud-based portal automation of dozens of manual tools resulting in the relief of thousands of hours of OGS, Umbrella contractor, and Authorized Users staff time generating millions of dollars in direct and indirect cost saving, and/or cost avoidance. Since the COMeT implementation, we have increased the number of price updates processed and reduced cycle time in half. We have eliminated 90% of the manual processes necessary to perform pricelist updates and IT Umbrella RFQs.

The need for this type of tool has been highlighted by the results of the formal surveys and informal discussions that OGS has held to solicit feedback from both Authorized Users (AUs) and Contractors. Authorized Users told us they did not have enough staff resources to conduct the manual RFQ process and contractors indicated both RFQ and pricing update processes required an inordinate number of resources. COMeT was designed to address these pain points and make using the contract easier than ever before. COMeT tackles some of the greatest challenges with government procurement in the technology sector, such as the speed to market of new technology offerings.

Innovation

The innovation is the development of a low code, standardized, cloud-based, state-owned portal supported by a data lake, which automates contract management processes including reseller and contractor contact changes, price list updates, ROP validation, addresses the RFQ processes and has the potential to be easily expanded to perform other functions. When developing COMeT, OGS researched solutions being used by other states and GSA. Some entities had portals where pricelists could be viewed and searched, and other entities had eProcurement Solutions. OGS envisioned a system that would combine both these functions into one tool.

COMeT was implemented in two phases. Phase 1 was vendor-focused and built to automate as much of the contract modification review process as possible, freeing OGS staff to focus on additional aspects of contract management. Phase 2 was built to automate as much of the AU RFQ process as possible, while still allowing AUs the flexibility to create as complex an RFQ as they deemed necessary to meet their needs, along with providing a webform structure for general guidance on using the contract.

In COMeT, contractors submit their modification requests and files through a webform and online portal. COMeT performs a validation review and processes successful submissions while providing helpful feedback to unsuccessful submissions. Once a pricelist modification is successfully submitted,

Attachment #1: Staff Time Cost Savings Methodology. Attachment #2: PPT Presentation PDF. Hyperlink to Video Presentation [COMeT Presentation](#), Attachment #3: COMeT Requirements from the solicitation

COMeT compares the existing approved pricelist to the newly submitted changes. The OGS team reviewer is able to then view the changes and, if needed, run a reasonableness of price (ROP) validation. During the ROP Validation, COMeT compares the existing price point on a per SKU basis between the submitted changes and contractor-submitted peer pricing. COMeT also allows manual submission of ROP for instances such as invoice submittal as ROP documents. COMeT also manages all approval workflow. Once the pricelist changes are approved, they are immediately available in COMeT, which reduces the time for the posting process by half when compared to the previous manual process. This availability feeds the data behind the online search capability and the ability for AUs to directly select SKUs to add into the financial section of the RFQ. (Prior to COMeT, all 3 million+ SKUs on the contract were published to pdf price lists and posted to the website.) RFQs and any related questions are both released and received directly in COMeT alleviating the complexities associated with releasing an RFQ to a large bidder pool via email.

Transferability

While initially designed to accommodate the pricelist structure of the Manufacturer Umbrella Contract, COMeT's framework is flexible enough to be used for not only additional NYS contracts, but also the contracts of other states.

COMeT was built within Microsoft Dynamics, with a heavy focus on out-of-the-box functionality over custom coding, to minimize future support requirements. The system is built using a "low code" configuration strategy. Microsoft Dynamics can be used with other widely used Microsoft office products, such as Outlook, SharePoint, and Office 365 currently used by many government entities.

With minor field name changes to appropriate pricelist columns, Phase 1 COMeT functionality can be easily replicated. The Manufacturer Umbrella Contract requires the submission of ROP documentation for any product additions or price increases. This shows that the pricing offered to NYS is equal to or better than the pricing offered to any other government entity. COMeT was built to facilitate this process; however, it's a manually triggered event which can be applied by other states as needed.

On a similar note, the initial processing that is triggered when a pricelist modification document is first submitted includes the automated checking for a series of scope words. These are words that will be flagged when found to indicate to a reviewer that an offering may be out of scope for the contract Lot for which it was submitted. This functionality is highly configurable by in-team staff with the possibility of either only an "exact word" match triggering the flag for reviewers or any number of "variations on a scope word" triggering the flag. For example, if the word "hardware" or the variation "HW" is found in the Software or Implementation Lots, one message would be generated if the contractor holds the Hardware Lot inquiring if the offering should be moved to the Hardware Lot while a different message would be generated if the contractor does not hold the Hardware Lot inquiring if the contractor can demonstrate that the offering is in fact in scope for the proposed lot.

Using these configurable options, the COMeT system could be altered to meet the scope needs of any contract. The IT related words in use can easily be updated with any other text that could cause a submission to be flagged for any reason. The correlating messages generated are also easily configurable. If this functionality was not desired, another team could simply not have any scope words set to be flagged. All of the ongoing configurations do NOT require a vendor to support, can be managed by the contract team, and do not require experience or proficiency with coding software. This facilitates adoption by all levels of government regardless of software development maturity.

Many other areas of COMeT were built with flexibility in mind. The system can operate very differently from one modification submission to the next, driven by the needs of another team or organization's pricelist or scope. Internal team rules and chain of command structures can be used to set limitations on system use, rather than the limitations of the system itself driving system usage.

The various roles built into COMeT can also be easily customizable using standard Microsoft Dynamics functionality to require that certain actions be taken, or to limit approvals or the finalization of a modification request to only those holding a certain role. Conversely, roles can be structured to allow anyone to complete the review and approval process regardless of role if desired. In short, the COMeT system was designed in a way that it could be easily expanded to accommodate other contracts with no customizations and with minor configurations required, and that same flexibility and expandability could be utilized by other entities looking to adopt a similar system to improve efficiency and reduce the time and manpower required for contract modifications and updates.

Service Improvement

Our contractors are constantly adding new products and removing obsolete products. With 124 contractors, this leads to a continuously high volume of pricelist update requests. In 2019 alone, there were 229 pricelist updates submitted for processing, representing over 3 million SKUs added or modified. The updates were done manually using complex Excel formulas and were vulnerable to transcription errors.

With COMeT, the pricelist update process has been sped up considerably. Basic checks which used to be done manually are now done automatically by COMeT, saving substantial hours of staff time. Prior to COMeT, a price list update would take a median of 14 days to complete. With the implementation of COMeT, that has been cut in half to 7 days.

File size also presented a problem, as some pricelists contain over half a million items on them. Before COMeT, often the files were so big that they were unable to be sent or received via e-mail. Attempts to review them would be hindered by computers unable to open the files, or files too large to be processed. COMeT can handle any file size, alleviating these logistical problems.

Prior to COMeT, individual Excel pricelists were manually posted upon approval onto the contract website for each contractor, and the delay between approval and posting could be up to a week. With COMeT, once a pricelist update has been approved it is published instantaneously on the COMeT portal.

COMeT has significantly improved the ability to search for items. Prior to COMeT, searches used to be limited to one contractor's pricelist at a time. Large files also presented problems, as they were often difficult for users to open. It routinely took several minutes to apply filters in these large files, and they were prone to crashing during searches. One of the most frequent requests from users was the ability to search across contractor pricelists. COMeT has made this possible, and its improved search functionality allows users to not only search by SKU and keyword, but also filter by manufacturer, lot, product categories, and product tags. Searching is now faster and far more user friendly.

For AUs, another great COMeT improvement is with the RFQ process. For every transaction on the contract, users are required to solicit bids from manufacturers and their authorized resellers through an RFQ to ensure transaction level competitive pricing. Over 20,000 RFQs are issued annually.

Due to the vast scope of the contract award, there are multiple RFQ templates that can be used based on the procurement scenario. The distribution list for RFQs also changes depending on the RFQ scope and can range from 6 vendors to over 1,300. Prior to COMeT, it was up to users to consult the contract's "How to Use" guide to determine which templates were needed and to determine the bidder pool. Many users found this process to be complex, cumbersome, and were not always clear on what documents they should be using or to whom they should be sending their RFQs. COMeT has simplified this process. Users now check off their various procurement requirements (such as which lots they are procuring from and whether they are targeting a single manufacturer), and COMeT provides the appropriate web form based on the user's RFQ requirements.

Transcription errors in RFQs are also now minimized. Prior to COMeT, items would be copied from the contractor's excel file into an RFQ Excel template. Now users can simply click on the item they want, and it will transfer straight into the RFQ.

Attachment #1: Staff Time Cost Savings Methodology. Attachment #2: PPT Presentation PDF. Hyperlink to Video Presentation [COMeT Presentation](#), Attachment #3: COMeT Requirements from the solicitation

Once the RFQ is ready for release, it will automatically be sent out to the distribution list based on both the RFQ and contract requirements. For example, if a user is targeting one manufacturer with more than five resellers, the RFQ will automatically go out to that manufacturer and their resellers. If they are targeting one manufacturer but that manufacturer has fewer than five authorized resellers, an error will appear, as this scenario is not allowed by the contract. If an RFQ must go out to an entire contract lot, which can be over 1,300 vendors, it will be sent automatically by COMeT to all vendors, alleviating the need for the user to manually send out a separate e-mail to all 1,300 vendors.

Cost Reduction

COMeT provides long-term indirect cost reductions for both OGS as an agency and our AUs. It has reduced OGS' average pricing processing time from 14 day to 7 days, resulting in 9 less full-time staff members dedicated to this administrative process who can now be refocused on other solicitation and contract management tasks. This equates to \$901,575 in staff time savings annually.

COMeT also offers significant potential time and cost savings to AUs. Processes which AUs had to manually perform prior to COMeT are now automated, significantly reducing the amount of time AUs need to spend fulfilling their procurement needs. For example, AUs used to spend 3 to 15 hours preparing an RFQ and are now spending an hour or less. Assuming only the minimum efficiencies and savings, Authorized Users are set to feel relief of over 40,000 person hours across 20,000 RFQs in year one of COMeT being live.

COMeT frees up OGS and AU staff time (and money) to focus on other areas and to invest in human capital activities. For example, by reducing the time it took to process pricing updates, NYS was able to issue a solicitation to allow more manufacturers to submit bids to be awarded under the Manufacturer Umbrella Contract. NYS is now able to devote resources to developing improved terms and conditions for the updated version of the contract. The Team is also able to develop additional aggregate buys for specific products or functions used by all Authorized Users which will drive real product costs down even further. The current aggregate buy for hardware saves Authorized Users over \$25 million dollars annually by coordinating purchases of laptops and achieving up to 50% off the already discounted contract price. Having 9 more full time team members working on securing these kinds of savings will resonate exponentially in real savings to Authorized Users over time.

Even vendors have already begin experiencing real cost savings related to the efficiencies of the COMeT system. Quantifying this value has not been completed, but OGS can provide vendor references to express their relief and satisfaction with the COMeT implementation.

Finally, COMeT helps AUs use the Manufacturer Umbrella Contract correctly, which increases the success rate of RFQs and decreases the amount of time spent on re-issuing RFQs. This improvement also benefits the contractors, as they now spend less time responding to RFQs since they are also able to work more efficiently through the COMeT portal.

Conclusion

COMeT is a full-service eProcurement solution that improves upon every aspect of the contract management process for the Manufacturer Umbrella Contract. OGS staff, vendors, and AUs of the contract all benefit from this multifaceted solution, which has saved countless hours of staff time and made the Manufacturer Umbrella Contract much easier to use. The system is flexible, and with just a few tweaks, other organizations could customize it for use on their own contracts. COMeT is currently used for just the Manufacturer Umbrella Contract, but it has the potential to become the contract management system of choice for many other contracts into the future for both NYS and beyond.

Attachment 1 –Cost Avoidance and Savings Methodology

COMeT reduced OGS' pricing processing time in half from 14 days to 7 days allowing 9 full time employees to be reassigned to other contract tasks.

OGS calculated the salary and benefits value of this staff reallocation by determining the average base salary of an OGS employee performing price list reviews to be \$62,220.5 and benefits equaling an additional 61% of the base salary (37,954.5) for a total of \$100,175, then multiplied by the number of staff (9), equaling \$901,575

Attachment 2 PowerPoint

Hyperlink to Video Presentation [COMeT Presentation](#)



NY GovBuy

co-sponsored by



Speed Up Your IT Procurement with COMeT



May 4 & 5, 2022

Presenters

- Alexis Bredencko, Contract Management Specialist, IT Umbrella Manufacturer Team
- Josh Sack, Contract Management Specialist, IT Umbrella Manufacturer Team

Agenda

- Introduction to COMeT
- How to view and search pricelists
- How to use the RFQ Portal
- Question & answer

Introduction to COMeT

 @NYS_OGS

 @NewYorkStateOGS

#2022NYGovBuy



NY GovBuy

COMeT 101

- **COMeT** = **C**entralized **O**nline **M**anagement for **e**Procurement **T**ool
- Phase 1: Launched for contractors in 2021
- Phase 2: Just launched for all authorized users on May 4th

COMeT 101

- COMeT is an online portal for the IT Umbrella Manufacturer Contract
- It allows authorized users to:
 - Search contract pricelists
 - Draft and release Request for Quotes (RFQs)
 - Award RFQs
 - Export procurement records

History of COMeT

- OGS conducted surveys on the contract
 - Vendors (2019)
 - Authorized users (2020)
- Main pain points:
 - Searching pricelists
 - Speed of pricelist updates
 - Complexity of the request for quote (RFQ) process

COMeT Advantages

- Price lists are easier to search
 - Search across vendors
 - Search by tags
- Pricelist updates published in real time
 - Update is approved by OGS = available in the COMeT portal
 - No more waiting for OGS to publish an update to the contract website

COMeT Advantages

- RFQ process is simplified
 - No more deciding which template to use – COMeT will provide the proper form based on your RFQ requirements
 - Pull items directly from the contractor's approved pricelist
 - RFQs are sent automatically to the distribution list

How to Use the COMeT Portal

 @NYS_OGS

 @NewYorkStateOGS

#2022NYGovBuy



NY GovBuy

Demos

- Viewing pricelists
- Searching pricelists
- Signing up for an account



Where to Find COMeT

<https://ogs.ny.gov/comet>

WELCOME TO COMET

Built to Manage the Umbrella Manufacturer Based Contract



Search Pricelists

Use the COMeT portal to search for pricelists on the IT Umbrella Manufacturer Contract.



