

Additional Viewer Submitted Questions and Answers

General Questions about GSA Multiple Award Schedules

1. Orders below Micro purchase level, currently, \$3500, limits most any Advertising and Integrated Marketing services (AIMS). Thus almost ALL AIMS orders require a FAR procurement or 3 or more RFQ's on GSA. We then end up setting up all new contract and rarely reference GSA contracts. Is it possible to procure a large effort over \$1,000,000 from a SDVOB without solicitations?

No, under MAS Schedule procedures, even if setting aside for a SDVOSB the requirement at this threshold must be distributed via an RFQ to potential sources (e.g. SDVOSB) - see FAR 8.405-1 (d). Outside of MAS Schedules please review the procedures in FAR 19.

2. What suggestions do you have for putting together an IGCE for an IT contract where there is uncertainty about the number of required labor hours, such as a unique software development contract, prior to putting out your RFQ to the GSA contractors?

If the number of labor hours is uncertain, then establishing a "low" and "high" range would be a good start. You could also opt to flag your RFQ as "sources sought" first and attempt to narrow down the variation. Once you have received responses, you could then re-issue the request as an RFQ.

3. When ordering products like carpet from GSA schedule contract, can an agency pick an specific brand and weight of carpet? Example X agency wants Bentley carpet squares 38 oz weight. Can the SOW be specific to that specific carpet brand? Does the CO need to take any action because of the specific brand request?

The scenario outlined in the question would require a brand name justification per FAR 8.405-1(e) as follows:

(e) When an order contains brand-name specifications, the contracting officer shall post the RFQ on e-Buy along with the justification or documentation, as required by [8.405-6](#). An RFQ is required when a purchase description specifies a brand-name.

4. We recently awarded a GSA Schedule contract for labor hours. The contract specified specific labor categories that were in the vendor's GSA contract. After contract award we realized we needed one more labor category. Must the contractor process a change to their GSA contract in order for us to add the labor category to our contract or can we just negotiate a local change adding the new category?

You cannot just negotiate a local change. In order for the "buy" to be a GSA Schedule order, the item must be on the contractor's GSA Contract. If on the Schedule contract, you follow the procedures for a new order.

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5. Can only Contracting Officers ask for a better price? Or can CORs also ask for a better price?

Anyone can ask for a better price, but only a Contracting Officer (or an authorized Purchase Card holder) can commit the Government.

6. How often is the schedule being updated? And how are the services/project be selected to be included on the schedule?

Schedule solicitations are usually "refreshed" or changed at least twice a year to comply with changes in federal acquisition regulations and statutes. Schedules are commercial in nature and reflect a scope for a particular category (e.g. professional services). Schedules are further broken down into more discrete special item numbers or SINs to enable customers to find what they are looking for. These Schedules and SINs tie to Product Service Codes (PSCs) and North American Industrial Classification Codes (NAICs) for classification and identification. GSA selects commercial products and services that are demanded by our federal customers.

7. I'm a new COR in the IT area, and do like what I am hearing about the GSA Schedules. Do you have a "getting started" sheet that has a road map of the e-Tools and other related sites that will help me get going on a requirement. Also, I thought that the Acquisition Gateway and specifically the SOW Library was very, very interesting and would like to ask for additional resources, if available, to help me with using it. Also, can you send me a link to this seminar, so that I can also use it as a reminder of the resources that are available?

There are two resources that are ideal for both those just getting started, and those looking for specific guidance. The schedules home page, www.gsa.gov/schedules has information on the program, on training, and links to other references. Another great place to research schedules is the MAS community on InterAct (<https://interact.gsa.gov/groups/multiple-award-schedules>). There are discussions on a variety of topics, and there are participants from both industry and government joining in. Finally, we're providing a link to our a demo of the Gateway that features the SOW Library, among other digital services and functionality: <https://meet.gsa.gov/p9u48e1d2j2/> we hope this site proves to be a valuable resource.

8. My question is regarding the OMB mandate for Major Investment Contracts to contain requirements to perform Earned Value Management reporting. If my contracting officer refuses to place such verbiage in the contract, what can the investment manager do to fix the situation?

My suggestion is if this is a requirement, you are interested in inserting it into the requirements document (e.g. Statement of Work).

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9. For years we have been buying IT from SEWP as a mandatory source for all IT procurements with Acquisition Gateway now how is SEWP considered - still a mandatory source or Gateway is a mandatory source over SEWP?

That sounds like an internal agency-level requirement. The Acquisition Gateway would not impact internal policy, but it may provide access to information which better informs the development of internal policy.

