

## HOW TO BUY PROCUREMENT TECHNOLOGY – ADVICE FROM SUPPLIERS

### WEBINAR TAKEAWAYS: 14 TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER PROCUREMENT TECHNOLOGY SOLICITATIONS FROM SUPPLIERS WHO RESPOND TO THEM

#### SUPPLIERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BID WHEN YOU:

1. Understand the problems you are trying to solve and articulate a clear vision to solve them.
2. Establish measurable goals that, if achieved, will result in project success.
3. Identify an organizational champion to signal to suppliers that your solicitation has executive support.
4. Allow suppliers to present innovative solutions to meet your desired capabilities, as opposed to narrow, overly prescribed requirements. Not only can these prevent suppliers from being creative in their proposal, they may trigger no-bid decisions, limiting your competition.
5. Are clear about your current state and realistic about what you can achieve in a single procurement. A large, overly ambitious RFP may take so long to award that the solution will be obsolete by the time the technology is operational.

#### A GOOD RFP HAS A FEW KEY CHARACTERISTICS:

6. Start with clear definitions of problems to be solved and desired program outcomes that are discreetly measurable; avoid large RFPs and focus on simple problems and goal-focused work statements.
7. The goals of the project reflect an understanding of the marketplace and match the requirements.
8. Technical solutions are not overly prescribed, leaving room for suppliers to be creative and solution-oriented– focus on defining your desired capabilities rather than features and functionality
9. Modular design, which gives organizations a chance to adjust in later phases of the project, lowering risk and increasing the likelihood of success.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS UNIQUE TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR BUYING PROCESS:

10. Laws and regulations typically vary from agency to agency, so it is well worth your time to communicate with a few suppliers before you go out with a solicitation.
11. Political accountability in the public sector can impact decision-making, resulting in risk aversion and "playing it safe" behaviors. A way to work around this is to start with small, modular contracts and pilots that give your team and customers a chance to test and experiment with solutions, rather than going after one huge "make or break" end state.

#### HOW TO ENGAGE INDUSTRY WITHOUT IMPACTING FAIR COMPETITION?

12. Research what industry analysts like Spend Matters, Public Spend Forum, and Gartner are sharing.
13. Focus on giving all suppliers an equal opportunity to communicate with you, and be transparent about discussions you've had in the RFP, specifically in the question & answer phase.
14. If you need tips on data sources & transparency, check out the Open Contracting Partnership and see what they can do to help.

Watch [How to Buy Procurement Technology – Advice from Suppliers](#) for more expert tips!