

VETS 2 GWAC DRAFT RFP
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
NOVEMBER 13, 2015

Below is a list of frequently asked questions GSA received in response to the VETS 2 Draft RFP. The answers below are based on GSA's current position with the Draft RFP. The final solicitation will take precedence in the case of any conflict with the responses provided below. The GSA VETS 2 team sincerely appreciates each and every comment received and will be considering the suggestions received as we move closer to a final solicitation.

General

Q1 - When will the Final RFP be released?

A1 - GSA anticipates posting the VETS 2 RFP to FBO.gov in Spring 2016. This is subject to change dependent upon the adjustments made based on feedback to the Draft RFP, and other factors. More information regarding the RFP schedule will be posted to the VETS 2 Interact Community as it becomes available.

Q2 - Does an offeror need to be certified/verified in the CVE/VIP database at the time of proposal submission?

A2 - No. CVE verification is applicable to Department of Veterans Affairs contract set-asides.

Q3 - Can Veteran-Owned Small Business (VOSB) firms which are not Service-Disabled (SD) VOSB submit a proposal in response to the VETS 2 solicitation?

A3 - VETS 2 will be a SDVOSB set-aside and therefore only SDVOSB firms may offer and be considered. The VETS and VETS 2 GWACs are a result of Executive Order 13360, which includes a provision for GSA to 1) establish a service-disabled veteran businesses GWAC and 2) assist service-disabled veteran businesses to be included in Federal Supply Schedules. VETS 2 focuses on the first of those two areas, each of which support SDVOSBs. Additionally, GSA does not have authority for VOSB set-asides, as this authority applies to the Veterans Administration.

Q4 - Does the Government intend to include FEDRAMP certification as a requirement for VETS 2?

A4 - FEDRAMP certification is not required at the master contract level, but might be included for individual task order requests.

Q5 - For the existing VETS GWAC, how many awards did the GSA make?

A5 - The VETS GWAC was awarded to 44 SDVOSBs in 2007.

Q6 - Where can I find more information on tasks that have been performed through the existing VETS GWAC?

A6 - For historical information on task orders awarded through the VETS GWAC, and other GSA GWACs, we recommend visiting the GWAC Dashboard at www.gsa.gov/gwacdashboards.

Q7 - Is there a target for a minimum number of VETS 2 contract awards?

A7 - As stated in L.2.3 and M.2 of the draft solicitation, GSA anticipates making 70 contract awards.

Q8 - Does the government intend to conduct a pre-proposal conference?

A8 - Details about any pre-proposal conference will be provided with the final RFP.

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Q9 - After the VETS 2 contract is awarded, will GSA consider adding additional companies to the contract at a later date?

A9 - Yes. As stated in H.18 of the draft solicitation, GSA reserves the right to award additional SDVOSB contractors to VETS 2 through Open Season(s).

Q10 - Has the GSA previously conducted an Open Season on any GWACs?

A10 - Yes, in 2015 the Small Business GWAC Division posted and closed the 8(a) STARS 2 GWAC Open Season solicitation.

Scope

Q11 - As stated in B.12 of the solicitation, it is anticipated that there may be task orders under this contract for work outside the United States. As such, is there an estimated percentage of work that will occur outside the United States?

A11 - While the majority of work under the contract is expected to be performed in the United States, customer agencies may have occasional requirements outside of the United States. The scope of VETS 2 empowers fulfillment of these requirements.

Q12 - Are all Systems Design services identified in C.3.6 required to comply with the Federal Architecture framework (FEA) and its reference models?

A12 - As stated in C.2.1 of the draft solicitation, the Master Contract provides IT services in support of the business functions and services performed in the Federal Government, as described in the Business Reference Model (BRM) of the Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA). Specific requirements will be detailed in individual task order requests.

Q13 - Will GSA consider additional examples of services in sections C.3.1 through C.3.6?

A13 - Based on feedback received, GSA will consider expanding the listed examples within sections C.3.1 through C.3.6.