Sign In Here



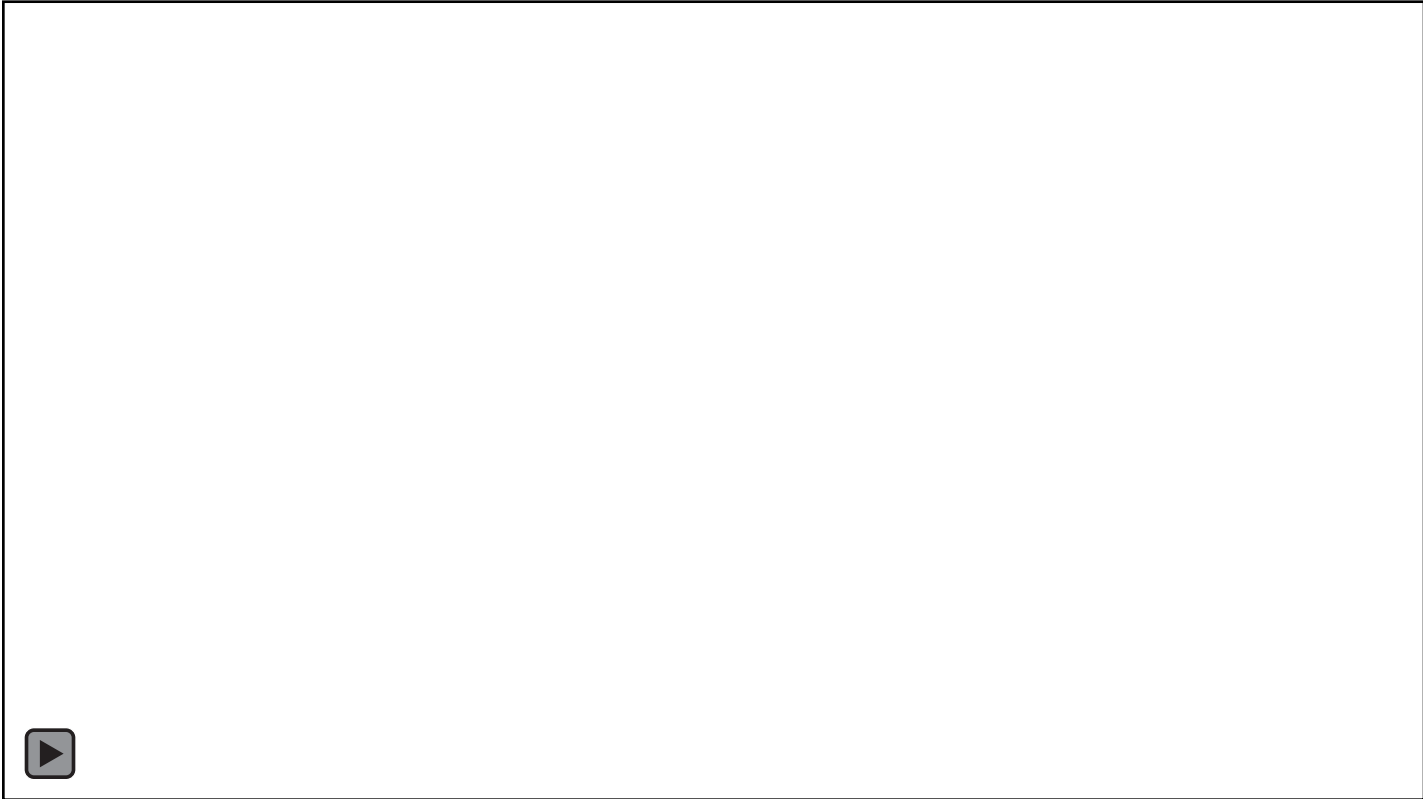
Contract Information

Award 22802: Information Technology Umbrella Contract - Manufacturer Based

Viewing and Searching Pricelists



Signing Up for an Account



How to Use the RFQ Portal

 @NYS_OGS

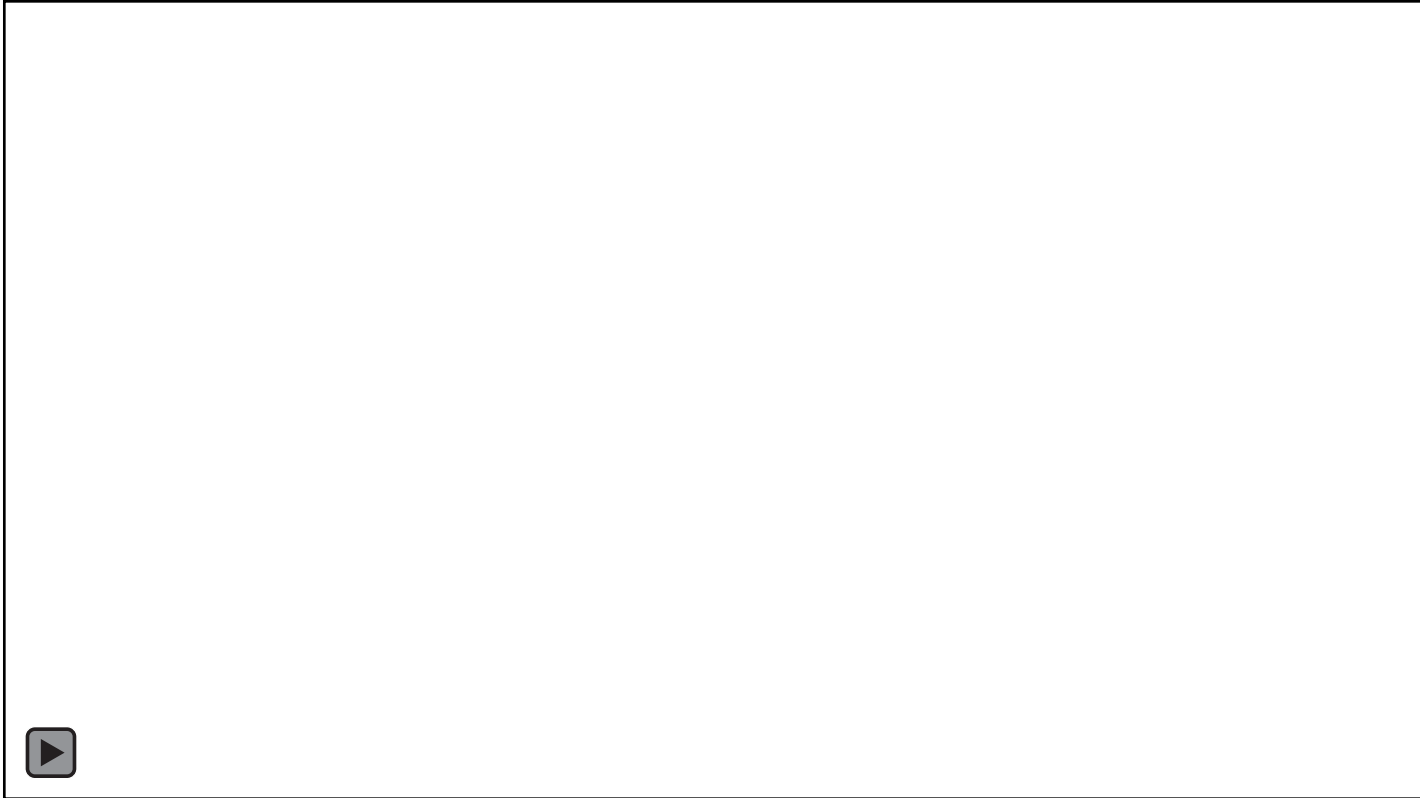
 @NewYorkStateOGS

#2022NYGovBuy



NY GovBuy

Conducting an RFQ in COMeT



Questions?

 @NYS_OGS

 @NewYorkStateOGS

#2022NYGovBuy



NY GovBuy

ATTACHMENT 3 - COMET Requirements	
ID #	Phase 1 Requirements Description
1	General Requirements
1.1	The solution must be available during core business hours M-F 6am-9pm EST. Vendors will not be responsible for hardware/network issues. The solution must adhere to existing Microsoft SLA for the Cloud CRM environment.
1.2	The solution should be available to users 24/7 barring scheduled downtime.
1.3	The solution must provide a facility to create and manage multiple user security roles (role based authentication for all users).
1.4	The solution must provide functionality that allows for the validation of specific data fields based on defined criteria.
1.5	The solution must provide functionality to allow the upload of vendor documents (in multiple formats: Excel, Adobe PDF, etc.) based on defined criteria.
1.6	The solution must be able to provide a document repository for temporary and long-term storage, based on agreed upon criteria.
1.7	The solution should provide an automated "User Help" facility at the application level, page level, and identified field levels.
1.8	The solution should provide functionality to flag and communicate file upload status (success, failure, etc.).
1.9	The solution should provide the ability to set and revise goals for the completion of tasks through the use of visual indicators to users as well as overall analytic capabilities for managers and staff.
1.10	The solution must maintain a history of all price changes for each SKU on a contract for the length of the contract plus 12.5 years.
1.10.1	Pricing history for a SKU within the past 12 months must be immediately available to all users.
1.10.2	Pricing history for a SKU beyond 12 months must be available to identified users through the reporting solution within 48 hours.
1.11	The solution must provide the ability for users to view and download any documents which are uploaded into the solution based on user security role.
1.12	The solution must provide functionality to generate automated email messages using templates to users based on defined criteria.
1.13	The solution must provide auditing capabilities based on state policies and agreed upon criteria. See https://its.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nys-s14-005_security_logging_5.pdf for details pertaining to New York State Office of Information Technology Services current IT Standard for Security Logging.
1.14	The solution must provide the ability to track identified expiration dates including, but not limited to: insurance policies, sales reports, etc.
1.15	The solution must provide automated notifications to Vendors based on statuses and solution activity.
1.16	The solution must provide a mechanism for OGS to load existing approved and bidder price lists and other supporting documentation, as needed, into the solution.
1.17	Upon initial upload of a price list, the solution must create an effective date for each SKU.
1.18	The solution must provide the ability to create and modify automated workflows.
1.19	The solution must be built in accordance with all contract terms and conditions (see Appendix C, etc.).
1.20	The solution must display a progress bar to the user, including, but not limited to, the following situations: - File uploads - Searches - Downloads
1.21	Upon an initial upload of a Price List, the solution must provide the capability for OGS to conduct an audit of existing/already approved price lists.
1.22	The solution must provide the capability for OGS to conduct an audit of existing/already approved price lists at any time.
2	Solution Requirements
2.1	The solution must be configured with Microsoft Dynamics and supported third-party products that are approved by and made available by OGS. OGS does not anticipate any custom development outside of API creation.
2.2	The solution must implement it's own API and/or consume APIs of other related applications in order to support required business processes. For example, the solution's API will need to interact with other existing MS applications including O365, SharePoint sites, and on premises MS Dynamics solutions.
2.3	The solution must provide role based access management. Roles must include, but not be limited to, the following: - Contractor - Reseller (Phase 2) - Sales Agent (Phase 2) - OGS Application Administrator - OGS Manager - Reviewer 1 - Reviewer 2 - Reviewer 3 - External User See Attachment 8 - Roles for a complete listing of roles and their associated titles, capabilities, and levels of authentication.
2.4	The solution must provide security to the field level.
2.5	The solution must be able to support OpenID authentication protocols.
2.6	The solutions must provide OGS the ability to manage the user's roles.

2.7	The solution must allow for individual and bulk approvals of all modifications by Reviewer 3.
2.8	Data from final approvals to modifications will not be available to users other than Reviewers 1, 2, and 3 until approved by Reviewer 3.
2.9	The solution must have dashboard functionality for users based on their role. Dashboard must display information for each user including but not limited to: - Number of modifications assigned - Status of assigned modifications - Number of items included in each modification - Date of submission
2.9.1	The solution must have information sections for unauthenticated users based on their role. Information sections can be configured as a dashboard.
3	Create/Manage Vendor Profiles
3.1	The solution must provide the ability to create new Vendor profile records. This information may be extracted from an existing database used by OGS or the data may be input manually. Profile data must include, but not be limited to the following: - Vendor Name - NYS Vendor ID (if applicable) - FEIN - Address - Contact Name(s) - Contact Phone Number(s) - Contact Email(s) - Contract Number(s) - Contract Holder(s) (if applicable) - Contract Status (e.g. active, inactive) - Vendor Status (e.g. active, inactive) - Designation/Certification (e.g. MWBE, SDVOB, SB)
3.2	The solution must provide a dashboard view of all Vendor profiles based on user role.
3.3	The solution must provide a mechanism modify, inactivate, and reactivate user profiles.
3.4	The solution must provide a mechanism for OGS managers to inactivate a contract.
4	Contract Modification Request
4.1	The solution must allow the ability for a Vendor to submit a request for contract modifications via an interactive portal application (see Appendix C -- Contract Modification Form).
4.2	Each vendor contract modification request must be assigned a unique 'Modification ID.'
4.3	The solution must provide an on-line mechanism for vendors to upload and identify files which are required for the requested type of contract modification.
4.4	The solution must provide the ability to process contract modification transactions in accordance with attached use cases.
4.5	The solution must provide the ability for a user to verify completion of any manual processes that take place outside of the solution.
4.6	The solution must allow associated active and unexpired documents to be used for one or more contract modification requests.
4.7	The solution must allow a Vendor to change or delete a contract modification request that has not been submitted to OGS for processing.
4.8	The solution must allow a Vendor to save and go back in to complete contract modification request that has not been submitted to OGS for processing.
4.9	Upon submittal, the solution must perform basic validation of submitted data and required files.
4.10	The solution must notify vendor and OGS of submission validation status.
4.11	The solution must only pass successful validations to OGS for processing.
4.12	Only documents that have been uploaded into the solution may be used for contract modification requests.
4.13	The solution must prevent a vendor from submitting a new request for contract modification if there is an active request of the same type currently being processed.
4.14	The solution must provide the ability for OGS to suspend a Vendor.
4.15	The solution must provide the ability for OGS to override a suspension and re-activate a Vendor.
4.16	The solution should save the file(s) loaded by the vendor to a pre-determined location, renaming the file to a standard set by OGS. For example, the file name should include the type of file (e.g. ROP, price list, EOL document, etc.) , contract number, date and timestamp that it was received by the solution.
4.17	The solution must allow a Vendor to modify a change request which was denied and resubmit as a new request.
4.18	The solution must load the submitted price list data into the OGS Microsoft CRM database, linking each SKU price change to the Modification ID.
5	OGS Modification Request Processing
5.1	The solution must provide a means to automatically assign a price change request to a pre-determined reviewer based on the vendor submitting the request.
5.2	The solution must provide ability for OGS managers to manually assign and reassign staff to a contract modification request.

5.3	The solution must provide a dashboard to view a summary of all open contract modification requests including, but not limited to, the following, with the ability to sort and filter on any column. - Modification ID - Type of request - Status of request - Name of reviewer - Submission date - Vendor name
5.4	Within the dashboard, OGS staff must be able to view a list of contract modification requests assigned to them with the ability to access the full data of the request.
6	OGS Contract Modification Request Review
6.1	The solution must allow modifications to be approved/denied either through automated validations performed by the application and/or through a reviewer manually approving/denying the modification.
6.1.1	Modifications that are denied must have an accompanying reason/justification (e.g. missing documentation).
6.2	The solution must provide a mechanism to initiate a review of a Vendor's current price list in order to verify all criteria specified in section 6 are met, based on user role.
6.3	The solution must allow the reviewer to override the results any automatic validations performed by the solution and provide a reason for the override.
6.4	The solution must provide the ability for specific users to override the effective date of a price change assigned by the solution and require a reason for the override, based on user role.
6.5	The solution must allow OGS staff to manage the Vendor's use of ancillary documents (Including ROP documents).
6.6	The solution must allow OGS staff to activate and inactivate the use of an uploaded ROP document.
6.7	The solution must allow OGS staff to add and modify an expiration date for an ROP document.
6.8	The solution must provide the ability for OGS staff to upload a version of the ROP document in a specified file type and format to be used by the solution for reasonableness of price comparison.
6.9	All items that have been marked as approved EOL SKU deletions will be inactivated and no longer displayed on a Vendor's price list.
6.10	The solution will automatically mark a price increase for a SKU as denied if that price has already increased in a predetermined number of days configured in the solution, and provide a reason.
6.11	The solution must allow the OGS administrator to change the number of days required to have passed before a SKU's price can be increased again, per contract terms.
6.12	The solution must allow keywords to be updated by users with the appropriate security role.
6.13	The solution must compare the SKU for all new item requests to the list of the vendor's inactive SKUs and automatically mark matching SKUs as denied and provide a reason.
6.14	The solution must compare the fields in the submitted price list to the fields in current price list and provide a list of changes with the ability to view and sort the results.
6.15	The solution must automatically mark as denied products with duplicate SKUs and provide a reason.
6.16	The solution must have the ability to display the percent increase/decrease requested for SKU price changes.
6.17	The solution should provide the ability to view the following for each uploaded ROP excel document: - File name - Date of file upload - Username of the person who uploaded the file.
6.18	The solution must provide functionality to compare price for a SKU on price list to price found on ROP documentation.
6.19	The solution must provide functionality to calculate if a price is "reasonable" or not "reasonable" based on defined criteria (e.g. reasonable: price is less than or equal to price listed for SKU in ROP document, not reasonable: price is greater than the price listed in ROP document).
6.20	The solution must automatically mark for approval all SKUs which pass the reasonableness of price validation check.
6.21	The solution must automatically mark for denial all SKUs which fail the reasonableness of price validation and provide a reason.
6.22	The solution must provide the ability to view, filter and sort the ROP comparison results for all items in the price list. Fields include, but are not limited to, the following: - Lot Number - SKU - Description - Unit Of Measure - Current Price - Requested Price - ROP Validation Price - difference between ROP price and Current Price - indicator if SKU has passed/failed the ROP test - indicator if price change is marked for approval/denial

6.23	The solution must provide functionality to generate a comparison summary that includes, but is not limited to, the following: - Lot Number - Number of SKUs submitted by Vendor - Number of SKUs able to be compared (valid data read) - Number of SKUs which passed the ROP test - Number of SKUs which failed the ROP test - Number of SKUs which were not matched in ROP document - Number of SKUs with changes to Product Name - Number of SKUs with changes to Description - Number of SKUs with price changes above or below a set percentage
6.24	Each item in the comparison summary must have a link to the results, e.g. the number of SKUs with product name changes must link to a page which displays the list of SKUs whose product names have changed.
6.25	The solution must provide the ability to export the data on the comparison results pages in multiple formats which must include Excel, CSV, XML, and PDF.
6.26	At the completion of each price list modification the solution should export the data into a Microsoft Excel file (see current Appendix E format) through an API to the OGS reviewer and OGS website.
6.27	The solution must provide the ability for two levels of management approvals once review of contract modification request has been completed.
6.28	The solution must provide the ability for specified first level approvers to give final approval, i.e. no second level approval required.
6.29	First and second level approvers must be able to approve the contract modification request review or return the request with comment to the reviewer for updating.
6.30	The reviewer must be able to edit review data and resubmit for approval.
6.31	A review becomes final, and SKU prices become effective, when approved by the last required approver.
6.32	Once all approvals have been completed, all updates will become part of the Vendor's approved price list.
6.33	The solution will automatically notify Vendors of final results of each change requested in the contract modification request.
6.34	The solution will archive prices that have been changed, maintaining all of the current metadata associated with the price, as well as adding the date that the price was replaced (e.g. effective date).
7	Internal Communication
7.1	The solution should provide a comments facility for internal OGS use associated with the contract modification request.
7.1.1	The solution should provide the ability to add a comment on a Vendor record.
7.1.2	The solution should provide the ability to edit a comment on a Vendor record.
7.1.3	The solution should provide the ability to delete a comment on a Vendor record.
7.2	The solution should provide functionality to auto-fill the username used for comment creation and a timestamp of when the comment was created.
8	External User Access to the Vendor Prices
8.1	From the OGS public web site, users will be able to be hyperlinked to a search screen that will provide the means to search the OGS Portal database.
8.2	Users must be able to search the price portal (across all Vendor pricing) using multiple criteria. These include, but should not be limited to: - Lot number - Contract Vendor - Vendor part number or multiple part numbers. - Item description - Category - Keyword
8.3	Search results must be able to be exported in excel, CSV, XML, and PDF format.
8.4	Search results must be able to be filtered and sorted based on user preference.
8.5	Search results must include, but should not be limited to the following: - Contract Vendor - Product Name - Product Description - Category - Meta data - List Price - NYS Discount - NYS Net Contract Price
9	Vendor Sales Data Upload (Quarterly Sales Report)
9.1	The solution will provide vendors the ability to upload periodic sales report data in a specified format.
9.2	The solution will provide OGS users the ability to upload periodic sales report data on a Vendor's behalf in a specified format.
9.3	The solution will perform validations based on fields in sales reports. Validations will include comparisons between the sales data and pricelists.
10	Reporting

