



# General Services Administration (GSA)

#	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?	<p>GSA establishes indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contracts for commercial supplies and services. These are 5 year contracts with 3, 5 year options for a total of 20 years. Some of the GSA Federal Supply Schedules are available for use by state and local government entities, under authorized programs. Congress has authorized several programs that allow state and local governments to take advantage of these Federal contracts. The programs are outlined here, including the legislative authority that allows for their use. <a href="#">Learn More...</a></p>
2	What is the legal formation of your cooperative organization (public, non-profit, for profit, etc.)? How long have you been established?	<p>The U.S. General Services Administration is a Federal, Executive Branch Agency. For background and history of GSA, please visit; <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21354">http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21354</a></p> <p><b>Supplemental Information:</b></p> <p>GSA is not a “cooperative” organization (such as WSCA?) in the sense commonly used by States - the term “Cooperative Purchasing” refers to the ability of entities other than Federal to use the Federal Supply Schedules (FSS) through statutory authorization</p>
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.	<p>GSA, as a Federal agency, negotiates and awards Schedule contracts with in-house Federally warranted contracting officers.</p>
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.	<p>GSA contracts (pre and post award audits) and contracting practices are subject to review by the GSA, Office of the Inspector General (IG) and General Accounting Office (GAO). GSA responds directly to the audits and investigations, as appropriate.</p>
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?	<p>GSA follows Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) procedures in establishing and administering the Schedule contracts. Ordering entities utilize FAR 8.4 to ensure best value on orders placed under Schedule. FAR 8.4 procedures are recommended, but not mandatory for state and local governments placing orders under Schedule. State and local entities may follow their own competitive guidelines and regulations when ordering off of Schedule. Disputes under Schedule orders are handled between the ordering entity (S&amp;L government) and the vendor. GSA is not a party to the dispute for Schedule orders.</p> <p><b>Supplemental Information:</b></p> <p>Schedules information: <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/schedules">www.gsa.gov/schedules</a> Statutory and Regulatory Foundation for Schedules</p> <p>Two major federal regulations determine policy for the GSA Schedules program.</p> <p>Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – The GSA Schedules program is prescribed in FAR Subpart 8.4 and FAR Part 38 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), which codifies policy for federal acquisition of supplies and services. GSA, NASA, and the Department of Defense share authority to issue or revise the FAR. General Services Administration Acquisition Manual (GSAM) – The General Services Administration Acquisition Manual (GSAM) covers GSA acquisition policies and practices, contract clauses, solicitation provisions, and forms that control the relationship between GSA and current or prospective contractors.</p>

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6	<p>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?</p>	<p>State and Local governments may purchase directly from Schedule vendors, under authorized programs. As long as an organization falls within the definition of state and local government, they have access to the programs under authorized scope and terms, including utilization of order language, where applicable. There is no fee for customers (State and local governments) to utilize the FSS Schedules Program under the authority identified (see answer 1).</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Supplemental Information:</b></p> <p>Definition of State and Local Government: 40 U.S.C § 502 (c) offers the following definition of state or local government:</p> <p>“The term, “State or local government” includes any State, local, regional, or tribal government, or any instrumentality thereof (including any local educational agency or institution of higher education).”</p> <p>The term does not include contractors or grantees of state or local governments.</p> <p>If there is a question on whether or not an entity falls under this definition, the entity may submit an eligibility request to GSA. Instructions for eligibility requests can be found at our Eligibility Determination Process site. GSA will issue a formal determination on behalf of the requesting entity that clearly outlines the entity’s access to GSA sources of supply. Entities that clearly fall under the definition of state and local government do not need to request an eligibility determination.</p> </div>
7	<p>Where can your organization's cooperative solicitations and resultant contracts be viewed? Describe what documentation is available at this site.</p>	<p>GSA Schedule solicitations may be found on FedBizOpps (<a href="https://www.fbo.gov/">https://www.fbo.gov/</a>) website. GSA Schedule contracts, with corresponding clauses and price lists can be found on the GSA eTools; GSA eLibrary (<a href="http://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov">www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov</a>) and GSA Advantage (<a href="http://www.gsaadvantage.gov">www.gsaadvantage.gov</a>).</p>
8	<p>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.</p>	<p>GSA has Industrial Operating Analysts and Administrative Contracting officers that monitor compliance of the Schedule contractors during their Schedule contract period of performance. Contractor Assessments:</p> <p>The purpose of the Contractor Assessment is to assess the contractor’s performance through a review of process controls and past transactions. The assessment is a process review conducted as an interview and procedural evaluation. The discussions determine if the Contractor has an understanding of contractual requirements. The Industrial Operations Analyst (IOA) reviews the process/system to determine if the Contractor has developed and implemented effective plans, processes, or systems to manage these requirements. The assessment findings are documented in a report database following the completion of the assessment. The report completed by the IOA will be made available simultaneously to both the contractor and the Contracting Officers.</p> <p>IOA reviews contractor compliance in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sales Tracking and Reporting System</li> <li>2. Pricing of items or services provided</li> <li>3. Prompt Payment Discount terms</li> <li>4. Scope of Contract</li> <li>5. Trade Agreements Acts compliance</li> <li>6. Basis of Award</li> <li>7. E-Commerce (GSA Advantage, E-library etc..)</li> <li>8. Delivery of items or Services</li> <li>9. Labor Qualifications of personnel used in services provided</li> </ol> <p>IOA’s findings are documented in the system and are used by Contracting Officers to determine in exercising option period of contracts.</p> <p>Contractors may update the pricing on their contract when their commercial pricing changes and are required to incorporate price reductions. Prices changes are proposed through a modification request, at which time, the CO performs a full price analysis to ensure proposed pricing is competitive. A price analysis is also done when a contractor requests to add items to the contract and prior to exercising an option to extend the term of the contract. Recently, GSA has initiated a procedure for scanning all pricing on GSA Advantage on a quarterly basis to identify items that do not appear to be priced competitively. When items are identified, a report is sent to the CO for resolution.</p>

