Unsealed Bidding

Purpose

Formal competition is not generally practicable for small purchases, and is therefore not required below certain thresholds, which may instead proceed using informal competition. Small purchases are generally set-aside for micro businesses or for small businesses.

Unsealed bidding is the preferred sourcing tool to solicit bids and quotes for procurements that require informal competition and that can be awarded on the basis of price:

- Non-technology goods and nonprofessional services over $10,000 – up to and including $100,000
- Software over $30,000 – up to and including $100,000

Roles and Responsibilities

Institution responsibility

SSC responsibility

Steps by Participant and Milestone

Submit and Review Requisition

College End User

1. Submit requisition
1.1. Submit requisition for review

Purchasing Queue Manager

1.2. Research request
Unsealed Bidding

1.3. Does spend exceed $100,000?
1.4. Assign to Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

Prepare Solicitation

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
2. Prepare solicitation
2.1. Create procurement folder
2.2. Meeting with End User
2.3. Send forms
College End User
2.4. Send forms
Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
2.5. Plan the procurement
2.6. Create sourcing project
2.7. Draft solicitation
Purchasing Supervisor
2.8. Review solicitation document
Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
2.9. Request peer review
SSC Compliance Manager (or designee)
2.10. Peer review
Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
2.11. Send for College approval
College End User
2.12. College End User review

Post Unsealed Bid

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
3. Post Unsealed Bid
3.1. Prepare and Post
3.3. Vendor questions?

Amend Unsealed Bid

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
4. Amend Unsealed Bid
4.1. Collect Vendor questions and send to End User
College End User
4.2. Answer Vendor questions
Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
Unsealed Bidding

4.3. Write addendum
4.4. Post addendum

Review

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
5. Review bids
5.1. Analyze bids

College End User
5.2. Review Bid

Award

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
6. Award Solicitation
6.1. Publish notice of award
6.2. Process requisition

End

All Participants
7.0. End
Unsealed Bidding

Procedure

Submit and Review Requisition

College End User

1. Submit requisition
   1.1. Submit requisition for review
       • See Create a Purchase Requisition procedure, if needed, for details
       • When charter and ethics forms are received, go to step 2.4

Purchasing Queue Manager

1.2. Research request
    • Review and validate the following, as needed:

    | If:                                        | Then:                                      |
    |--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
    | This is a one-time need                    | Go to step 1.3                             |
    | This is a recurring need                   | Go to step 7 to exit this process and initiate Solicitation Intake process |
    | There is an available contract or cooperative contract | Go to step 7 to exit this process and initiate appropriate contract or Cooperative contract steps |
    | There is no available contract or cooperative contract | Go to step 1.3                             |
    | There is an available contract or cooperative contract, but college determined the contract(s) not the best fit | Go to step 1.3 |
## Unsealed Bidding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a mandatory source and college decides to use it</td>
<td>Go to step 7 to exit this process and select appropriate procurement method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a mandatory source, but waiver has been obtained</td>
<td>Go to step 1.3</td>
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</table>

### 1.3. Does spend exceed $100,000?
- **If YES**, determine if pursuing formal competition, go to step 7 to exit this process and take next appropriate action
- **If NO**, go to step 1.4

### 1.4. Assign to Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)
- Assign to Lead Buyer (or designee) to continue process
- Purchasing Queue Manager actions are complete
- Go to step 7

### Prepare Solicitation

**Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)**

### 2. Prepare solicitation

#### 2.1. Create procurement folder
- Gather information and compile notes from requisition in procurement folder
- Go to step 2.2

#### 2.2. Meeting with End User
- Establish ownership and set expectations
- Review Ethics Agreements and Charter
- Review scope of work and ask pertinent questions for the order
- Go to step 2.3
Unsealed Bidding

2.3. Send forms
- Send out ethics (Nondisclosure Agreement) forms to College end-users via email (everyone who needs to touch the unsealed bid before it's awarded)
- Send Charter for College end-user signature via email
- Go to step 2.5

College End User

2.4. Send forms
- Sign Charter and Ethics forms
- Return Charter and Ethics forms to Lead Buyer via email
- Go to step 2.12