10.1	The solution should provide a comprehensive reporting facility as outlined in "Reports" Attachment (delivered reports, ad-hoc reporting, query, etc.).
11	Audit - Log of Actions
11.1	Solution must log the following transactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submission of a request - Assignment of a request to reviewer - Completion of the review(s) - Completion of all approvals/denial, including noting of final approval/denial - solution overrides by reviewer
11.2	Solution log must capture the following information for each identified transaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -User ID -Date/time -Transaction Type
11.3	Solution log must capture the following information for each user: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Log on attempts (successful or unsuccessful) -Date/time -Functions performed after log on -Account changes
ID #	Phase 2 Requirements Description
12	RFQ
12.1	Authorized Users must be able to submit Participation of Interest (Sample Upload 5) limited to active vendors in targeted Lot.
12.2	Solution must allow Authorized Users to create and release Request for Quotes (RFQ)
12.3	User shall attach own RFQ template or select system RFQ template based on product/service/commodity
12.3.1	System must have the ability for Authorized Users to create and populate standard RFQ templates based on the procurement scenario identified by the user
12.3.2	System must allow Authorized Users to upload their own RFQ template for each RFQ created
12.4	Search results must be limited to approved Contract Items. Search results must be able to be filtered by SKU, product description, manufacturer, metadata, keyword, Lot, price, etc... Cascading filters must be available to organize or limit product search results.
12.5	Users must be able to search the history of an approved SKU or an archived SKU upon request. Search results for historical/archived information will be available based on a user's role.
12.6	Solution must create a unique identifier for each RFQ and capture all related system activities for that RFQ. Including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation of Interest, RFQ, Bidder Pool, Q &A period(s), Bidder Submissions, Notifications, and Cancellations.
12.7	Solution must link the Authorized User's email(s) to the RFQ to capture the following information from the RFQ request: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - user name - email - phone - entity name
12.8	The OGS Centralized Contract sets basic rules for all to follow. However the RFQ procedures depend upon the Authorized User's scenario. Scenarios include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discretionary purchasing - Single vendor if more than five resellers - Not to exceed pricing - Mandatory competition - Automated canvassing of no bids/replies if less than three bids received
12.9	Solution must create the RFQ document(s) based on user selections from a master RFQ template built in Dynamics Solution.
12.10	If required by RFQ, the solution must allow vendors and resellers to submit questions regarding a specific RFQ within the system.
12.10.1	Solution must be able to compile questions based on RFQ identifier and date received.
12.10.2	Solution must anonymize Vendor's questions and notify Authorized Users.
12.10.3	Solution must ensure question submitter's entity name cannot appear in their questions.
12.10.4	Solution must email compiled questions to RFQ originator based on an identified date.
12.10.5	Solution must allow manual edits and additions of questions and provide justification by Authorized User prior to publishing.
12.10.6	Solution must allow Authorized Users to answer questions and resubmit to system for distribution based on RFQ identifier.
12.10.7	System must be able to distribute question and answer responses to pool of vendors who have received RFQ via email.
12.10.8	Solution must allow Authorized Users to modify the RFQ to be released with the answers

12.11	In the case of an Authorized User's modification to an RFQ, the solution must issue a pop-up warning for the Authorized User to make sure that procurement rules are not being broken.
12.12	Solution must allow vendors to pull from existing approved pricelists and apply discounts (percentage or amount) to create an RFQ response
12.13	Solution must allow vendors to attach additional documents to their RFQ responses (SLA, add'l terms and conditions) including word, excel and pdf.
12.14	Solution must validate RFQ responses to ensure SKUs proposed are contained within the existing approved contract pricelist and the price proposed is equal to or less than the existing approved contract price.
12.15	Solution must allow Authorized Users to cancel the RFQ at any point in the process. However, they must also provide a justification.
12.16	Solution must be able to provide automated notifications for the following: -RFQ cancelations -RFQ submissions -RFQ modifications -RFQ answers submitted
12.17	Solution must be able to provide automated notifications to: -OGS authenticated users -RFQ submitter -RFQ vendors and resellers
12.18	Solution must provide survey to Authorized User post RFQ to capture pricing data and customer satisfaction
12.19	Solution must send all transactions within a specific RFQ identifier to the Authorized User upon completion
12.20	OGS users with a designated role must be able to issue RFQs for aggregate buys (an RFQ for designated items with the intent of securing a lower price for popular and/or desired products for other designated users to procure from).
13	Banners
13.1	The solution must allow designated OGS users to create and distribute banners that would appear towards the top of a designated group of user's dashboard. The banner may be used to identify users of forthcoming updates, remind users of action items, notify users that an aggregate buy is underway, or that a product they are searching may be available via an existing aggregate buy, etc...
13.2	Banners may include links, "Yes"/"No" buttons, or other methods of communication as identified by designated OGS users.
13.3	Banners may be released to an individual user or a group of users who share one or more roles.



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of New York

Office of General Services
Procurement Services



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Preferred Source

Commodity and Service

Application Process

Award Submission Contact: James Jasiewicz | eMail: james.jasiewicz@ogs.ny.gov | (518)486-5238

Executive Summary

The intent of the New York State Preferred Source Program is to advance special social and economic goals by providing employment opportunities for inmates, the blind and visually impaired, and disabled New Yorkers. The program is supported by New York State (NYS) Finance Law, which requires state agencies, public benefit corporations, municipalities, school districts, most public authorities and other authorized users of centralized NYS contracts to make purchases of \$50,000 or more from designated Preferred Sources if their offerings meet the form, function, and utility of the commodities or services that are sought. The Preferred Sources are the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (CORCRAFT), the New York State Preferred Source Program for New Yorkers who are Blind (NYSPPSP), and the New York State Industries for the Disabled (NYSID).

The NYS Office of General Services (OGS) is responsible for administering the state's centralized contracts, and the OGS Procurement Services Preferred Sources Team (Team) administers the Preferred Source Program. As part of its administrative duties, the Team approves the specific commodities and services that state contract users can buy directly from preferred source catalogs. As the preferred source contracts are not competitively bid, the Team must confirm the proposed pricing is within 15% of fair market values, that a majority of the work is performed by incarcerated individuals, blind individuals, or disabled individuals and that job titles, labor rates, equipment utilized, and non-disabled labor all fall within the requested scope of service. This requires the Team to interact on an almost daily basis with the government purchasers and the preferred sources. In addition to these activities, the Team is tasked with completing a comprehensive review of each procurement application and collecting data on key performance metrics throughout each procurement's lifecycle.

The Team has encountered many challenges in administering a mandated program that has constantly grown in scope and complexity, including increased participation from both purchasers and private business partners. The initial program guidelines and processes lacked standardization, consistency, and the tools to allow purchasers and preferred sources to successfully complete their procurement activities in a timely manner with transparency and accountability of all parties. These issues also made it more difficult for the Team to efficiently evaluate scope and cost compliance.

To address this issue, the Team created the [electronic service application](#)¹ (ESA), a multipart form completed by government purchasers, sent to the preferred source entity, and ultimately submitted to the Team for review. The Team then created the [Preferred Source Service Application Status Report](#) (the Service Tracker), a "tracking" tool that provides a platform for organizing program submissions and is published online to allow both users and Preferred Sources to stay abreast of application status and volume. The process was replicated, and the Team later created the [Preferred Source Commodity Application Status Report](#) (the Commodity Tracker). The Team also uses these to provide information to the New York State Procurement Council, Empire State Development, and other entities that work with OGS to ensure that its activities comply with State Finance Law and the Preferred Source Guidelines. A third step the Team took to address problems with the program process was to develop an internal electronic review workbook in Excel that standardizes content review, facilitates comparison of similar applications, and enables the collection of data used to assess key performance indicators (KPIs) for the program. Use of this tool during application review has improved efficiency, reduced process time, and improved the accuracy of program-reported performance data.

These three innovative activities have resulted in the standardization of process steps and terminology, increased transparency through real-time status and reporting (posted on website by the team bi-weekly), reduced application review times, and increased resource efficiency. They have also proven to reduce application review time and improve accuracy, a service improvement that benefits both preferred sources and authorized contract users by meeting their needs more accurately and quickly. The innovative improvements provide real cost savings to purchasers due to the structure of the application. The electronic improvements are easily transferable to other states, other areas of procurement or between services and commodities.

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Innovation

Over the past few years, the OGS Preferred Sources Team has demonstrated innovation through several activities, including:

Implementing an innovative [electronic service application process \(ESA\)](#): The Team successfully developed and implemented a detailed, user-friendly electronic application process using Microsoft Office tools. The electronic forms carry out complex calculations for the purchaser with built-in, high-level decision support functions that standardize the process across all the preferred source entities; increases the efficiency of the review process; increases the government purchaser's involvement in the processes; creates a consistent record of each application; and incorporates standard procurement practices into the Preferred Source Program. The entire ESA process is detailed in the [Application Overview Form](#), which serves as a table of contents for the ESA's forms to guide users. [Form 1](#) of the ESA, which is completed by the government purchaser, includes a link to the [list of Preferred Source Offerings](#) that is posted on the OGS website for convenience. Form 1 also defines the approved services, which helps the purchaser correctly identify, request, and obtain services that have been vetted by the Team and meet all requirements. [Form 2](#) and [Form 3](#) (Excel) of the ESA are completed by the preferred source and require the preferred source to accurately provide standardized data fields that address the needs outlined in Form 1 of the application. A notable benefit in Form 3 is the consistent clarification of material and overhead costs, which results in a standard metric across all Preferred Source applications. [Form 4](#) requires the purchaser to concur with the preferred source pricing before the ESA is submitted to OGS for final review. Upon receipt of the completed ESA, the Team uses an Excel-based Review Workbook to evaluate Form 3 of the ESA.

Providing extensive training and guidance: The Team has traveled across the state and educated over 650 government purchasers on the Preferred Source Program and the ESA to ensure its successful implementation. In addition, the Team has held webinars on an as-needed basis for authorized users. The Team also provided training on preferred source's buying strategies and conducted [Town Hall meetings](#) for preferred sources and their corporate partners during two of the past three NY GovBuy events. The presentation given during the NY GovBuy training session is posted on OGS's [NY GovBuy webpage](#), and the presentation from NY GovBuy's [Town Hall meeting](#) and other trainings, along with guidance documents, are posted on the [Preferred Source Program's webpage](#).

Improving transparency: The Team also created an Application Status Report for both services and commodities (the Service Tracker and the Commodity Tracker) that is posted on the OGS Procurement Services public website. The Tracker identifies when a preferred source application was submitted to the Team, when the preferred source contract is expected to start and end, where the application stands in the Team's review process, and if the Team is awaiting additional information from the preferred source that is needed to approve the submittal. In addition, a comprehensive list of the approved [Preferred Source offerings](#) is posted on the OGS website, along with purchasing procedures, to assist government purchasers during their procurement process. This provides transparency and accountability to all parties including the New York State Procurement Council and the public.

Creating an electronic price database: Since the preferred source contracts are not competitively bid, the Team needs to determine whether the pricing in each ESA is statutorily compliant relative to the prevailing market. Certain services are not frequently procured through a competitive solicitation, so extensive research is sometimes required to determine if the pricing of a service is reasonable. To confirm price reasonableness and to expedite the approval process, the Team created a database that includes current market pricing information from across the State. The Team maintains information from competitive solicitations or from services secured through the open market so that pricing is readily available when a new ESA for the same service is received. This database includes pricing for typical supplies as well as amortized equipment. Information from the ESA can easily be imported into a review workbook for comparison purposes.

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Transferability

There is a high degree of transferability in socioeconomic procurement that can be easily implemented by other states. This is done through both an overall approach to process improvement changes and the development of standardized forms. The forms are a great template that can be easily modified and applied elsewhere. Standardizing application forms that drive applicants to submit responsive applications, creating an application review workbook, publishing an on-line tracker, or establishing a database of market price information can all be replicated using internal resources and standard Microsoft applications. Other states and municipalities can use the methods leveraged by the Team to administer any regulatory oversight which requires standardized, systematic reviews of a series of statutory or administrative provisions. It can also be used to increase transparency and facilitate reporting. Perhaps most valuable is the ability to immediately see cost over-runs, submissions out of compliance and other concealed risks in the submissions. Most of these innovations or portions of them can be applied or are in the process of being applied to other areas within the Preferred Source Team, such as new product offerings and commodity applications. For example, the Team initially used the tracker for services and later implemented it for commodities. Some of these concepts are already applied or are being applied to other areas of procurement within OGS and can be replicated by other states.

Service Improvement

The Team has significantly improved the effectiveness of the Preferred Sources Program by:

Implementing an innovative electronic service application process: Providing the ESA online greatly reduces the time to procure and is a benefit to all stakeholders. Government purchasers' needs are met in a timelier fashion, and the products and services offered by preferred sources are sold more quickly as well, which results in increased sales volume and keeping more people employed. The more efficient and accurate application process also releases the State's resources so that they can be applied elsewhere, ensuring that additional responsibilities are also met.

The improved efficiency of the ESA compared to the prior application process is clearly demonstrated when comparing various metrics associated with the application cycle time. For example, in 2015 and 2016, the review and completion of an application to the Preferred Sources Program took an average of 79 and 74 days, respectively. As a result of the ESA process, the cycle time for an application has been reduced by over 75% as the 2021 fiscal year average approval time was 18 (services applications) and 16 days (commodity applications) respectively. In late 2015, there were as many as 50 applications in the queue to be reviewed at any given time. As of May 31, 2022, there were only 16 applications pending review (see supplementary document). This 68% reduction in pending applications is directly attributable to the ESA.

Providing extensive training and guidance: The Team provides government purchasers and sellers with opportunities for in-person training and posts many useful resources to the [Preferred Source Program page](#) on the OGS website. Other training efforts include the Team's Town Hall meetings and a statewide Power of Purchasing tour that focuses on various aspects of the procurement process. All these outreach efforts have resulted in the following benefits.

(See supplementary document for screenshots that demonstrate some of the following benefits.)

More complete and accurate applications being submitted, reviewed, and approved more quickly. A better understanding of the procurement process and program compliance among government purchasers. A reduction in the need for correspondence with OGS or the preferred source to clarify application requirements and/or status. Real savings to government purchasers due to increased visibility into the costs proposed by the preferred sources. And ensuring employment opportunities for the incarcerated, blind, and disabled individuals participating in the Preferred Sources Program.

Improving transparency: Posting the Application Status Reports on the OGS website has been well-received in terms of providing an additional level of transparency and has drastically reduced the number of calls the Team receives from purchasers asking for application status updates.

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Creating an electronic price database: This innovative approach has helped expedite the review process and has resulted in cost savings for government purchasers, as well as saving the Team resources that they have been able to apply to other activities and projects.

Using the NYS eMarketplace: The addition of commodities offered by preferred sources to the eMarketplace, along with the platform's functionality in identifying and prioritizing those offerings, has made the procurement process easier for purchasers and has increased program compliance.

Cost Reduction

For government purchasers, the reduction in application process time has led to a reduction in gap fill orders of buying temporary products or services, resulting in real cost savings. For preferred sources and their private business partners, the improved application process has resulted in increased sales volume along with opportunities for maintaining and increasing employment of the blind and disabled, which reduces the need for governmental support that is offered to those populations through other programs.