Q14- Will GSA consider adding suggested labor categories to the Master Contract?

A14 - GSA is reviewing suggested labor categories. Having said that, B.8.4.1 allows additional labor categories to be utilized on individual task orders when deemed necessary to provide an IT services-based solution.

Relevant Experience

Q15 - L.5.2.2 Relevant Experience Projects - The draft solicitation requires 5 projects performed as a prime contractor valued at greater than \$500,000. Will GSA consider removing this requirement as I would like to participate, but I don't have five projects as a prime contractor?

A15 - Having considered feedback received, GSA is considering adjusting the requirement for five projects performed as a prime contractor.

Q16 - If our Relevant Experience proves to be relevant but does not share a NAICS code as stated in this solicitation, will the Government mark it as irrelevant?

A16 - Please review L.5.2.2.1.1 (2). If the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) report does not provide verification of the NAICS code being claimed, additional information can be submitted in the proposal in order to receive credit for the claimed NAICS code.

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Q17 - L.5.2.2 (1) states that each project must have been for the performance of one of the Performance Areas listed in L.5.2.2.7 Relevant Experience Performance Areas. Because larger value information technology contracts may cover the entire lifecycle from design, development, to O&M, can an offeror claim credit for multiple performance areas using a single project?

A17 - While a project may encompass aspects from more than one Performance Area, the Performance Area that constitutes the principal purpose of the project will be considered for scoring purposes.

Q18 - Will GSA consider awarding points for “Relevant Experience Project Representing a Task Order against a Multiple-Award Contract”, as referenced in 5.2.2.3, for work performed as a subcontractor?

A18 - Scoring for 5.2.2.3 is limited to offerors who have previously been, or currently are, multiple-award contract holders and have received task order awards against those contracts.

Q19 - Will partial points be awarded for relevant experience projects that don't fulfill all of the requirements listed in L.5.2.2?

A19 - Any relevant experience project that meets the requirements of L.5.2.2 and M.5.1.1 will receive the claimed points for the project. No partial points are available.

Q20 - M.5.1.1.4 Relevant Experience Projects Demonstrating Experience with Multiple Federal Government Customers - Can past performance/relevant experience from Local Government prime contracts be considered as "government" relevant experience?

A20 - The “Experience Working with Multiple Federal Government Customers” evaluation factor is limited to Federal Government Agencies, as local government entities are not eligible to place orders on GSA GWACs.

Q21 - L.5.2.2.5 - Unique Customer Agency: Is this at the office level, branch, or agency level. I.E. Is Army and Navy both DoD thus not unique? Is FEMA and Coast Guard both DHS and thus not unique?

A21 - As stated in L.5.2.2.5, Federal Government Customer is determined by the Funding Agency ID identified within the FPDS Report.

Q22 - In accordance with L.5.2.2.4, will GSA consider awarding additional evaluation points to offerors with larger value relevant experience projects that were performed as a subcontractor?

A22 - GSA will consider expanding this subfactor to include experience as a subcontractor.

Q23 - Clarification needed regarding the linkage between File name reference column in Attachment J.P-4 and Attachment J.P-5 Relevant Experience Project Template. Is a separate write up required other than what is required by J.P-5?

A23 - Please refer to L.5.2.2.1.1 for the necessary verification documents for each Relevant Experience submission. Furthermore, L.4 Proposal Format Table provides the file name structure for all required submissions. Each Relevant Experience Project with all supporting documents should be submitted in a single .pdf file and referenced within the J.P-4, Document Verification and Self Scoring Worksheet.

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Teaming

Q24 - Does FAR Clause 52.219-27 and G.16.1 Limitations on Subcontracting imply that after award of the Master contract, the SDVOSB is free to subcontract to different companies on a Task Order basis?

A24 - Yes, GSA will not approve specific subcontractors at the Master Contract level. Contractors are able to subcontract as necessary to fulfil individual task order requirements, keeping in mind the requirements of FAR 52.244-2, Subcontracts. GSA does monitor compliance with the Limitations on Subcontracting at the Master Contract level.