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9	<p>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)?</p>	<p>GSA/FAS has over a hundred employees working on the FSS program and has successfully worked with numerous State and municipal governments. The FSS program manages approximately 19,000 Schedule contracts.</p>
10	<p>Describe your approach to customer service and include any response time commitments.</p>	<p>Excellent customer service is part of our pillars of strength at the United States General Services Administration (GSA). We pride ourselves in having local Customer Service Directors (CSD's) assigned to every state across the country. Our CSDs possess knowledge on every aspect of the Federal Acquisition Service's program offerings, which includes our State and Local programs. To find your local customer service director, please visit <a href="http://www.gsa.gov/csds">www.gsa.gov/csds</a>. In addition to local support, our CSDs work directly with the program experts and acquisition offices located across the country. GSA provides free use training through our CSDs and access to our eTools to help streamline the acquisition process.</p>
11	<p>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?</p>	<p>GSA Schedule solicitations are always open. Competition amongst the Schedule holders happens at the order level. The state may add in specific evaluation criteria or requirements when you issue a request for quote to the Schedule holders. GSA's eBuy system can help streamline this process.</p>
12	<p>How do you evaluate contractor performance? Do you have a process that allows agencies to report vendor deficiencies?</p>	<p>In May, 2010, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) and the Acquisition Committee for eGovernment (ACE) determined that the Defense (DoD) Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) will be utilized as the single past performance reporting system federal-wide to collect and transmit performance evaluations to PPIRS. All Federal agencies use this one system to report and review contractor past performance. Ordering entities are also able to report contractor performance on Schedule orders to GSA CO's who may take discretionary action with the contractor, if necessary. GSA Schedule COs also utilize the contractor assessments provided by our IOAs to review contractor performance and compliance when exercising options on Schedule contracts. <a href="https://www.ppirs.gov/">https://www.ppirs.gov/</a></p>
13	<p>Indicate any national cooperative coalitions/associations to which your organization is a member.</p>	<p>GSA is committed to working with and supporting Federal and state and local agencies, including participating as active members on several government and/or vendor coalitions, including but not limited to NIGP, NCMA, Coalition for Government Procurement, Professional Services Council.....</p>
14	<p>How do you track the usage of contracts to ensure you are accurately conveying order volume within your solicitations?</p>	<p>Our IDIQ solicitations only guarantee \$2500 in sales over a 5 year period. We work with vendors to help them make the most of their GSA Schedule. We also encourage our customer community to seek additional price discounts off of the Schedule price, since we do not guarantee a high volume of business. Contractors are required to have a system in place to track contract sales and are required to report contract sales on a quarterly basis. Sales under the Cooperative Purchasing program are reported separately from sales to federal entities. Review of the tracking system and accuracy of reporting is examined by the IOAs during the contractor assessment visit.</p>