The Team's efforts have allowed staff additional time to focus on other program improvements, reducing the number of staff needed to manage the program. For example, during our agency's response to COVID, the Team was able to review and approve 45 COVID specific preferred source applications, while at the same time managing the existing workload for other preferred source applications. Previously, the Team consisted of an Assistant Director and three contract management specialists of varying levels of seniority, and OGS management considered adding another specialist to the team at an annual cost of \$56,604 to meet demand. After the programmatic improvements and some staffing changes, the Team currently consists of an Assistant Director and three specialists of lower seniority, and OGS management decided that hiring an additional specialist was no longer necessary. That decision, along with the new staffing structure that costs OGS \$33,710 less annually, has resulted in a total savings potential of over \$90,000 per year. Cost savings realized for contract users from 9/1/17 - 5/31/22 are \$4,649,917.14 as a result of the standardization ESA process review of Form 3 and Form 4. From 2019 - 2021 approved service applications had an annual average of disabled labor FTEs of 627 per year reducing the need for government support resulting in savings to the State.

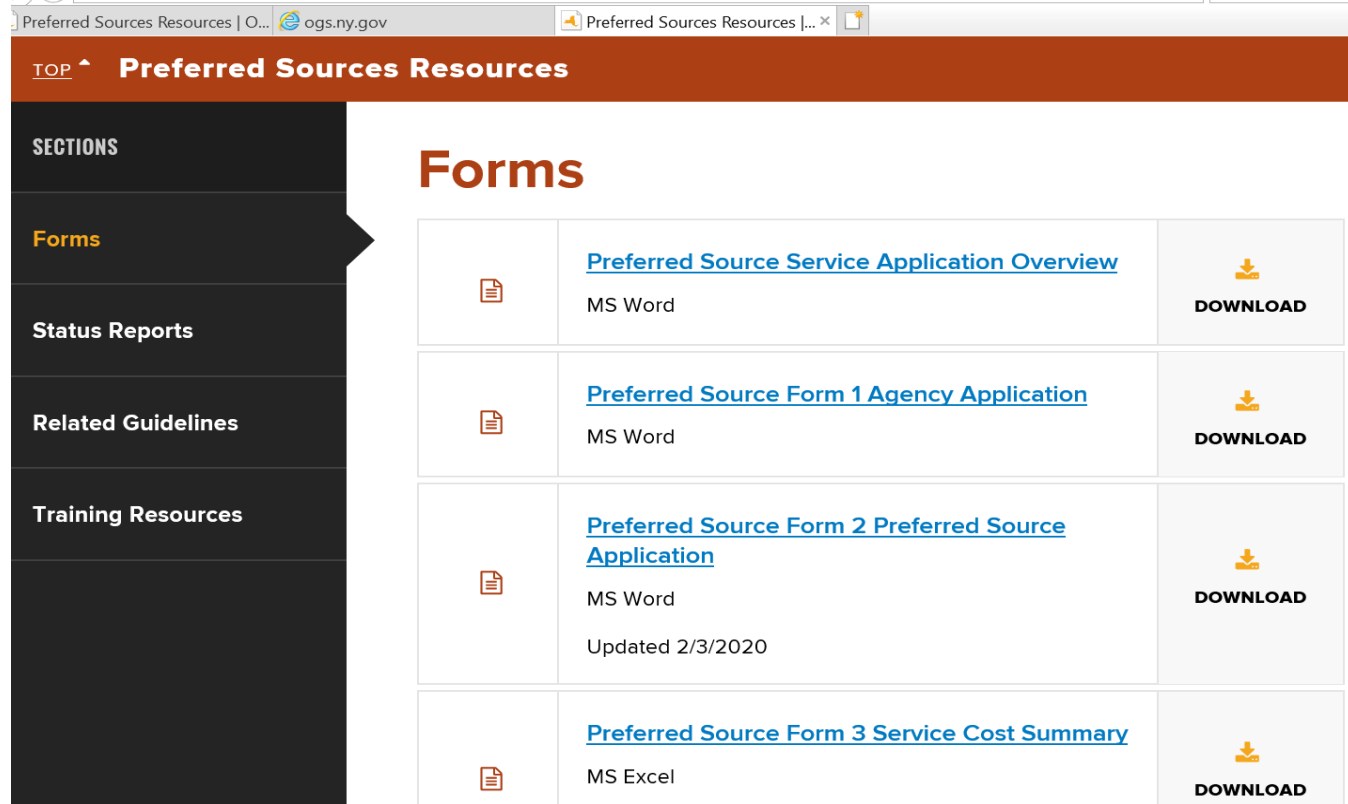
Conclusion

The changes created and implemented by the NYS OGS Preferred Sources team have resulted in increased transparency through real-time status updates (reported bi-weekly), reduced application review times, and increased resource efficiency. These efforts have resulted in numerous benefits to the staff, the preferred sources and our state customers. As the benefits of the process changes are becoming more widely recognized, the Team's work is serving as a case study for other programs whose staff are interested in process improvement. It is anticipated that as the Team educates others on the success of their efforts, their methods and tools will serve as templates for other teams to use in enhancing their own programs, not only at OGS but across other state entities. This leads to more efficiency and resource & cost savings across the enterprise.





¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION - NYS OGS -2022 Cronin application

Location of the [Preferred Sources Resources | Office of General Services \(ny.gov\)](#) page where ESA documents/forms are found. (referred to in Executive Summary and Innovation Section)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL 'ogs.ny.gov'. The page title is 'Preferred Sources Resources'. On the left is a dark sidebar with 'SECTIONS' and links for 'Forms', 'Status Reports', 'Related Guidelines', and 'Training Resources'. The 'Forms' link is highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Forms' and contains a table of four downloadable documents.

Icon	Document Title	Format	Action
	Preferred Source Service Application Overview	MS Word	DOWNLOAD
	Preferred Source Form 1 Agency Application	MS Word	DOWNLOAD
	Preferred Source Form 2 Preferred Source Application	MS Word Updated 2/3/2020	DOWNLOAD
	Preferred Source Form 3 Service Cost Summary	MS Excel	DOWNLOAD

the [Preferred Source Service Application Status Report](#) (the “Service Tracker” referenced in the Executive Summary)

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)


NYS OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES PREFERRED SOURCE SERVICE APPLICATION STATUS REPORT For the PS Bi-Weekly Meeting 05/20/22-06/02/22										
PROJECT NUMBER	DATE RECEIVED	CONTRACT START DATE	CONTRACT END DATE (Include All Renewals & Ext.)	PS FACILITATOR	SERVICE DESCRIPTION	MEMBER AGENCY - ASSOCIATE AGENCY	PROCURING AGENCY	ESTIMATED VALUE	CURRENT STATUS	CURRENT OWNER
2821	4/11/2022	1/1/2023	12/31/2027	NYSID	Mail Presort, Mail Fulfillment Services, Mail Distribution, Mail Folding & Inserting, and Mail Packaging	CFDS	NYSIF - Insurance Fund	\$ 15,201,462.00	5/16/22 Awaiting Management	OCS
2832	5/5/2022	10/1/2022	9/30/2027	NYSID	Grounds Keeping and Lawn Maintenance	AHRC	NYC Fire Department	\$ 1,337,889.71	5/5/22 Requested Clarification	Preferred Source
2833	5/18/2022	9/1/2022	8/31/2027	NYSID	Janitorial and Floor Maintenance	Human Technologies Corp.	OPWDD - Central NY DDSO	\$ 316,362.00	5/18/22 New App. Needs Completeness Review	OCS
2834	5/20/2022	6/1/2022	12/31/2022	NYSID	Secure Document Destruction	Unity House of Troy/SecureScan	WCB - Workers' Compensation Board	\$ 147,400.00	6/1/22 Requested Clarification	Preferred Source
2835	5/25/2022	2/1/2022	1/31/2027	NYSID	Janitorial, Floor Maintenance, and Window Cleaning	SASI - Suburban Adult Services, Inc	DMH - Buffalo Psychiatric Center	\$ 198,096.76	5/25/22 Requested Clarification	Preferred Source
2836	5/25/2022	9/1/2022	8/31/2027	NYSID	Janitorial, Carpet Cleaning, and Floor Maintenance	WellLife Network/Goodwill	DMH - Office of Mental Health	\$ 1,074,537.84	5/25/22 New App. Needs Completeness Review	OCS
2838	5/27/2022	3/1/2022	9/30/2023	NYSID	Data Imaging Services	Fedcap	NYC - Health and Hospital Corp (NYC HHC)	\$ 175,000.00	5/27/22 Requested Clarification	Preferred Source

[Preferred Source Commodity Application Status Report \(the "Commodity Tracker" referenced in the Executive Summary\)](#)

NYS OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES PREFERRED SOURCE COMMODITY APPLICATION STATUS REPORT For the PS Bi-Weekly Meeting 05/20/22-06/02/22										
PROJECT NUMBER	DATE RECEIVED	PS FACILITATOR	COMMODITY DESCRIPTION	MEMBER AGENCY - ASSOCIATE AGENCY	PROCURING AGENCY	ESTIMATED VALUE	APPLICATION TYPE	CURRENT STATUS	CURRENT OWNER	
1895-C	5/3/2022	NYSID	Disposable Paper Hot Cups, 8oz, B2314	ACRMD CMRS	Multiple	\$ 24,397	Product Line Extension	6/1/22 Continued CMS Review	OCS	
1899-C	5/11/2022	NYSID	Corrections Officers Male/Female, Navy Blue, Relax-Fit Trousers, A2870	HTC	Multiple	\$ 312,885	Product Line Extension	5/27/22 Continued CMS Review	OCS	
1905-C	5/17/2022	NYSID	Tork Universal Jumbo Toilet Tissue Roll 2-Ply 3.5" x 1,000' 8.8 Diameter D4415	Community, Work, and Independence, Inc.	Multiple	\$ 58,552	Price Revision	5/31/22 Prepare FPR for Final Review	OCS	
1907-C	5/18/2022	NYSPSP	Safety Vests 720 Series	Northeastern Association of the Blind at Albany	Multiple	\$ 286,810	Price Revision	6/1/22 Under CMS Review	OCS	
1908-C	5/19/2022	NYSPSP	NYPD Uniform Shirts	Northeastern Association of the Blind at Albany	Multiple	\$ 864,103	Product Line Extension	6/1/22 Under CMS Review	OCS	
1909-C	5/20/2022	NYSPSP	Utility Grade Packing Tape, 3.1 mil x 48 mm x 55 yds	CABVI	Multiple	\$ 5,403	Price Revision	5/24/22 Under CMS Review	OCS	
1911-C	5/23/2022	NYSID	1000 Individually Wrapped Purell Hand Sanitizer Wipes, D4059	Liberty Enterprises	Multiple	\$ 52,034	Price Revision	5/23/22 New App. Needs Completeness Review	OCS	
1914-C	5/25/2022	NYSID	Tork Universal Toilet Tissue, Recycled Fibers 1-Ply 3.75x4 232 Sheets, D4407	Community, Work, and Independence, Inc.	Multiple	\$ 450,025	Price Revision	5/25/22 New App. Needs Completeness Review	OCS	
1915-C	5/26/2022	NYSID	Universal Absorbent Mats 15x19, D4820	Liberty Enterprises	Multiple	\$ 1,460,013	Price Revision	5/31/22 Requested Clarification	Preferred Source	

Electronic Service Application Overview Form (Referenced in Innovation Section)

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

 NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES Procurement Services	Preferred Source Service Application																						
<h2>OVERVIEW</h2>																							
<p>Application Submission Process Summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Purchasing Agency fills out Form 1 and sends it to the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity (NYSFSP/NYSID) with supporting documents (i.e. scope of work). 2. The Preferred Source Facilitating Entity (NYSFSP/NYSID) fills out Forms 2 and 3, and submits them to the Purchasing Agency with attachments as applicable. Form 3 must be submitted in Excel format in addition to the application PDF. 3. The Purchasing Agency will review all forms and attachments included in the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity's Service Application. If the Purchasing Agency has questions or concerns regarding Forms 2 and 3, they must be addressed with the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity (NYSFSP/NYSID) before signing Form 4. 4. The Purchasing Agency completes Form 4 and submits all forms and attachments back to the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity. 5. The Preferred Source Facilitating Entity will submit all required Service Application documents (listed below) to OGS at OGS.sm.PS.CM.PreferredSource@ogs.ny.gov for review. 																							
<p>Instructions for Submission of a Complete Application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All required documents found in the list below must be completed prior to submission to OGS. 2. All required documents found in the list below must be included in the initial submission to OGS. 3. Authorized signatures from a Preferred Source Facilitating Entity, Preferred Member, Corporate Partner (if applicable), and Purchasing Agency must be included where indicated. 4. Page numbers are required on all documents in the application. 5. Form 3 must be submitted in Excel format. 6. All cost backup information must be attached to Form 3. 7. The Market Comparison must be based on the OGS Guide to Prevailing Markets. Please click the following link to access the document: https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/preferred-sources-resources#forms 8. All forms and documents must be scanned into a single PDF formatted file. 9. The PDF must be legible, correctly oriented and submitted with the Excel file via e-mail to OGS.sm.PS.CM.PreferredSource@ogs.ny.gov 10. This Overview document will serve as the cover to your application packet. You must click on the hashtag symbols (#) below and enter the appropriate page numbers to complete this form prior to submission. Note: Failure to provide a complete application may result in the return of the application to the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity (NYSFSP/NYSID) for resolution. 																							
<p>INDEX OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION OF A COMPLETE APPLICATION</p> <p>The Documents for THIS APPLICATION are presented in the order listed below:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>PREFERRED SOURCE SERVICE APPLICATION OVERVIEW.....</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PREFERRED SOURCE FACILITATING ENTITY APPLICATION LETTER TO OGS.....</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FORM 1- PURCHASING AGENCY STATEMENT OF WORK.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FORM 2- PREFERRED SOURCE FACILITATING ENTITY SERVICE APPLICATION.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FORM 3- PREFERRED SOURCE COST SUMMARY.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FORM 4- PURCHASING AGENCY APPROVAL.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ATTACHMENT 1- MARKET COMPARISON.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">IF APPLICABLE:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ATTACHMENT 2- DESIGNATING AGENCY CORPORATE PARTNER APPROVAL.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ATTACHMENT 3- PREVAILING WAGE SCHEDULE.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ATTACHMENT 4- PRIOR CONTRACT APPROVAL LETTER.....</td> <td>#</td> </tr> </table>		PREFERRED SOURCE SERVICE APPLICATION OVERVIEW.....	1	PREFERRED SOURCE FACILITATING ENTITY APPLICATION LETTER TO OGS.....	2	FORM 1- PURCHASING AGENCY STATEMENT OF WORK.....	#	FORM 2- PREFERRED SOURCE FACILITATING ENTITY SERVICE APPLICATION.....	#	FORM 3- PREFERRED SOURCE COST SUMMARY.....	#	FORM 4- PURCHASING AGENCY APPROVAL.....	#	ATTACHMENT 1- MARKET COMPARISON.....	#	IF APPLICABLE:		ATTACHMENT 2- DESIGNATING AGENCY CORPORATE PARTNER APPROVAL.....	#	ATTACHMENT 3- PREVAILING WAGE SCHEDULE.....	#	ATTACHMENT 4- PRIOR CONTRACT APPROVAL LETTER.....	#
PREFERRED SOURCE SERVICE APPLICATION OVERVIEW.....	1																						
PREFERRED SOURCE FACILITATING ENTITY APPLICATION LETTER TO OGS.....	2																						
FORM 1- PURCHASING AGENCY STATEMENT OF WORK.....	#																						
FORM 2- PREFERRED SOURCE FACILITATING ENTITY SERVICE APPLICATION.....	#																						
FORM 3- PREFERRED SOURCE COST SUMMARY.....	#																						
FORM 4- PURCHASING AGENCY APPROVAL.....	#																						
ATTACHMENT 1- MARKET COMPARISON.....	#																						
IF APPLICABLE:																							
ATTACHMENT 2- DESIGNATING AGENCY CORPORATE PARTNER APPROVAL.....	#																						
ATTACHMENT 3- PREVAILING WAGE SCHEDULE.....	#																						
ATTACHMENT 4- PRIOR CONTRACT APPROVAL LETTER.....	#																						
Revised 03/22/19	Page 1																						



¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Form 1 (completed by the Agency/Purchaser) (Referenced in Innovation Section)

FORM 1
Purchasing Agency Statement of Work for Preferred Source Services

Each of the sections below must be completed. Additional documents may be attached.

To be completed by the Purchasing Agency. Date:

Project Information

Purchasing Agency Name	<input type="text"/>
Contact Name	<input type="text"/>
Contact Email	<input type="text"/>
Contact Phone Number	<input type="text"/>
Contact Street Address	<input type="text"/>
City, State Zip	<input type="text"/>
Project Name	<input type="text"/>
Proposed Start Date	<input type="text"/>
Preferred Source Facilitating Entity	<input type="text"/>

Approved Preferred Source Service(s): [Click here](#) for a link to the detailed list of Preferred Source offerings. Please be sure to review the definitions of the service(s) you are selecting to ensure that the correct one(s) are chosen. Select appropriate service(s) from the drop down list of approved services. **Form fields will expand as text is entered.**

Only approved services are listed. If the service you are looking for is not listed, follow the purchasing order of precedence established under NYS Finance Law § 163 (3)(a)(i), <http://codes.findlaw.com/nys/state-finance-law/sect-163.html>.