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

2.5. Plan the procurement
- Determine specifications or scope of work needed
- Determine if site visit will be required
- Go to step 2.6

2.6. Create sourcing project
- From eVA, open the requisition
  - Click “Create Solicitation”
  - Enter the information into the sourcing project page
  - Add team members to serve as back-up
- Obtain RFx number
- Log RFx number into solicitation tracking sheet on shared google drive
- Notate RFx number in requisition blog
- Go to step 2.7

2.7. Draft solicitation
- Solicitation Template and Terms and Conditions found in Procurement shared drive
- Send Draft to Purchasing Supervisor for review
- Go to step 2.9
Unsealed Bidding

Purchasing Supervisor

2.8. Review solicitation document
- Review and alert Lead Buyer to any changes that need to be made
- Return to Lead Buyer to continue process
- Purchasing Supervisor actions are complete
- Go to step 7

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

2.9. Request peer review
- Incorporate edits recommended by Purchasing Supervisor.
- Create Salesforce case
- Attach solicitation documents and Peer Review form (Found in Procurement shared drive)
- Send via Salesforce to Compliance for Peer Review
- Go to step 2.11

NOTE: Edited version may be required for subsequent peer reviews, if so noted.

SSC Compliance Manager (or designee)

2.10. Peer review
- Complete peer review
- Return to Procurement Lead Buyer to continue process
- SSC Compliance Manager actions are complete
- Go to step 7

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

2.11. Send for College approval
- Upon completion of Peer review, send updated document via email to college for final approval
- Go to step 3.1
College End User

2.12. College End User review
- Review solicitation document for approval and notify lead buyer via email of necessary changes or of approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If:</th>
<th>Then:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vendors submit questions and amendment needs to be posted</td>
<td>Go to step 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendors do not submit questions</td>
<td>Go to step 5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post Unsealed Bid

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

3. Post Unsealed Bid
3.1. Prepare and Post
- After college approval, proceed with posting the solicitation.
- Open the sourcing project in eVA and select “Prepare RFx”
  - Complete the information on the “Setup” tab
  - Fill in the “item” tab to match the line items requested in the solicitation document
  - SSC Procurement will use the best practice of posting the solicitation for five business days. However, the college may request to post for less than or more than five business days. To allow adequate time for review and responses, a solicitation shall be published for no less than three business days.
  - Attach solicitation document and terms and conditions under the “Publicly Posted Documents” tab
  - Ensure opening and closing times on the RFx page match the solicitation document
  - Click “submit” to send the posting for compliance approval
  - Once compliance has approved, click “Send” to post Unsealed Bid
- Go to step 3.2
3.2. **Monitor for Vendor questions**
- Collect and send Vendor questions to End-User.
- [Go to step 3.3](#)

**NOTE:** Vendor questions are not answered directly, but rather in the form of a publicly posted addendum. Questions are only accepted during the question period set out in the solicitation document.

3.3. **Vendor questions?**
- If **YES**, [go to step 4.1](#)
- If **NO**, [go to step 5.1](#)

### Amend Unsealed Bid

**Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)**

4. **Amend Unsealed Bid**
4.1. **Collect Vendor questions and send to End User**
- Collect questions received from vendors during the question period.
- Send questions to college end user to answer
- [Go to step 4.3](#)

**College End User**

4.2. **Answer Vendor questions**
- Provide answers to each vendor question submitted.
- Send answers to Lead Buyer to prepare responses to vendors.
- [Go to step 5.2](#)
Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

4.3. **Write addendum**
- Open Addendum Document in Procurement shared drive.
- Save a copy to your procurement folder.
- Fill in college and solicitation information at the top.
- Update bid due date if needed (any changes to unsealed bids resets the 3 business days policy.)
- Copy vendor questions and college answers into the document.
- Go to step 4.4

4.4. **Post addendum**
- Go to “Prepare RFx” under the Sourcing Project in eVA.
- Select “Create new round” under other actions.
- Update the close date, if necessary, on the ‘Setup” tab.
- Choose “Amend” under the Amend/Cancel drop-down on the “Setup” page.
- Under “Amendment Description” type addendum #x.
- Attach Addendum document under the “Publicly Posted documents” tab.
- Click “Submit” to send for compliance approval.
- Once compliance approval is complete, click “Send” to post the addendum.
- Go to step 5.1
Unsealed Bidding

