

## Solicitation Process

Sourcewell offers a portfolio of competitively solicited cooperative purchasing contracts for Sourcewell members and Participating Entities.

### Membership and Participation

Sourcewell membership and participation is available to any eligible unit of government, which may include a city, county, town, state, school district, political subdivision of any state, federally recognized Indian tribe, agency of the United States, instrumentality of a governmental unit, or other entity as defined in Minn. Stat. § 471.59, subd. 1(b), and Art. VI of the Sourcewell Bylaws.

Members and Participating Entities are responsible for interpreting their federal, state, and local purchasing laws and policies to determine whether they can access and use these contracts.

### Requests for Proposal

Sourcewell's request for proposal (RFP) process is informed by Minn. Stat. § 471.345, the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law, Sourcewell's Cooperative Purchasing Program and Procurement policies, the Model Procurement Code established by the American Bar Association, and public procurement best practices and standards. It evolves continuously to align with the changing needs of Sourcewell members and Participating Entities. The product is a competitively solicited procurement and contracting framework that delivers access to products and services.

#### 1. Pre-solicitation process

Sourcewell performs a three-step pre-solicitation process, as follows:

- Conduct scope development via market research and category assessment.
- Provide 120 days of advance notice of planned solicitations via the Sourcewell Procurement Portal.
- Institute a silent period by ceasing communication with prospective responders for 14 days before publication, all communication with prospective responders relating to the specific solicitation stops.

#### 2. Solicitation

Sourcewell institutes a competitive sealed proposal process by issuing an RFP and providing legal notice as follows:

- **Legal Notice.** Each RFP is published and advertised by Sourcewell to satisfy its legal requirements under Minnesota law through the Sourcewell Procurement Portal.
- **Publishing.** The solicitation is publicly published for a minimum of 14 calendar days on:
  - Sourcewell websites (all online postings stay live from the date of publication until the closing date);
  - Websites, including New York State Contract Reporter, Public Purchase, Merx, and Biddingo (all online postings stay live from the date of publication until the closing date); and
  - The following print publications include (any may not be limited to):
    - USA Today (Once weekly for two consecutive weeks.)
    - The State (Columbia, South Carolina) (Once in the first circulation following the RFP solicitation.)
    - The Oklahoman (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) (Once weekly for two consecutive weeks.)
    - Daily Journal of Commerce (Oregon) (Once in the first circulation following the RFP solicitation.)
    - Deseret News (Salt Lake City, Utah) (Once in the first circulation following the RFP solicitation.)
    - The Salt Lake Tribune (Utah) (Once in the first circulation following the RFP solicitation and on the next closest date to publication for the online edition.)
    - Indianapolis Star (Indianapolis, Indiana) (Once weekly for two consecutive weeks.)

- Indiana Business Journal (Indianapolis, Indiana) (Once weekly for two consecutive weeks on the first Friday following the RFP solicitation.

**Advertising Record.** Sourcewell maintains a complete list of publication locations for all solicitations and retains copies of affidavits of advertisement on its website(s).

### 3. Request for proposal (RFP) details

To support its competitive, fair, and transparent procurement process, Sourcewell ensures each solicitation meets the following requirements:

- **Procurement Portal.** All solicitation communications, including clarifications and public addenda, and proposal submissions must be completed through the Sourcewell Procurement Portal.
- **Response Period.** RFPs remain open for seven weeks, accounting for holidays or special timing considerations. All communications from prospective responders occur through the portal. Clarifications or updates are issued as public addenda within the portal. Each RFP clearly defines proposal due dates. Late submissions are not accepted.
- **Scope.** Each RFP clearly defines the scope of the solicited category and identifies any exclusions. Sourcewell seeks the broadest offerings available from prospective suppliers that meet the defined scope.
- **Award Standard.** Sourcewell awards one or more contracts to responsive and responsible proposers offering the best overall combination of quality, selection, products, services, and price, consistent with the commonly requested specifications of Sourcewell and its members and Participating Entities.
- **Scoring Criteria.** Proposals are evaluated using established scoring criteria and a 1000-point scoring scale. Price represents the largest share of evaluation points (40 percent). Other evaluation factors, which are published in each RFP, may include:
  - Responsiveness and responsibility;
  - Conformance to RFP requirements;
  - Financial viability and marketplace success;
  - Ability to sell and deliver;
  - Marketing plan;
  - Value added attributes; and
  - Depth and breadth of solutions.
- **Solicitation Closing and Review.** After the proposal due date, Sourcewell conducts a public opening of all submissions and reviews all timely submitted proposals. The evaluation team reviews proposals using the criteria established in the RFP. See additional solicitation [public opening information](#) online (<https://app.spekit.co/app/share/content/2d2abb38-84b4-4b91-b50b-9245617bb881>).
- **Data Practices.** Under Minnesota law, the names of all proposers become public upon request on the due date.
- **Evaluation and Award.** Upon completion of scoring, the evaluation team submits its recommendations to Sourcewell's Deputy and Chief Procurement Officers for final approval. Approved recommendations proceed to final contract negotiations with selected proposers. Executed contracts are ratified by Sourcewell's Board of Directors.
- **Protest Period.** Non-awarded proposers may appeal in accordance with the instructions specified in the RFP.

### 4. Post-award activities

Following contract award and execution:

- **Contract Documents.** Sourcewell posts all evaluation and contract documents on its websites. Pricing as established pursuant to the contract is also available for public inspection. Publicly available documents include the RFP, proof of publication, proposal(s) opening record, proposal evaluation, proposal comment and review, compliance statement, pricing information, Sourcewell Board of Directors award of contract, and executed contract(s).

- **Contract Usage.** Members and Participating Entities may review awarded contracts and work with awarded suppliers to determine if the contract meets the Entity's needs. Each member and Participating Entity remains solely responsible for ensuring each solicitation and contract meets with its compliance and due diligence requirements.
- **Contract Management.** Sourcewell actively manages each contract and supplier relationship through a disciplined, lifecycle-based contract management program designed to ensure ongoing value and performance for members and Participating Entities. Contract management practices include:
  - Dedicated staff charged with contract administration oversee supplier onboarding, pricing and product catalog maintenance, reporting, and adherence to contract terms.
  - Centralized contract management systems tracking milestones, amendments, performance metrics, and issue resolution.
  - Best practice tools, such as regular supplier scorecards, sales and utilization reporting, and periodic performance reviews to ensure awarded suppliers continue to meet pricing, service, and quality standards.
  - Structured and routine evaluations and escalation protocols to ensure that Sourcewell contracts remain valid, competitively priced, operationally reliable, and responsive to the evolving needs of members and Participating Entities.

## 5. Disclaimer

Members and Participating Entities are responsible for performing due diligence and ensuring their use of Sourcewell cooperative contracts complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and policies, and specific funding requirements.