NYS SP APPROVED SERVICES

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

NYSID APPROVED SERVICES

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Revised 03/22/19 Page 1

FORM 1
Purchasing Agency Statement of Work for Preferred Source Offerings

Has your Purchasing Agency held a competitively awarded contract for this service within the last five years?

If yes, please attach a copy of the contract scope and pricing to Form 1.

Proposed Contract Term

Scope of Work
Describe the actual tasks that the Preferred Source will be expected to perform. As with all other portions of Form 1, every effort should be made to include as much detail as possible.

Work Location(s)

If the service is subject to Article 9 Prevailing Wage requirements, click on the link below to request the appropriate PRC number and enter it in the box below.
<https://labor.ny.gov/workerprotection/publicworks/PWRreqforOWS.shtm>

PRC NUMBER

Special Requirements
Describe any special requirements, (i.e. certifications, industry standards, mandatory staffing levels, emergency requests, security, uniform, or background checks) for the service(s) being performed.

Revised 03/22/19 Page 2

FORM 1
Purchasing Agency Statement of Work for Preferred Source Offerings

By signing Form 1, I do so attest that:

- I have completed all required B-1184 documentation for this procurement, or, if a B-1184 is not required, I certify that my organization will have access to sufficient funds to meet this obligation.
- I have the authority to sign on behalf of the Purchasing Agency.
- I am responsible for reviewing the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity's complete Service Application and signing Form 4.

Purchasing Agency Authorized Signature _____
Print Name _____
Title _____
Date _____

1. Upon completion of Form 1, the Purchasing Agency must forward to the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity(ies) and retain a copy for the Agency's procurement record.
2. Upon acceptance of a complete Service Application from the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity, the Purchasing Agency must review and sign Form 4.

NOTE: The Purchasing Agency must give the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity(ies) ten days to respond. It is the responsibility of the Purchasing Agency to follow all applicable finance laws and keep copies of these documents for their procurement record.

Revised 03/22/19 Page 3

Form 2 (completed by the Preferred Source) (Referenced in Innovation Section)

FORM 2
Preferred Source Facilitating Entity Service Application

Each of the sections below must be completed. Additional documents may be attached.

To be completed by the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity: Date:

Member Agency Information

Member Agency:	<input type="text"/>
Contact Person:	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>
Phone #:	<input type="text"/>
Street Address:	<input type="text"/>
City, State Zip:	<input type="text"/>

Corporate Partner Information (If applicable)

Corporate Partner Name:	<input type="text"/>
Contact Person:	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>
Phone #:	<input type="text"/>
Street Address:	<input type="text"/>
City, State Zip:	<input type="text"/>

Purchasing Agency Information

FORM 2
Preferred Source Facilitating Entity Service Application

Prevailing Wage Information

Is this service subject to Article 9 of the NYS Labor Law?

If yes, please enter the PRC number from Form 1 in the box below and attach the correct Prevailing Wage Schedule to this form.

Is this service subject to the New York City Prevailing Wage Schedule? If Yes, please attach the correct Prevailing Wage Schedule to this form.

Each of the sections below must be filled out. Additional documents may be attached if necessary. Form fields will expand as text is entered.

Approved Preferred Source Service(s) [Click here](#) for a link to the detailed list and definitions of approved Preferred Source offerings. Please be sure to review the definitions of the service(s) you are selecting to ensure that the correct one(s) are chosen. Select appropriate service(s) from the drop down list of approved services. The service proposed must align with the customer scope of work.

NYS SP APPROVED SERVICES

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

NYSID APPROVED SERVICES

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Form 3 (Excel) (completed by the Preferred Source) (Referenced in Innovation Section)

Form 3 Instructions:						
The Preferred Source Facilitating Entity must complete Form 3 in its entirety.						
Additional rows and formulas may be inserted as needed in the sections below. The form is not locked.						
Please delete unused tabs as applicable.						
You must sign Form 3 and submit a scanned copy, along with the original Excel file to the Purchasing Agency for review.						
Upon Purchasing Agency concurrence of Form 4, submit Form 3 in both PDF and Excel formats with your completed application forms and attachments to NYS OGS at OGS.sm.PS_CM_PREFERREDSOURCE@ogs.ny.gov.						
Preferred Source Facilitating Entity						
Project Information	Purchasing Agency Name				Application Date	
	Contact Name					
	Contact Email					
	Contact Phone Number					
	Contact Street Address					
	City, State, Zip Code					
	Project Name					
	Proposed Start Date					
	Disabled/Blind Labor Job Title	Estimated Number of Employees	Number of Hours	Hourly Wage	Total	
				\$	-	



Form 4 (completed by the Agency/Purchaser) (Referenced in Innovation Section)

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)



Purchasing Agency Acceptance of Preferred Source Service Application **FORM 4**

By signing below the undersigned attests that appropriate purchasing agency personnel have:

1. Read and reviewed the entire Preferred Source Facilitating Entity Service Application, totaling _____ pages, including Forms 1-4, Appendices, Attachments, and other documents referenced in the Preferred Source Service Application Index;
2. Submitted concerns, suggestions, or questions concerning the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity's Service Application to the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity and that the Preferred Source Facilitating Entity has provided answers to the purchasing agency's satisfaction; and
3. Confirmed that to the undersigned's reasonable knowledge, all the job titles, hours, and equipment listed are necessary to perform the work described herein, basing such conclusion on discussion and agreement between the purchasing agency and Preferred Source Facilitating Entity's employees.

The undersigned recognizes that this Service Application is submitted for the express purpose of assisting the New York State Office of General Services ("OGS") in making a determination regarding approval of the Service Application and that OGS will rely on the information disclosed in this Service Application in making its determination in accordance with State Finance Law § 162 and the New York State Procurement Council Preferred Source Guidelines. The undersigned acknowledges that OGS may, in its discretion, verify the truth and accuracy of all statements made and information provided herein. The undersigned attests that they are authorized to sign on behalf of the purchasing agency. The undersigned agrees and acknowledges that this Service Application will become part of the final contract if a contract is executed.

Purchasing Agency Authorized Signature

Print/Type Name

Title

Date

Phone Number

Email

[TRAINING INFO](#) (Referenced in Innovation and Service Improvement Sections)

Town Hall Powerpoint



NY GovBuy

co-sponsored by



Preferred Source Town Hall Meeting

April 30 & May 1, 2019

#2019NYGovBuy @NYSPro @nvsprocurement

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

NY GovBuy Presentation



NY GovBuy

co-sponsored by



Preferred Source Buying Strategies

Know the Rules and How to Apply Them

May 4 & 5, 2022

Useful Resource (Referenced in Service Improvement Section)

Procurement Excellence

TM

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

← → ↻ 🔒 https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/preferred-sources-resources

TOP ^ **Preferred Sources Resources**

SECTIONS

- Forms
- Status Reports
- Related Guidelines
- Training Resources**

Training Resources

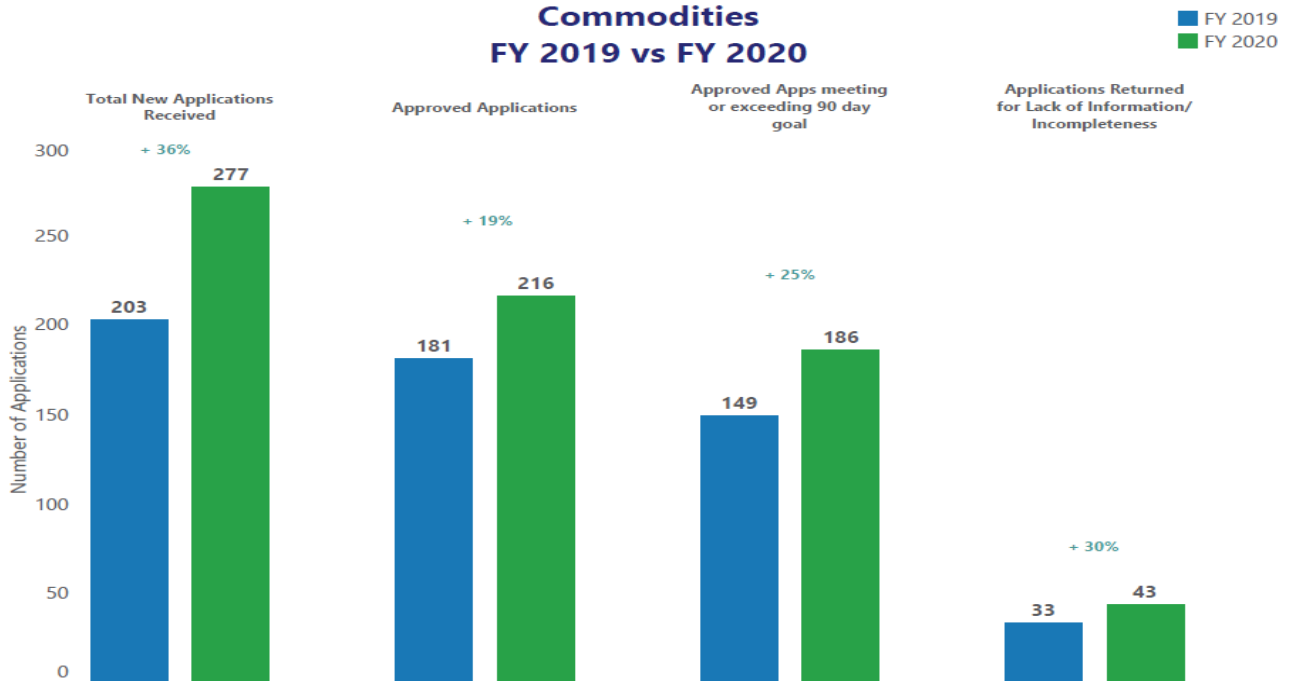
- [Town Hall Meeting Presentation, 2019](#)
- [Electronic Service Application Webinar \(July 19, 2017\)](#)
- [Electronic Service Application \(ESA\) Webinar Q&A](#)
- [How to Use the Preferred Source Electronic Service Application](#)



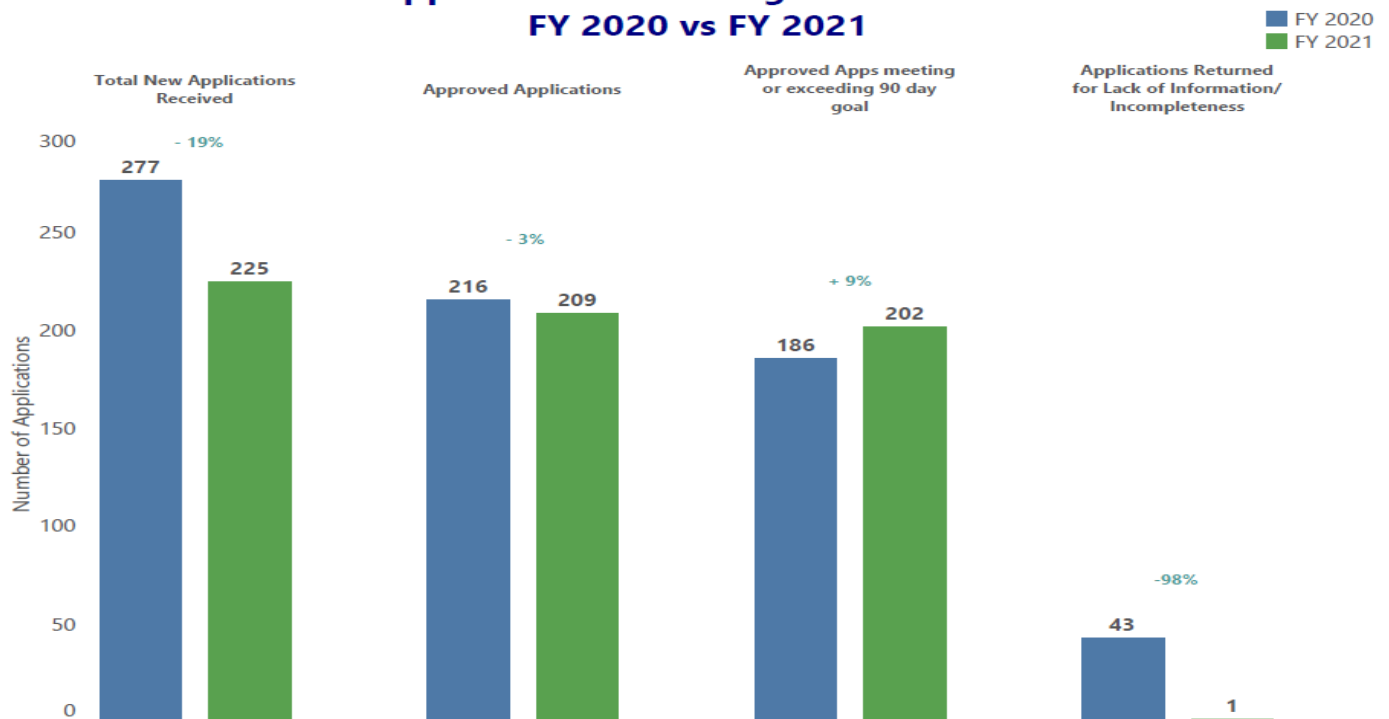
SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS - PROCESS TIME IMPROVEMENTS

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Preferred Source Services Application Processing for Services and Commodities FY 2019 vs FY 2020



Preferred Source Application Processing for Services and Commodities FY 2020 vs FY 2021



¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Tracker Consolidated Services Tab

	A	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION	MEMBER AGENCY - Associate Agency	ENTITY TYPE	ENTITY NAME	PROCURING AGENCY	SERVICE LOCATION	CONTRACT TERM	ESTIMATED VALUE	CONTRACT START DATE	CONTRACT END DATE (Include All Renewal Ext.)	STATUS DETAIL LOG	LOI needed	Current Owner	
1															
2	NYSID Priorities														COPY FORMULA FROM CELL ABOVE
3	1381	Digital Printing	PC DID NOT APPROVE			PC DID NOT APPROVE	PC DID NOT APPROVE	Not Stated	Not Stated		NA-Withdrawn	Review suspended. 8/23/13 To be removed from list at NB request.		Closed	
4	1477	Secure On-Site document destruction and Recycling Services	BW/S/ProShredsecurity, Inc			None at this time		Not Stated	Not Stated	12/13/2013		Approved		Closed	
5	1495	Temporary Personnel	Good Temps	New_York_City	NYC - Department of Citywide Administrative Services	NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)	Any NYC Agency in NYC's 5 Boroughs	5 Years	Not Stated	8/30/2013	8/29/2018	Approved (03/18/14)		Closed	
6	1496	Messenger, Courier Services, Mailings	Rehabilitation Support Services	State_Agencies	ITS - Office of Information Technology Services	NY State Office for Technology	Albany	5 Years	\$ 207,471.00	10/4/2012	10/3/2017	Approved		Closed	
7	1502	Janitorial	Fedcap Rehabilitation Services, Inc.	New_York_City	NYC - Department of Sanitation - Fiscal Services	NYC Department of Sanitation	NYC, 7,500 sqft	1 Year	\$ 98,323.00	8/20/2013		Approved 08/06/14		Closed	
8	1507	Janitorial	F.E.G.S. American Maintenance	State_Agencies	OPWDD - Long Island Developmental Disabilities Service Office	NY State OPWDD Long Island DDO	Commack, Woodbury, Plainview, Farmingdale	5 Years	\$ 1,581,600.00	4/1/2013	8/19/2018	Approved 04/01/13		Closed	
9	1510	Janitorial	The Alamont Program	SUNY_Schools		SUNY Adirondack Community College	Wilton	1 Year	\$ 56,122.00	9/3/2012	9/2/2013	Approved		Closed	
10	1515	Motor Messenger	Goodwill Industries of Greater NY and Northern NJ, Inc./Velocity Express Real Time Delivery	New_York_City	NYC - Human Resources Administration - 1110th Ave, 8th Floor	NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA)	NYC 5 Boroughs	3 Years	\$ 183,465.00	9/18/2013		Approved		Closed	
11	1516	Janitorial	Human Technologies Corp	State_Agencies	OPWDD - Broome Developmental Center	NY State OPWDD Broome DDO	Chenango Regional Dr / Norwich	5 Years	\$ 310,925.00	4/1/2013	9/16/2018	Approved		Closed	
12	1519	Document Imaging	Westchester APC	New_York_City		NYC Transit Authority	White Plains	Date of Award to Forty Eight (48) Months.	Not Stated	4/8/2013		Approved		Closed	
	1521	Janitorial	Human Technologies Corp.	State_Agencies	DOT - Main Office	NY State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)	A. Whitney Pest Area B. Kikkook Pest Area	5 years	\$ 1,260,000.00	11/1/2012	10/31/2017	Approved		Closed	