10. My Project releases water and generates power in real time. Is there a GSA avenue for obtaining major rotating equipment repair contractors and service providers?

You can review GSA Advantage!, review GSA e-Library or post a Sources Sought notice on GSA e-Buy for available GSA sources.

11. Please advise if GSA intends to create a Schedule to provide EMERGENCY repairs to commercial generators and auxiliary equipment operated by Federal Agencies?

We are not aware of any initiatives at this time.

12. When will GSA add the Socioeconomic categories of WOSB and EDWOSB to GSA e-Buy?

WOSB and EDWOSB are already loaded in Advantage, and e-Buy. In order to do a set-aside for any given business type, there must be at least one business within the SIN that qualifies. In other words, if there are no EDWOSBs within a SIN, then an EDWOSB set-aside cannot be done for that SIN.

13. How are open market items that not covered under an MAS contract handled? What happens if the costs of the open market items not covered under the MAS contract is greater than the total awarded price of an order?

Open market items are handled in accordance with the procedures in FAR 8.402(f). There is no limit on the open market items, only that acquisition of these items comply with FAR 8.402(f).

Specific Questions about the Acquisition Gateway

14. Is there any chance that you could go over the Project area where I can put my project work in the Acquisition Hallway?

Think of the Project Center as your personal work center – a place where you can name your projects and build acquisition packages using resources from across the Acquisition Gateway. The Project Center is your workspace to build and organize acquisition documents, solutions, data, and content to help you execute an acquisition package. Upload information from your desktop to add to resources you

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pin from the Gateway to each project. Create and manage your tasks to stay on track with each acquisition.

You are the only one who can access the projects, tasks, and personal events you create in the Project Center. Soon you will be able to share projects with other users. The plan is to connect the Project Center with task order writing systems and RFQ publishing platforms like e-Buy and others.

- 15.** Does the database only consist of GSA contractors or does it include all government contracts (DOD, VA, FDA, etc.)?

The Solutions Finder is the place to compare acquisition solutions available across government. At last count there were 183 solutions in the Solutions Finder. In addition to GSA contracts, the Solutions Finder also includes solutions from AbilityOne, Air Force, Army, Commerce, DHS, DLA, DOD, DOI, DOJ, EPA, FBI, GPO, HHS, IRS, NASA, Navy, NIH, Treasury, USAID, and VA. Available solution types include:

- Blanket Purchase Agreements*
- Enterprise License Agreements*
- Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiatives*
- Government-wide Acquisition Contracts*
- Interagency Agreements*
- Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity*
- Multi-Agency Contracts*
- Multiple Award Schedules*
- Mandatory Sources*
- Common-use Supply Requisitions*

- 16.** How does a government employee register to use the Acquisition Gateway?

This [page](#) on GSA.gov includes step-by-step instructions and a link to a how-to [video](#) on YouTube.

- 17.** It was stated that to have access to Acquisition Gateway that you must have an OMB Max ID on PIV card. What is the process to obtain an ID for CORs, Program Offices/Managers?

All users of the Acquisition Gateway are required to authenticate via OMB's MAX.gov. The page referenced in (16) above includes materials that explain how to associate a MAX user ID with a PIV card.

- 18.** Are there any additional costs, "fees", financial considerations attached to using the Gateway or Multiple Awards Schedule program?

The Acquisition Gateway, built by GSA, helps federal government buyers from all agencies act as one acquisition community. The Acquisition Gateway is a workspace

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that provides accurate, useful, and unbiased advice. It helps federal acquisition professionals learn what they need to know, connect with others to collaborate and communicate, and act to accomplish their tasks effectively. Its goal is to help make government acquisition great. There are no costs or fees for using the Acquisition Gateway.

With GSA Schedules, customers have a partner in meeting their procurement needs. GSA has worked hard to award contracts to vendors who provide “fair and reasonable” pricing. GSA also works with customers to respond to the evolving marketplace and to meet the needs for new supplies and services.

Schedules also enable compliance with federal procurement regulations as well as environmental and socioeconomic requirements, providing a simplified process for obtaining commercial supplies and services.

GSA’s excellent customer service makes Schedules an even more powerful and effective tool. Training programs provide education for ordering activity procurement specialists, with web-based and instructor-led courses on contracts, acquisitions, technology, government charge cards, and more.

19. As a federal employee, how does one get a user name and password to access the Gateway?

You do not need a user name and password to access the Acquisition Gateway. All users of the Acquisition Gateway are required to authenticate via OMB’s MAX.gov. The page referenced in (16) above includes materials that explain the process for registering with OMB MAX.