

Solicitation Process

While it is the desire of Sourcewell to meet our participating entities' procurement requirements, it is ultimately our participating entities' responsibility to interpret local purchasing laws to determine their own ability to access and utilize Sourcewell contracts.

Our rigorous request for proposal (RFP) process is continuously being refined to meet the changing needs of our participating entities. The desired result is a national, competitively solicited procurement and contract process that is not only valued by participating entities but meets or exceeds their requirements—offering exceptional products and services from nationally acclaimed suppliers.

1. Identify Participating Entity Needs and Research Solutions

Sourcewell identifies areas of need through daily participating entity interactions and advisory committees, then researches the best approach for each offering.

2. Seek Authorization from Sourcewell's Board of Directors

After establishing the existence of the participating entities' needs and a viable industry solution, permission from the publicly elected Sourcewell Board of Directors is sought to officially begin the development of the solicitation and overall procurement process.

3. Draft Solicitation, Public Advertisement, and Notice

Our solicitation document is the cornerstone of cooperative contract purchasing. The consistency of the solicitation document, its response format and evaluation criteria, are some of our greatest assets.

Sourcewell advertises each RFP:

- In print and online: [USA Today](#) (National), [Daily Journal of Commerce](#) (Oregon), [The State](#) (South Carolina), [The Oklahoman](#) (Oklahoma)
- On the Sourcewell [website](#)
- On e-commerce sites: [Biddingo](#), [MERX](#), [PublicPurchase](#), [The New York State Contract Reporter](#)

We also notify each state procurement department for re-posting of the solicitation within their system at their option.

4. Conduct Pre-Proposal Conference

Proposers are typically given seven weeks from the advertisement of the RFP to respond. A Pre-Proposal Conference is conducted to answer questions and provide clarification. Prospective Proposers can attend the livestream of the Conference or watch the recording that is posted shortly after the Conference concludes.

5. Questions

All questions related to open RFPs must be submitted through the [Sourcewell Procurement Portal](#) and will be answered via an Addendum. Addenda will be issued to all who are registered in the Portal for that RFP. All issued Addenda must be acknowledged in the Portal prior to successfully submitting a response.

6. Followed by Opening of Responses

Immediately after the Proposal Due Date, a list of all proposers will be publicly available on the Sourcewell Procurement Portal. To view the list, verify that the Sourcewell Procurement Portal opportunities list search is set to "All" or "Closed." Members of the public may attend the Opening at Sourcewell's office located at 202 12th Street NE, Staples, MN, to hear the results.

7. Evaluate Responses

Evaluation will be conducted using the Sourcewell Evaluator Scoring Guide which can be found on the Sourcewell Procurement Portal homepage.

8. Provide Recommendation to Chief Procurement Officer (CPO)

Recommendations of the evaluation committee are presented to the CPO for final review and possible award. The CPO has the final authority to issue or deny a procurement contract.

9. Award Suppliers

Upon approval by the CPO, the recommended supplier is awarded a four-year contract term with the potential for up to three additional one-year extensions at the discretion of Sourcewell. The Procurement Department sends Notice of Award or Non-Award to all respondents via email.

10. Debrief Calls

All awarded and non-awarded proposers may request a debrief call up to 60-days following notification of their award status.

11. Posting and Reviewing Approved Contract Documents

A complete procurement file is maintained by Sourcewell, and contract documentation is posted on our website for review by our participating entities. This file is periodically reviewed for compliance and effectiveness. Awarded suppliers are allowed to seek reasonable price and product changes upon the approval from Sourcewell.