Tracker Consolidated Info Commodities



¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

PROJECT NUMB	DATE RECEIVE	Current Status	OPEN or CLOSE	PS FACILITAT	PS SUBMITTAL BY	PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION	MEMBER AGENCY - Associate Agency	PROCURING AGENCY	ESTIMATED VALUE	APPLICATION TYPE	NUMBER OF ITEM	STATUS DETAIL LOG	Current Owner
1872-C	3/24/2022	7.Determination Made	CLOSED	NYSID	MH		HAIX Black Eagle Tactical 2.0 GTX High Zip Boot, A2479	Herkimer Industries	Multiple	\$ 12,263	Price Revision	1	3/30/22 Approval Letter Sent	Closed
1873-C	3/24/2022	7.Determination Made	CLOSED	NYSID	MH		HAIX Black Eagle Safety 42.1 Low Shoe, A2947	Herkimer Industries	Multiple	\$ 16,885	Product Line Extension	1	4/5/22 Approval Letter Sent	Closed
1874-C	3/29/2022	7.Determination Made	CLOSED	NYSID	RH		Household Paper Towels, 2-Ply, D4420	Venture Together, Inc.	Multiple	\$ 115,099	Price Revision	1	4/5/22 Approval Letter Sent	Closed
1875-C	4/1/2022	7.Determination Made	CLOSED	NYSID	SC		Bagged Premium Kiln Dried Firewood w/ Starter Stick, G7906	Liberty Enterprises	Multiple	\$ 319,250	Price Revision	1	4/11/22 Approval Letter Sent	Closed
1876-C	4/4/2022	7.Determination Made	CLOSED	NYSID	CP		Men's Boxers A2547	Spectrum Designs Foundation	Multiple	\$ 24,996	Price Revision	1	4/13/22 Withdrawn by Preferred Source	Closed

Tracker Dashboard

GEORGE CRONIN

ENTER YOUR CUSTOM COMPARISON DATES

Enter Date Range for Current Review: 12/22/2021 - 12/31/2021
 Enter Date Range for Comparison: 12/22/2020 - 12/31/2020

SELECT THE FISCAL YEAR TO COMPARE QUARTERS

Select Fiscal Year from Drop Down below:
 FY 18-19

Application	Current Period	Comparison Period
Applications (Service & Commodity Combined)	12/22/2021 - 12/31/2021	12/22/2020 - 12/31/2020
Applications (Service)	43	55
Applications (Commodity)	10	10
Applications (Both)	53	65

COMPARISON

Quarterly Completion Rate (% of new items that were completed in same quarter as requested)

Number Applications Pending (from each Quarter): 0, 0, 0, 0

(Service & Commodity Combined)	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1	FT Total
Applications (Service)	45	40	52	11	248
Applications (Commodity)	8	5	10	10	33
Applications (Both)	53	45	62	21	281

Rate Range for this application is determined by Commodity Report Rate range above.

Service	Current Period	Comparison Period
Total Applications Received	101	107
Approved Applications	1	41
Applications Pending	0	0
Applications (Both)	101	107

FULL FISCAL YEAR COMPARISON

Service	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Commodity	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Applications Received	33	23	22	18	24	15	18	27	27
Approved Applications	7	8	7	5	1	1	1	1	1
Applications Pending	26	15	15	13	23	14	17	26	26

Ready

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Dashboard components

Preferred Source Application Dashboard							Fiscal Year	
ON DATES		SELECT THE FISCAL YEAR TO COMPARE QUARTERS						
1/1/2021	12/31/2021	Select Fiscal Year from drop down below:			1/1/2019	3/31/2019	Q4	
1/1/2019	12/31/2019	FY 18-19			10/1/2018	12/31/2018	Q3	
				7/1/2018	9/30/2018	Q2		
				4/1/2018	6/30/2018	Q1		
Current Period		Comparison period		FULL FISCAL YEAR COMPARISON			FY 18-19	
1/01/21 - 12/31/21	1/01/19 - 12/31/19	Applications (Services & Commodities Combined)		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY Total
248	274	Total New Applications Received		63	55	40	45	203
2	49	Applications Returned w/o Processing		10	10	5	8	33
0	0	Sent Lack of Information Letter		0	0	0	0	0
0	0	Sent Conditional Approval Letter		0	0	0	0	0
235	206	Approved (without conditions)		61	38	37	45	181
0	0	Denied		0	0	0	0	0
2	10	Withdrawn by Preferred Source		7	1	4	3	15
0	0	Number Applications Currently Pending from Each Quarter		0	0	0	0	0
0	0	Cumulative Total Applications Pending a Determination at actual end of Period (historical snapshot, manually entered at close of each quarter)		0	0	0	0	0
		Approval Goal - 90 days						
17	53	Average approval time for approved applications (days)		42	43	75	62	55
230	173	Number approved apps meeting or exceeding 90 day approval goal		50	32	21	37	140

Consolidated Info SVCS

Dashboard

Consolidated Info COMM

Dashboard - Savings

Sheet4

Chart1

AU List

Drop Down



Quarterly Completion Rate (% of new items that were completed in same quarter as receipt)

Number Applications Pending (from each Quarter)

Q1: 0
Q2: 0
Q3: 0
Q4: 0

Applications (Services & Commodities Combined)	Current Period				FY Total
	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1	
Total New Applications Received	45	40	55	63	203
Applications Returned w/o Processing	8	5	10	10	33
Sent Lack of Information Letter	0	0	0	0	0
Sent Conditional Approval Letter	0	0	0	0	0
Approved (without conditions)	45	37	38	61	181
Denied	0	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn by Preferred Source	3	4	1	7	15
Number Applications Pending (from each Quarter)	0	0	0	0	0
Total Applications Pending a Determination at Close of Time Period	0	0	0	0	0

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

	Current Period		Comparison period	
	1/01/21 - 12/31/21	1/01/19 - 12/31/19	1/01/21 - 12/31/21	1/01/19 - 12/31/19
28 Services			Commodities	
29 Total New Applications Received	125	147	Total Applications Received	123
30 Returned w/o Processing	0	41	Returned w/o Processing	2
31 Sent Lack of Information Letter	0	0	Sent Lack of Information Letter	0
32 Sent Conditional Approval Letter	0	0	Sent Conditional Approval Letter	0
33 Approved (without conditions)	109	89	Approved (without conditions)	126
34 Denied	0	0	Denied	0
35 Withdrawn by Preferred Source	0	6	Withdrawn by Preferred Source	2
36 Number Applications Pending (from Timeframe)	0	0	Number Applications Pending (from Timeframe)	0
37 Cumulative Total Applications currently Pending a Determination from Close of Period (# as of today)	0	0	Cumulative Total Applications currently Pending a Determination from Close of Period (# as of today)	0
Approval Goal - 90 days				
40 Average Approval Time for Approvals without condition (days)	22	63	Average Approval Time for Approvals without condition (days)	13
41 Number Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	104	67	Number Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	126
42 Percentage Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	95%	75%	Percentage Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	100%

Consolidated Info SVCS | Dashboard | Consolidated Info COMM | Dashboard - Savings | Sheet4 | Chart1 | AU List | Drop Down | +

Procurement

WORKING (DETAIL DATA) DASHBOARD

Date Range(s) for these selections can be customized for each section. Select "Yes" to Use the same date range for all data OR select "No" to enter custom dates for each data set. The Default Range will also be used if there are no dates input into an individual section.

Default Date Range for Current Review

Default Date Range for Comparison

Date Range for Current Review:

Date Range for Comparison:

Current Applications	Current Range	Comparison
Total in Queue to Complete	8	0
Stage: Completeness Review	0	0
Stage: Under Review	0	0
Stage: Prep for Final Review	0	0
Stage: Pending FPR Approval	0	0
Closed		
Open status data input check	Data Missing	Matches

Staff Production	Open	Closed
Christine Irvine	0	0
Patti Kelly-Sbrega	0	0
John Normile	0	0
David Keneston	0	0
John Indelicato	0	0

Use Default Dates for all results? Yes

Date Range for Open:

Date Range for Closed:

Current Applications	Current Range	Comparison
Total in Queue to Complete	0	0
Stage: Completeness Review	0	0
Stage: Under Review	0	0
Stage: Prep for Final Review	0	0
Stage: Pending FPR Approval	0	0
Closed		
Open status data input check	Matches	Matches

Consolidated Info SVCS | Dashboard | Consolidated Info COMM | Dashboard - Savings | Sheet4 | Chart1 | AU List | Drop Down | +

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Last Dashboard component

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----

FULL FISCAL YEAR COMPARISON											
Services	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Commodities	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
	4/1/2018	7/1/2018	10/1/2018	1/1/2019		4/1/2018	7/1/2018	10/1/2018	1/1/2019		
FY 18-19	6/30/2018	9/30/2018	12/31/2018	3/31/2019	FY 18-19	6/30/2018	9/30/2018	12/31/2018	3/31/2019		
Total New Applications Received	39	29	22	18	Total Applications Received	24	26	18	27		
Returned w/o Processing	7	8	2	5	Returned w/o Processing	3	2	3	3		
Sent Lack of Information Letter	0	0	0	0	Sent Lack of Information Letter	0	0	0	0		
Sent Conditional Approval Letter	0	0	0	0	Sent Conditional Approval Letter	0	0	0	0		
Approved (without conditions)	38	11	25	21	Approved (without conditions)	23	27	12	24		
Denied	0	0	0	0	Denied	0	0	0	0		
Withdrawn by Preferred Source	4	1	3	3	Withdrawn by Preferred Source	3	0	1	0		
Number Applications Pending (from Cumulative Total)	0	0	0	0	Number Applications Pending (from Cumulative Total)	0	0	0	0		
Applications <i>currently</i> Pending a Determination from Close of Period (#)	0	0	0	0	Applications <i>currently</i> Pending a	0	0	0	0		
Approval Goal - 90 days					Approval Goal - 90 days						
Average Approval Time for Approvals without condition (days)	51	64	109	88	Time for Approvals without condition (days)	32	23	41	35		
Number Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	36	7	11	13	Number Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day	23	25	10	24		
Percentage Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	95%	64%	44%	62%	Approved Apps meeting or exceeding 90 Day Approval Goal	100%	93%	83%	100%		
Average Time to Close (Any closing status)		55	46	97	75	Average Time to Close (Any closing status)		35	26	35	32

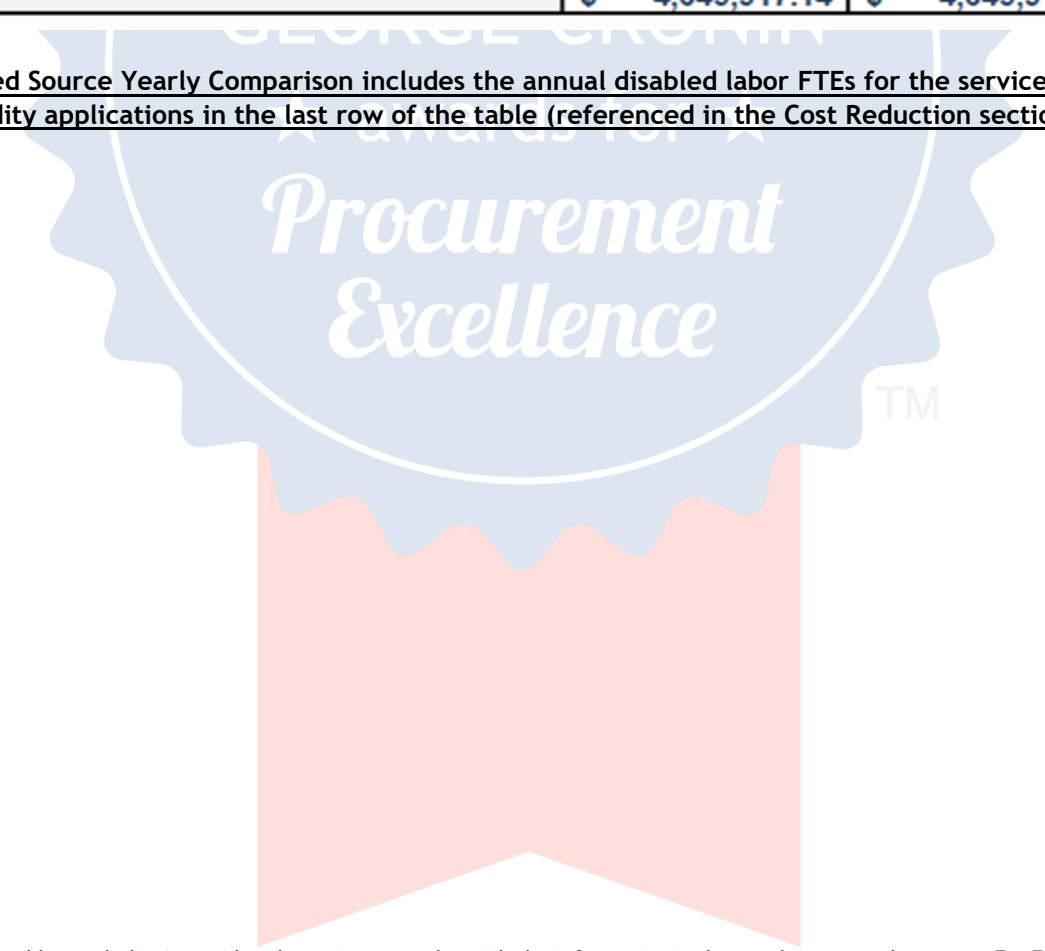


¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

COST SAVINGS (9-1-17 to 5/31/22 extracted from Dashboard (referenced in Cost Savings section)).

Preferred Source Cost Savings Dashboard		
ENTER YOUR CUSTOM COMPARISON DATES		
Enter Date Range for Current Review	9/1/2017	5/31/2022
Enter Date Range for Comparison	9/1/2017	5/31/2022
COMPARISON SELECTED BY USER	Current Period	Comparison Period
Cost Saving Reasons	9/01/17 - 5/31/22	9/01/17 - 5/31/22
Direct Labor Costs	\$ 183,604.42	\$ 183,604.42
Indirect Labor Costs	\$ 893,347.57	\$ 893,347.57
Supplies & Equipment	\$ 704,894.69	\$ 704,894.69
Overhead	\$ (268,784.37)	\$ (268,784.37)
Benchmarking & Escalators	\$ 100,237.55	\$ 100,237.55
Out of Scope Costs	\$ 3,032,992.60	\$ 3,032,992.60
Clerical/ Math Error	\$ 3,624.68	\$ 3,624.68
Total	\$ 4,649,917.14	\$ 4,649,917.14

Preferred Source Yearly Comparison includes the annual disabled labor FTEs for the service & commodity applications in the last row of the table (referenced in the Cost Reduction section).



¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)

Preferred Source YEARLY COMPARISON

SERVICE APPLICATIONS	2019	2020	2021	2021 Comments
NYSID Service Applications Received	142	104	124	
NYSPSP Service Applications Received	5	5	4	
Year Total Service Applications Received	147	109	128	
Total Service Applications Approved	99	120	118	Difference due to applications withdrawn or current not yet approved
Disabled Labor FTEs	649.2784	680.0164	424.3455	
Total Labor FTEs	907.694	912.0031	532.4459	
Disabled Labor Ratio	71.00%	74.56%	79.70%	
COMMODITY APPLICATIONS	2019	2020	2021	
NYSID Commodity Applications Received	106	98	102	
NYSPSP Commodity Applications Received	21	12	21	
Year Total Commodity Applications Received	127	110	123	
Total Commodity Applications Approved	117	100	126	Difference due to applications received in 2020 and approved in 2021.
Disabled Labor FTEs	18.9395	29.0438	80.9707	
Total Labor FTEs	22.5627	33.3354	93.2835	
Disabled Labor Ratio	83%	87%	87%	
Disabled Labor FTEs Combined Total of Service & Commodity Apps	668	709	505	

Reference document below supporting improved cycle time in Service Improvement section. See “As a result of the ESA process, the cycle time for an application has been reduced by over 75% as the 2021 fiscal year average approval time was 18 and 16 days respectively”.