Review

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

5. Review bids
   5.1. Analyze bids
       • Review bids through the “analyze and award” tab.
         o Save bid tab to procurement file.
         o Verify with vendors that bids are correct and all-inclusive and can meet the need-by-date.
         o Ensure vendors meet System for Award Management (SAM) requirements.
         o Note the home state of each vendor and ensure reciprocity.
         o Consider small business award priority.
         o Send lowest responsive and responsible bid via email to end-user to review.
         o If only one bid is received, complete the price reasonableness document in the Procurement shared drive and save to procurement file.
       • Go to step 6.1

College End User

5.2. Review Bid
      • Ensure bid meets requirements and fits within budget.
      • Notify Lead Buyer of decision via email to continue process
      • College End User actions are complete
      • Go to step 7
Unsealed Bidding

Award

Procurement Lead Buyer (or designee)

6. Award Solicitation

6.1. Publish notice of award

- Click the trophy icon next to the awarded vendor on the “Analyze and Award” page.
- Complete the Notice of Award Document in the Procurement shared drive and save to the procurement file.
- Publish award and post the Notice of Award and Bid Tab.
- Go to step 6.2

6.2. Process requisition

- Ensure title of requisition matches the solicitation.
- Attach all relevant documents to the requisition.
- Import the awarded vendor and price into the requisition from the RFx.
- If over $30K, send order to compliance to review.
- Once ready, click approve.
- When PO is generated, email college and vendor with notification of award.
- Go to step 7

End

All Participants

7.0. End

- The process is complete.
Roles and Responsibilities

Institution Responsibility:

Institution shall:

- Provide details sufficient to identify the goods/services that are requested
- Facilitate site visits when a visit is necessary or useful for bidders to understand the solicitation
- Review bid and notify Contracts Officer or lead buyer whether or not bid is approved
- Abide by the terms of the Procurement Ethics Agreement document
- Answer questions as needed

Institution shall **not**:

- Communicate directly with bidders or prospective bidders after publication of an unsealed bid and prior to award regarding the solicitation, including during a site visit.
  - Any questions about the solicitation at any time should be directed to the contracts officer or lead buyer. Please note you may continue to converse with vendors about existing business.

SSC Responsibility:

- Confirm that the procurement is appropriate for unsealed bidding, and route other requests for fulfillment using the most appropriate procurement method
- Organize a pre bid meeting with the college to determine the scope of work
- Request mandatory source/contracts waivers if necessary and appropriate to do so
- Perform a Peer Review
- Prepare and issue the solicitation
- Analyze and award the solicitation
- Post addendums as needed
- Determine if a site visit will be needed and collaborate with the college to carry out the site visit
Unsealed Bidding

- Respond to inquiries from vendors by publication of amendments, when appropriate
- Receive, open, and evaluate bids, and make an appropriate award.
- Issue award (or decision of no award) in accord with the requirements of the solicitation
- Complete requisition

Requirements

Unsealed Bids may be used to implement an invitation for bids for a purchase up to and including $100,000. [APSPM §5.6, §14.6b]

Unless exempt from the requirement, non-technology procurements over $10,000 and up to and including $100,000 shall be set-aside exclusively for award to DSBSD-certified small businesses (including micro) if available and the price is fair and reasonable. [APSPM §5.6d]

Authorities

- Virginia Code §2.2–4303(G)
- APSPM §§5.6a; 14.6; 3.11g
- Technology Procurement Guideline §§6.3.1.2.1; 1.7

Approvals

Effective Date – July 10, 2024

Approved by – Procurement Operations Manager, Procurement Compliance Manager, Process Council, Management Council
Unsealed Bidding

SSC Line of Service

Procurement Contracts

Version Control

Version 1.0:

- **Author/Editor** – Michele Johnson
- **Change** – First published version
- **Approvals** – Procurement Operations Manager, Procurement Compliance Manager, Process Council, Management Council
- **Date** – July 10, 2024