



Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies (AEPA)

#	Cooperative Organization Questions	Response
1	Are your organization's cooperative contracts available for use by Arizona public entities? If so, do you have any local representation?	AEPA contracts are available to all US states. While there is no member representing AZ, AZ is currently being served by the State of California. If there is an organization in Arizona that would meet the parameters for membership in AEPA, please provide contact information so that we can begin a dialogue as to how AZ can become an AEPA state.
2	What is the legal formation of your cooperative organization (public, non-profit, for profit, etc.)? How long have you been established?	AEPA is comprised of 26 member states, working together through a Memorandum of Understanding. AEPA was originally organized in 2000 by 10 states interested in collaboratively saving money for the schools in their states. Articles of Incorporation were signed in 2007 designating AEPA as a nonprofit Corporation.
3	Does your organization conduct its own procurements with in-house personnel or does it enlist a public agency to conduct the procurement? If a public agency is utilized, please identify that agency or agencies and briefly explain how those agencies are selected.	Each bid category has assigned to it a bid committee comprised of a bid chairperson and 2-3 other individuals. These individuals are from different member states and possess expertise in the bid area. The committee writes the bid specs, analyzes the results, and makes recommendations to the Board for awards. The board then votes on each vendor/bid. After the award each member state must enter into a contract with the individual vendors; AEPA does not hold contracts. AEPA recently contracted with E&I, through an RFP process, to write bid specifications for LED lighting. Rangos Consulting LLC was used to review roofing specifications, again chosen through an RFP process. For the 2017 bid cycle, AEPA has moved to Public Purchase as a vehicle for bidding.
4	If your organization handles all of the contracting functions in-house please explain if you periodically have a 3rd party audit firm review your internal contracting procedures.	AEPA has an experienced bid team to review bids annually. Legal counsel is on retainer to review all governing documents. A third party accountant reviews all revenues and expenditures, prepares necessary financial statements and serves as an outside auditor for the organization.
5	What governing procurement laws does your organization follow in the soliciting, evaluating and awarding of cooperative contracts? (Please be specific.) Also, what state is noted as the legal venue within your contracts for dispute resolution?	AEPA is incorporated in NV. Comprehensive bids include general specifications as well as terms and conditions specific to each member state. Directors from each member state are responsible to provide terms and conditions from their state annually. AEPA uses Model Procurement Law.
6	Does an agency need to register or sign an agreement with your organization in order to purchase from your contracts? If so, please attach the registration form or agreement. Also, is the agency charged a fee to join your cooperative organization?	There are no fees to join the AEPA parent organization. The organization is funded by an assessment fee paid by each state based on the annual sales revenue. Each state operates independently so there may be a required agreement, registration process or fee depending on the individual state guidelines for participation.
7	Where can your organization's cooperative solicitations and resultant contracts be viewed? Describe what documentation is available at this site.	Bid documents are available on the AEPA website at www.aepacoop.org and can be accessed both in the Vendor section and the Purchasing Category section. All bid documents are posted with the exception of pricing.

#	Cooperative Organization Questions	Response
8	Do you periodically perform audits to ensure your contractors are fulfilling the contracts to include charging the correct price? If so, please briefly describe your internal audit program and explain if that program includes any benchmarking to ensure pricing stays competitive over the term of agreement.	The AEPA Board votes annually on contract extensions. The initial term for bids is one year with the possibility of three one year extensions. Vendor issues are addressed as they occur by the individual state representative and the bid committee chair. Each state is responsible to audit contracts per their state requirements.
9	What is the total employee count for your cooperative organization? How many employees perform specific contracting functions (solicitation development, bidding, evaluation and awarding of contracts)?	AEPA currently has one part-time Executive Director. Specific contracting functions are performed by individual volunteers. AEPA hires consultants on an as needed basis.
10	Describe your approach to customer service and include any response time commitments.	Each state implements its own customer service model and works with the individual vendors to implement the model. Best practice models for customer service are discussed at the semi-annual AEPA meetings.
11	How do you generate your bidders' list for any particular solicitation and what steps do you take to ensure Arizona companies are included in your notice?	AEPA bids are posted in newspaper(s) with the largest circulation in each member state. These postings are monitored by the bid chair. Information about the bids is then picked up and distributed by other national bidding platforms. For 2017 bids, AEPA will use Public Purchase as the bidding platform. Public Purchase provides access to a national vendor databank. Prior to the move to Public Purchase, vendor information was collected through a portal on the AEPA website.
12	How do you evaluate contractor performance? Do you have a process that allows agencies to report vendor deficiencies?	Each bid committee is responsible to make a contract extension recommendation to the Board at the winter meeting using data collected via a survey process of all members. Sales data and survey results are used to complete the standard contract extension form. The process for evaluation is outlined in the AEPA governing documents.
13	Indicate any national cooperative coalitions/associations to which your organization is a member.	AEPA has a strategic partnership with the Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA). AEPA has a presence at several national conference each year including NAEP, NIGP, ASBO and AESA.
14	How do you track the usage of contracts to ensure you are accurately conveying order volume within your solicitations?	Each member state tracks individual state sales data which is then reported to AEPA and analyzed annually by the Reporting Committee, the individual bid committees and the Board.