IMPROVED EFFICIENCY - APPLICATION APPROVAL TIMES



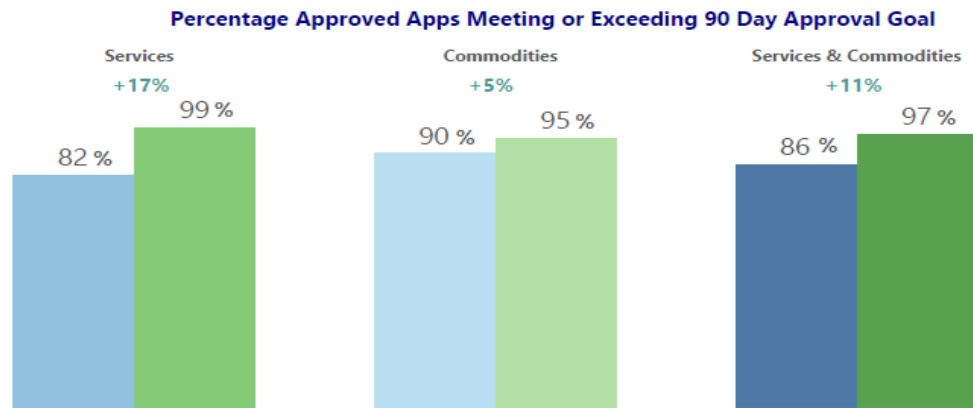
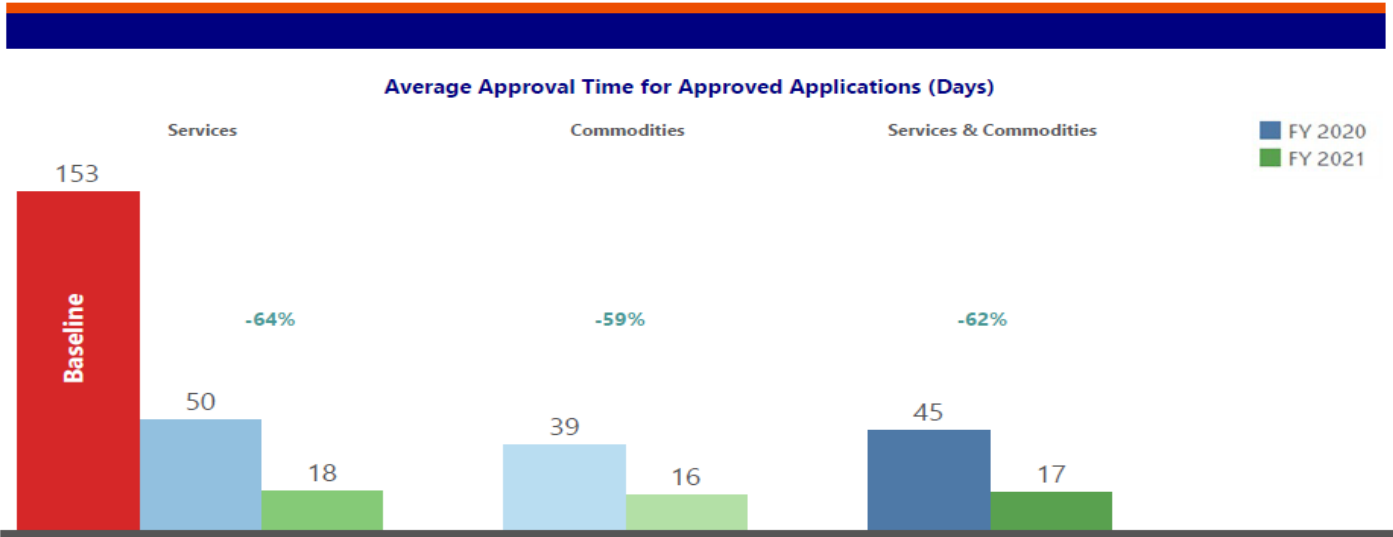
Office of General Services

Procurement Services Quarterly Performance Review

SFY 2020-21 Q4

April 25, 2021

¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click “Form #”, select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)



¹ Hyperlinks (blue underline) provide substantive examples with the information in the supplementary document. For Forms 1- 4 hyperlinked in Innovation section: Reviewer must Click "Form #", select download, close window, and form will open. (screen shots in supplemental document)



State of Tennessee

Department of General Services
Division of Central Procurement Office

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

*Procurement
Excellence*

Grassroots Recruitment & Agency Collaboration

TM

Executive Summary

In January 2019 newly inducted Governor Bill Lee issued his first Executive Order aimed at State departments finding ways to better serve rural Tennesseans. Tennessee Statewide Contract 700 ("SWC 700") covers HVAC, Electric, Plumbing, Boiler, and Chiller Maintenance and Repair. The contract's scope includes preventative maintenance services for each work type. Due to high estimated volume (\$40M), potential for high number of local suppliers (due to county-based awards), and 93% of Tennessee being considered rural, the SWC 700 re-procurement was identified as an opportunity by the State Central Procurement Office (CPO) to make a significant impact in rural Tennessee.

The State awarded 21 contracts under SWC 700 during the initial procurement in 2015. The contracts were awarded by county and were given a hierarchical vendor structure (A as primary, B as secondary, etc.) based on lowest evaluated price. All jobs under \$5,000 could simply be awarded to the A vendor and all jobs over \$5,000 would be competed amongst the vendors awarded in the county. Throughout the initial contract's term, many issues were identified, such as service gaps in rural counties without awarded vendors, users finding local vendors with better pricing than contracted vendors, vendors working on advanced boilers and chillers without the appropriate expertise, and compliance issues with agencies not following the vendor selection and documentation process correctly.

Grassroots recruitment is a multilayer strategy where one utilizes relationships to help address a goal. A grassroots method may take longer to accomplish due to the amount of time needed to organically build relationships, but if done correctly, this approach can result in significant change. With the SWC 700 example outlined below, we started this process in early 2019, released the procurement in late 2020, and finished the procurement in early 2021. Had we rushed into it, we could have come off as ingenuine to our target audience and faced a repeat of past suboptimal results.

The CPO started speaking directly with the top user agencies and a local government and higher education user of SWC 700 in 2019. Instead of working with procurement professionals, we worked directly with facility managers to obtain feedback and assistance to correct identified issues. In late 2020, after months of outreach in partnership with the top eight user agencies, a representative from a local government, a higher education institution, the Department of Commerce & Insurance (C&I), and Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise, the State released the solicitation over 9000 unique email addresses and contacts. The State received 65 bid proposals (more than double the response rate of the previous solicitation) and ultimately awarded 50 unique contracts, an increase of 250% in available vendors. As a result, every Tennessee county now has five vendors for HVAC services, three vendors for chiller services, and two vendors for boiler services. Most have five for electrical and plumbing services. This was especially impactful for Rural Tennessee and Executive Order #1 because it led to numerous small, rural vendors being awarded contracts from the State. Lastly, nineteen of the vendors are registered diversity businesses.

Lastly, the CPO held numerous kick off trainings for both agencies and vendors and has plans to hold more in the future as refreshers. These trainings have significantly mitigated the number of agency and vendor compliance questions and issues.

Innovation: Due to the unique nature of awarding several contracts per county and the imperative of Executive Order #1, the CPO partnered with other State agencies to utilize a grassroots recruitment method to find new vendors that could bid on the services. Second, the CPO created a user-friendly dashboard that quickly provides users all the contract information they need.

Transferability: The grassroots recruitment method to identify interested vendors is 100% transferable in other states. The key to grassroots recruitment is to establish and then build upon relationships, and through actively listening give those relationships the information and tools to assist in accomplishing a goal. To utilize a grassroots approach to improve upon a SWC, other states simply need to identify who the key stakeholders/users of the contract are, absorb and utilize their knowledge to identify and address the areas of concern, then give them the tools/information to assist in improving those identified areas. By approaching the solicitation in this manner, the CPO saw more buy-in on the solicitation from those that we normally do not work alongside. More specifically, SWC 700 is 100% transferable and could be implemented in other states. Since these services typically require a state license, other states simply need to collaborate with their licensing board to begin outreach efforts with these vendors. The scope of services for this industry is standard across the US, and all the contract documents and tools for SWC 700 are open for public inspection. Tennessee would gladly share lessons learned in establishing contracts for these services.

Service Improvement: In a very short amount of time, the CPO saw many early successes from the increase in vendors on the contract. On the previous contract, most Tennessee counties had less than three vendors for all services. Upon award of the new contract, all counties had a minimum of three vendors if not five vendors for all services. Additionally, the number of off-contract requests has declined drastically in the last year, which can be directly correlated to the drastic increase in the number of vendors on the contract.

Cost Reduction: Some costs associated with the provisions of services under this contract, such as fuel and labor, have naturally increased since the previous contract was procured. The constant compete mechanism implemented by CPO for the larger projects controls costs on this contract and leads to savings, especially with the increase in competition compared to the last contract. While the cost for trip charges increased as expected from the previous contract, the overall labor hourly rates have decreased for the State.

Innovation

The CPO utilized a grassroots recruitment method as our primary method of recruiting interested vendors. SWC 700 has always allowed for agencies to request quotes from off-contract vendors; however, using those vendors required special approval from the CPO. Due to the sheer amount of off-contract requests received, the CPO realized the best way to reduce those requests was to get those commonly used non-contracted vendors on-contract. The facility managers within the top user agencies, local government representative, and higher education representative were the best people to assist in this effort because they had established relationships with many vendors, and we realized these vendors typically responded better by interacting with folks who they are familiar with. These facility managers provided 55 unique vendors to the CPO and they helped educate those vendors on how to do business with the State. The facility managers also advocated for the CPO by telling their interested vendors if they had additional questions to contact the CPO Procurement Specialists. Having the facility managers advocate on our behalf was the tipping point because it showed that stakeholders from several agencies were all aligned with the CPO's intent and the end goals of the project. Around 1/3 of the vendors awarded under this SWC were recruited through this grassroots effort. Additionally, the CPO partnered with the licensing board within C&I to identify all vendors that had the required licenses to perform HVAC, Plumbing, Electric, Boiler, and Chiller work.

Second, the State simply used a Microsoft Excel sheet for the previous SWC 700 contracts to indicate who the A, B, and C vendors were for each service in each county. When the re-procurement concluded, we knew that listing all the necessary contract information would be too cumbersome on an Excel sheet – especially for facility managers who would be using their mobile devices to search for the information. Therefore, the CPO developed a dashboard utilizing Tableau that allows agency or local users to easily search for who their awarded vendors are either on a mobile device or computer. A user simply selects their county and their

service offering. The dashboard will then list the A, B, C, D, or E vendor, show the contact information for each, whether they are a registered diversity business, and the contract pricing. The creation of this dashboard has given agency and local users the ability to find their vendors and contract pricing “on-the-fly.”

Third, on the previous iteration of SWC 700 the CPO identified numerous compliance issues or simple contract misunderstandings by both agency and vendor users alike. To improve the compliance of agencies the CPO started holding numerous one-on-one training opportunities for agency users. We also began attending facility management trainings/conferences to hold SWC 700 refresher trainings. By attending these facility management trainings and interacting more directly with the facility managers, the CPO has created a partnership with the actual users of the contract. Now it is quite common for facility managers throughout the State to call the contract administrator to discuss any unique situations they may have proactively on the front end rather than the back end. Additionally, the CPO realized that many of the previous vendors did not have a great idea on how the contract works; therefore, we established and held multiple vendor trainings at the start of the contract and have plans on continuing these trainings as refreshers throughout the term of the contract. Lastly, to increase the transparency on the contract usage, the CPO created a workflow approval process for all jobs that fall under the relevant commodity codes. This has enabled better oversight so that CPO can ensure compliance with the contract requirements by reviewing all requisitions and purchase orders using a relevant commodity code, but not associated to a SWC 700 contract.

Transferability

Utilizing a grassroots campaign for a procurement is 100% transferable to other States. To run a grassroots campaign, one must identify and know the target audience and actively work together towards a shared goal. In this case, we identified that the people we needed to work with were facility managers and not procurement personnel. We then held meetings with several of the top user agencies where we asked specific questions about how the contract could be improved. By setting aside time to personally visit those in facilities all throughout Tennessee, asking the right questions, and showing our mutual investment in a genuine goal of assisting the actual users in improving the contract, we were able to collectively come together to drastically improve upon the service component of the contract. Once we had the people bought-in and clearly established the mutual goal, the CPO began educating the facility managers on how the procurement process works and how they could help. We gave them instruction on how to identify prospective vendors and provide them the resources necessary to register to do business with the State.

Additionally, due to the growing demand across the country for these services it is more important now than ever to have contracts for these services in place. Having contractors in place to work on maintenance and repair jobs, as well as deferred maintenance and preventative maintenance, is critical to the infrastructure for state and local governments, as well as higher education institutes. Since this industry’s scope of services is straight forward and uniform across the country, Tennessee’s specifications, pricing template, and job log documents can easily be edited to apply to another interested state. The only notable state-specific difference would be that each state has their own rules and regulations governing how to become a licensed contractor within their state. Our Vendor Dashboard can easily be replicated if a state has access to Tableau or even Excel.

Service Improvement

Increased budget allocations to address deferred maintenance and construction projects, along with agency feedback during compliance review and research meetings all pointed to the need for more vendors for SWC 700. The 250% increase in contracted vendors would not have been possible without the strengthened relationships and increased vendor outreach stemming from grassroots approach to the procurement. The

additional time we spent on building relationships with actual contract users led to every county receiving multiple vendors for each service type. Rural State Park inns and prisons received a huge improvement in coverages as many of these facilities went from zero or one vendor for each service type to having three to five. Since these facilities are large economic drivers for rural Tennessee, having a wide range of nearby vendors greatly assists the local economy by keeping local dollars local.

SWC 700 requires vendor technicians to interact, collaborate, and work alongside facility managers on repairs. One highlight of service improvement came from TDEC's primary facility manager, who reported that they brought in one of the new vendors to assist an emergency at a rural county State Park. The agency contact stated the new vendor went above and beyond in identifying the issue and completing the job in record time at lower-than-expected costs.

The requests for off contract approval has declined by 72% due to the increase in vendors on contract. Additionally, despite this large increase in vendors, formal vendor complaints decreased by 58% between the last year of the previous contract and the first year of the new contract.

Another successful change that stemmed from facility manager feedback was separating the boiler and chiller maintenance and repair scopes from the HVAC maintenance and repair scope. Boilers and Chillers are highly advanced pieces of machinery that the average HVAC technician will not touch. Under the previous contract, agencies regularly requested the ability to go off-contract or pursue their own agency term contracts (ATC) for boiler work. Agencies reported that the SWC 700 HVAC vendors would turn down boiler/chiller work, subcontract it out, or work on the boiler/chiller and do more damage than repair. Separating the boiler and chiller scopes from the HVAC scope has led to more qualified vendors working on these items, contributed to a decrease in off contract requests, and led to a decrease in the number of ATCs for these services.

Cost Reduction ★ awards for ★

When restructuring this contract, as mentioned above, the CPO utilized a grassroots recruitment method as our primary method of recruiting interested vendors and seeking feedback from facility managers. Overall, the increase in vendors and service coverage through the grassroots recruitment method has led to a significant reduction in off-contract spend and some cost savings with many of our vendors.

Due to the increase in vendors and the constant compete mechanism for larger projects, we were able to obtain approximately a 4% savings on labor rates. Understandably, we did see an approximate cost increase of 14% for trip charges, which can be explained due to rising transportation related costs such as fuel.

Conclusion

The changes and grassroots recruitment method the CPO utilized has led to significant improvements across the board for SWC 700. Off contract requests, complaints, and compliance issues have drastically declined. Additionally, the CPO identified a large section of contract users to assist in ongoing contract management and developing future procurements. These users had typically not been utilized since they do not work in procurement and were not the highly specialized SMEs we normally work alongside. These efforts have greatly impacted rural Tennessee by being able to provide contracts to small, rural businesses throughout the State. The improvements made would not have been possible without the CPO engaging so closely with our agency, local government, and higher education partners. The amount of collaboration has proved yet again the CPO is a valued, strategic business partner that can deliver meaningful results to make others work easier.

State of Utah

Department of Government Operations
Division of Purchasing



2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

State Contract Management Program

Use this template to help guide you as you prepare your submission for review by the Cronin Awards Committee. It is recommended that you keep the headings as they are provided in this template. This will make it easier for committee members as they review submissions. Feel free to delete the guideline text as you go through this template, it is just there to help you understand how the committee evaluates each category.

Executive Summary

The State of Utah Division of Purchasing has started a project for a State Contract Management Program. This project was started to specifically address gaps in Executive Branch Agency contract management. Trends had started to be identified where contract managers did not have the proper training or tools to be successful, others weren't totally engaged, and, in some instances, vendors were underperforming without corrective action taking place. This program is being put together to provide oversight and improve the overall contract management procedures by achieving the following objectives:

- 1) Streamline contract management
- 2) Make contract management and reporting easier for the contract manager
- 3) Ensure transparency of all contracts
- 4) Provide usable data to the Governor's Office and Department's on contracts
- 5) Evaluate vendors on the services provided
- 6) Ensure that taxpayer money is being properly managed
- 7) Provide a database of agency contracts

The submission will cover the following topics in each required category:

Innovation:

- Utilizing a single system of record to create efficiencies
- Utilize automation to better gather data for analysis
- Full state approach
- Scalability to encompass Statewide Cooperative Contracts
- Collaborative approach to contract management. Embodying "One Team" approach.
- Standardize practices for the State while addressing individual needs of each agency
- Promotes top down and bottom up engagement

Transferability:

- Completely transferable to other states, even utilizing different systems
- No proprietary information
- Standardized metrics create a baseline/benchmark for anyone to use

Service Improvement:

- Improve contract manager training and engagement
- Improve timeliness of gathering important information to prevent gaps in coverage in critical services due to contract lapses

Cost Reduction:

- Consolidating contract processing and storage into one system
- Time savings through automation and efficient procedures

Innovation

The State of Utah started this program in order to take a wholistic approach to contract management at a state level. All agencies work towards the benefit of the State and we are currently undergoing a cultural shift towards a more unified approach throughout the State. This program embodies the approach of "One Team, One Mission" working towards a common goal. We identified that we, State Purchasing, were the best positioned to provide additional oversight and standardizing of contract management due to our expertise and more centralized purchasing setup within the State.

In order to provide a complete picture of the current status of contracts, we implemented this program across the entire State with all agencies.

As a part of the wholistic approach, we setup the new system to gather important metrics around overall vendor performance. We've created a single location for each contract that allows all contract actions to take place within it for easy of processing and tracking. This allows us to be more proactive in our engagement to address contract issues, but also identify if there are overlapping contracts or multiple contracts with the same vendor either within the same agency or across multiple agencies. This level of identification allows us to improve the overall effectiveness of the contracts, but also to consolidate contracts into cooperative level contracts or into contracts between multiple agencies for those specific services provided. The new system sends out automated surveys, on a monthly basis, that gather information around vendor performance and issues. The responses from these surveys, and identification of no responses, allow the members of the team who manage the program to have directed and pointed outreach directly related to what was submitted.

We identified Salesforce to be our single system of record, where we process, amend, and store the contracts, as well as track solicitations and pre-solicitations that directly feed in the contract management cycle. This level of integration into one system has greatly improved timeliness in processing new contracts and amendments, but also has made engagement with agency contract managers much more timely due to the immediate notifications based on survey responses or lack of responses. A common issue with contract management is documentation of issues and resolutions during the contract term. This single system allows us to automatically capture this information through survey responses and outreach which provides valuable information and documentation for decisions around re-solicitation or even backing up terminations, if necessary.

The wholistic approach we have taken differentiates this program from other similar programs surrounding contract management. Our program looks at the entire lifecycle of contract management which requires engagement from the contract manager from the beginning of the solicitation, through the contract term, and beginning refinement for the next solicitation. The program has implemented tools and a team that automate this engagement and then provide proactive engagement to ensure contracts are actively managed. Through routine surveys, the team is able to receive the valuable information around vendor performance. The surveys are targeted to gather appropriate information based on where the contract is within the lifecycle. Surveys at the beginning aim to identify gaps in preparation for the contract manager to ensure they are prepared with the tools for success. Routine surveys compile performance of the vendor and engagement of the contract manager. These data points allow the team to report back to agency leadership around the health of their contracts and identify areas of improvement based on engagement and vendor performance. Surveys towards the end of the contract term gather information around how best to improve the contract and if the services are still needed ahead of time to reduce the need to extend contracts for solicitation delays.

The program has standardized the baseline training standards for contract managers so they are all equipped to handle the requirements of being a contract manager. The team engages with each agency to bring them the best practices and baseline training, but is equipped to then assist them in developing a custom training program to address the unique needs of each agency. The program uses the metrics from the data points that are gathered to help identify gaps and focus areas for each agencies specific training needs.

The program encourages both top down and bottom up engagement. The metrics provided through the program allow leadership to make engaged decisions and stay connected with the contracts within their agency. This allows the leadership to make contract management a priority and to emphasize how important it is to their overall success. The bottom up engagement is driven from the direct, continuous feedback received from the contract managers. This provides the contract managers with more of a voice for their concerns and the ability to document changes that need to be made. By targeting both ends, it further emphasizes the unified, wholistic approach.

This program is currently in its beginning phases and is intentionally being developed with scalability in mind to encompass the Statewide Cooperative contracts as well in the future. The intent of the program is to develop it into a complete contract management program for all contracts that the Division of Purchasing oversees and develop a program that other public entities can model and utilize as well.

Transferability

Both the specific tool we've developed and the program outline, could be replicated on both small and large scales across the country. With the tool being built within Salesforce, it is easily replicated or customized to meet specific needs while still maintaining the functionality that was initially built. Not being a proprietary, overly customized solution has allowed us to have a faster implementation timeline, while also making it easier for other entities to adopt. This would allow for specific needs to be met and scaled appropriately.

The program's outline requires a dedicated team, but also includes scalable aspects that can be adapted by both small and large entities throughout the country for implementation. The best practices and standardized training approaches with the use of the tool can be taught to others looking to implement a similar, holistic approach to contract management.

As the program is scaled to include the cooperative, this will further increase how transferable the overall program is to more public entities to pick and choose the specific aspects they want for themselves.

Service Improvement

This program will provide a very positive overall impact to the agencies. The analytics provided to the agencies allows them to make informed decisions and course correct their internal procedures. We also stay engaged in the contracts to ensure they are still meeting the needs of the agency and if they are no longer meeting the needs, we can take corrective action early instead of at the end of the contract term. This improves the overall services that the agency is receiving and ensures that taxpayer dollars are being effectively spent.

This program is providing a completely new service that agencies have never received before. Ensuring they have the support needed to effectively manage their contracts. We are gathering information around specific amendment types to better inform agencies on process improvements. For example, we are identifying average number of extension amendments an agency processes. With this information we create a trend line of averages across all agencies. If an agency is showing more extension amendments compared to other agencies, this will lead us to address that specifically with the agency to see if there is room for improvement with how early we begin working on re-solicitations for needed contracts. This level of information allows us to have more pointed and constructive conversations to improve procedures overall.

So far, we have had a very positive response from agencies wanting to participate in this program and have passed the initial pilot phase with the Department of Public Safety and Department of Corrections. Both agencies thoroughly enjoyed the program and wanted to continue it moving forward. They provided valuable feedback to help define the direction of the program and what would be beneficial to them to have in the tool and program.

The additional impact is time spent processing various contract related actions, such as amendments, has been drastically decreased. All the historical documents for a contract are in one location within the system, so amending a contract only takes one click of a button to begin and then

processing is streamlined within the system due to historical and supporting documents being carried into the tool. This reduces the need to search for various approvals and other documents across various locations and systems. The processing of new contracts and amendments used to require individuals to gather documents from three different systems and combine the information. The whole process from beginning to end would take an average of two and half hours of work time. The new system has consolidated all documents into one location, which allows the team to prepare the amendment in one click and has cut the average processing time down to an average of one hour of total work time. This same single location also allows easier support to agencies who are looking for various documents surrounding one of their contracts.

Cost Reduction

A big consideration for this project is how moving to a single system of record can save money by no longer needing to operate within multiple systems. Cost savings come from work hours spent navigating various systems, making changes within each system, and the overall cost of licensing for the various system. By building our solution within Salesforce, we were able to keep our costs to our standard license fee to use it without the need to pay for additional modules that other systems would have required. We anticipate an annual savings of \$64,000 to the Division of Purchasing by being able to immediately remove the need for our previous contract system.

We anticipate that the increase in engaged contract management will lead to better overall services received by the agencies. This won't be directly seen in dollars saved, but rather in the quality of services received for those same dollars spent. We have come up with this potential through the pilot program and identifying gaps in engagement with contract managers who were not validating all the goods and services they were receiving. We also identified overlapping contracts that could be consolidated to save administrative burden.

Conclusion

The State of Utah Contract Management Program is an innovative, wholistic approach to standardizing and improving statewide contract management. This has already, and will continue to have a massively positive impact on agency contracts to ensure taxpayer dollars are effectively spent. This program directly supports the State's initiative to be a collaborative unit with transparency in practices.

TM



GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

State of Washington

Department of Enterprise Services
Contracts and Procurement Division

2022 George Cronin Awards for Procurement Excellence

Improving Contracting Equity in Washington State

Executive Summary

Washington's Department of Enterprise Services (DES) has committed significant resources to create opportunities and remove barriers that prevent small and diverse businesses in Washington state from doing business with government. Diverse businesses include those owned by veterans, women, people of color, and people who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

DES is taking a two-prong approach to this: creating more inclusive procurement practices that remove barriers and ensuring there are small and diverse businesses in the pipeline to meet the state's needs. One objective is connecting small and diverse businesses with state government contracts and then making sure the enterprise spends money with those vendors.

Ensuring equitable contracting opportunities for small and diverse businesses gives the enterprise access to more vendors, helps drive innovation, and strengthens economic growth. The success of small and diverse businesses makes Washington's economy and families more resilient, strengthens our communities and improves quality of life for all of Washington.

DES created a Procurement Inclusion and Equity program (PIE program) to add an equity lens to our state procurement process. The PIE program has created policies, practices, and tools to help institutionalize equity into statewide procurement practices.

We haven't yet achieved all of our goals, but we've made great strides to institute guideposts for state agencies to make more purchases from small and diverse businesses in Washington state.

Innovation

Washington isn't the first state to work on improving contracting equity among its small and diverse businesses. When DES formed the PIE Program, we connected with others who are doing the work to learn from their successes. The PIE Program met with 20 other states and seven other jurisdictions that have supplier diversity programs. DES joined the American Contractor Compliance Association, the lead supplier diversity organization in the nation, to continue to learn and share best practices.

DES has invested heavily in engaging with the small and diverse business community to help them connect with and succeed in getting state government contracts. Our PIE Program doesn't do its work in a silo – it's fully integrated in our Contracts and Procurement Division and is working alongside the small and diverse business community. The program also leads enterprise-wide coordination of best practices in contracting equity.

DES formed a **Business Diversity Advisory Group (BDAG)** in 2018 to advise DES on enterprise practices that create barriers for small and diverse businesses. The 22 members are small business owners from a variety of specialties, locations and ethnicities. BDAG members guide enterprise-wide policy, practices, projects and transparency measures.

The PIE Program meets with business community leadership organizations that represent interest groups, such as the state Office of Equity, ethnic commissions, Tribal governments, and others. In 2021, the PIE Program engaged over **120 times** with such communities and leaders.

The PIE Program attends events for small and diverse businesses. We create an annual outreach and training calendar and budget, which is approved by leadership. In 2021, we attended and participated in

67 events and strategically partnered with **eight** organizations. We offered training about how to do business with the enterprise **50 times in 2021**.

In 2021, we selected **three target market projects** that had the potential for small and diverse business participation. To do that, we researched the 18-month forecast of state blanket contracts and selected **Business Professional Services, IT Professional Services, and Automotive/Transportation**. We engaged small and diverse businesses to help them be prepared to successfully bid for these projects. This resulted in over 100 bids for the Business Professional Services solicitation, up from 70 that we received three years ago.

Transferability

DES sets enterprise-wide procurement policy and delegates purchasing authority through a robust risk assessment process.

To support our mission of improving contracting equity in Washington state, we developed several policies, procedures and processes that create opportunities and remove barriers for small and diverse businesses to contract with the enterprise. While the policies are specific to Washington state laws and rules, they are easy to replicate in other states.

Direct buy: We raised the limit for direct buy spending to \$40,000 if the purchase is from a certified small or veteran-owned business. The limit is \$30,000 for all other vendors.

Outreach guidance and templates: We created outreach guidance and ad templates for agency purchasers to connect with small and diverse businesses. We have also created a one-page solicitation advertisement to help state purchasers reach beyond the Washington Electronic Businesses solutions, where the state posts all its solicitations.

Small Business Policy: DES created an internal policy in 2021 that requires contracts specialists to use at least two supplier diversity strategies in every master contract solicitation. A master contract is a contract procured and managed by DES for the entire state to use. State agencies must use it and other state jurisdictions, tribes and nonprofits may use through the Master Contract Usage Agreements. Strategies that create opportunity for small and diverse businesses include unbundling awards (breaking procurement scopes into smaller sizes), creating multi-awards, giving priority points to small and veteran-owned businesses, and requiring vendors to have inclusion plans.

Increased transparency in enterprise contracting:

- **Planned procurements:** We post forecast lists with schedule details on a page called [Current and Future Bid Opportunities](#)
- **Sole source procedures** include more transparency measures to ensure proper use of public resources, contracting equity
- **Master Contract User Agreement (MCUA) enhancement:** BDAG recommended we [highlight new purchasers](#) that signed on within the past quarter to use DES master contracts to help vendors more easily identify potential new customers.

Made improvements for vendors in WEBS (our contracting portal for vendors and purchasers)

- We post **past solicitations**
- We post **winning bid tabs** so vendors can review them for future contract opportunities
- **Extended solicitations** by 50%, from 30 days to 45 days

STEPS TAKEN TO EMBED INCLUSION AND EQUITY INTO DES PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

Forecasting Our Contracts

- Developed 18-month forecast for state blanket contracts
- Created a long-term forecast for DES internal contracts



Conducting Prebid Conferences

- Prebids provide opportunities for bidders to ask questions or raise concerns on solicitations
- Created agenda and powerpoint tools for meeting consistency
- Since March 2021: 25 prebid conferences held to date



Posting Winning Bids

- Created guidance, language and a process for posting winning bids in a public place
- Placed in DES Desk Manual as a requirement for all contracts
- Started sending Bid Tab with Apparent Successful Bidders (ASB) announcement to show how each bidder scored
- Post the winning bid on the contract portal under historical documents
- 14 bid tabs have been posted to date
- Creating a page for internal DES winning bids



Lengthening Solicitation Times

- Developed timing guidance for Desk Manual
- Set goal to post all solicitations for no less than 30 days
- Extends to no less than 45 days for complex solicitations
- To date all solicitations except one have met this goal



Unbundling Analysis For Every Contract

- Created unbundling guidance for Desk Manual
- Conduct unbundling analysis on every solicitation
- Unbundle every contract when it creates an opportunity for a small/diverse business.
- To date we've successfully unbundled 20 of the 30 DES solicitations



Service Improvement

We are making it easier for governments, nonprofits and organizations that use our statewide master contracts to purchase goods and services from small and diverse businesses. Over 1,600 state and local governments, Tribal governments and nonprofits use the 200 statewide master contracts that we manage every year. Each year, those organizations spend \$1.9 billion through our contracts. We are also creating enterprise-wide consistency through our contracting policies, procedures, tools and templates.

- **Improved visibility of small and diverse vendors:** We created a webpage where purchasers can easily find small, veteran- minority- or women-owned businesses, called [Diverse Business Contracts](#).
- **By embedding contracting equity in our master contracts,** purchasers benefit from our work without having to make additional effort. Our Small Business Policy requires contracts specialists to use at least two supplier diversity strategies in every master contract solicitation. For example, purchasers that use one of our unbundled contracts benefit by having access to a small business that is local to their region of the state, which also benefits the vendor and the community.
- **We are reviewing the 18 milestones** in the master contract solicitation process with an equity lens to create or improve tools, including:
 - Milestone 1: Created guidance for when to use a cooperative agreement vs. resoliciting a master contract.
 - Milestone 2: Added Small and Diverse Business Outreach Guidance
 - Milestone 7: Added How to Post a Winning Bid guidance

- Milestone 8: Added one-page solicitation advertisement template to post on state's Office of Minority and Women Business Enterprises website and to diverse organizations, to help increase outreach, beyond posting to WEBS.
- **We train enterprise purchasers** on contracting equity as part of their required training.

In 2021, we started collect data and key performance indicators each quarter about for new practices to determine if they are having an impact on the number of small and diverse businesses on a master contract. Early indicators show that our master contracts have more diverse vendors than they have in previous quarters.

Cost Reduction

DES found ways to reduce costs for small and diverse businesses to do business with governments and nonprofits through our statewide contracts.

First, we partnered with **Washington Procurement Technical Assistance center (PTAC)** to provide no-cost, confidential, one-on-one technical assistance to small and diverse businesses in all aspects of selling to federal, state, and local governments. Not only does it save them money by providing free assistance, it helps them learn how to do business through government contracts in a way that is more efficient with their time.

In 2021, PTAC provided technical assistance to:

- **241** small and diverse businesses in WA
- **65 women-owned** businesses
- **60 minority-owned** businesses
- **38 veteran-owned** businesses
- Participants at **9 outreach and training events**

PTAC was also an important partner in our targeted market projects for Business Professional Services, Automotive/Transportation and IT Professional Services master contracts.

In 2021, DES' in-house Contracts & Procurement customer service team provided **4,030 instances of technical assistance** to vendors at no cost to them.

Secondly, we right-sized vendors' **insurance requirements**, which saves them money.

Excessive insurance requirements are a barrier for small businesses, and it is common for governments to require vendors to carry more insurance than necessary based on the risk of the contract.

Our Contracts & Procurement team created a series of training sessions to help procurement professionals understand the different types of insurance so they can more accurately determine the appropriate level of insurance for the contracts they negotiate.

We created a two-hour insurance overview training and six one-hour trainings that are targeted to specific types of contracts.