Q25 - Are VETS 2 prime contract holders prohibited from teaming with other VETS 2 prime contract holders at the task order level?

A25 - IAW FAR 9.601(2), a VETS 2 prime contract holder may subcontract with one or more other companies at the task order level to have them act as its subcontractors. GSA Schedule Contractor Team Arrangements (CTA), where each team member has privity of contract with the government, are not permissible under the VETS 2 GWAC.

Q26 - Does the government intend to evaluate subcontractors/team members, or is the evaluation criteria based solely on the offeror?

A26 - As stated in L.3.1, all of the evaluation elements for which an Offeror is taking credit must be in the Offeror's name. GSA is interested in the work performed by the offeror themselves, either as prime contractor or subcontractor. Although GSA will not approve subcontractors at the Master Contract level, contractors are able to subcontract as necessary to fulfil individual task order requirements, keeping in mind the requirements of FAR 52.244-2, Subcontracts.

Q27 - L.5.1.3 states that Prime/Subcontractor CTAs, as defined in FAR 9.601(2), are not allowable and will be rejected. Does this mean that Prime Contractor/Subcontractor arrangements are not allowable in support of VETS 2 task orders?

A27 - The section referenced pertains to existing CTAs who wish to submit a proposal in response to the Master Contract. CTAs defined in FAR 9.601(2), where a potential prime contractor agrees with one or more other companies to have them act as its subcontractors under a specified Government contract or acquisition program, are allowed in support of VETS 2 task orders.

Credentials

Q28 - L.5.4 - Why did the government choose to award points for CMMI but not address individual certifications?

A28 - Individual certification requirements are determined at the task order level.

Q29 - If a contractor is in the process of ISO/CMMI certification and is working with a registration auditor at the time of proposal submission, will the GSA permit the contractor to claim credit for ISO/CMMI Certification if the certification is imminent?

A29 - As detailed in L.5.4, credit may only be claimed for certifications held at time of proposal submission.

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Q30 - The ISO 9001 standard is currently undergoing an update from the 2008 standard to the 2015 standard. Will the government award points to bidders who are compliant with either the 2008 or 2015 standard? If so, will they be worth the same point value?

A30 - Within the final RFP, GSA will accept ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 9001:2015.

Q31 - B.8.2 - Are we required to have a DCAA approved accounting system in place before contract award?

A31 - Prior to responding to any Cost Reimbursement Task Order Request, unless specified otherwise by the Ordering Contracting Officer, Contractors are required to have a Cost Accounting System that has been determined adequate, by DCAA or another Cognizant Federal Agency, for determining costs applicable to a contract or order in accordance with 16.301-3(a)(3). Contractors are required to have an adequate cost accounting system prior to performing any cost reimbursement task order.

Q32 - Direct Labor Rates: Do offerors need to provide rationale for their direct labor rates if they fall within the ranges listed in Attachment J.P-8?

A32 - Yes, as stated in L.5.5.1(1)(i), Offerors shall state the methodology used in computing the direct labor rate composite and explain how the proposed direct labor rates were derived.

Q33 - Will the government sponsor those organizations that do not have a facility clearance?

A33 - As stated in L.5.4.6, GSA will not sponsor Offerors for any type of security clearances.

Q34 - Most SDVOSBs do not have facility clearance but do have cleared officers within the company who can obtain facility clearance upon contract award. Would the government award points for an FSO?

A34 - Individual clearance requirements are determined at the task order level. For L.5.4.6, scoring is only available for Facility Clearance Level, not for individual personnel clearances.

Pricing

Q35 - B.8.4 - This section states there will be a recalculation of the annual escalation from 1.58% to 3.16% for years 6-15. The spreadsheet (J.P-7_Costs_Price_Template) shows an annual escalation of 1.58%. We understand this is a draft solicitation, however, will this be updated to show the solicitation stated escalation of 3.16% for years 6-15, or, will all pricing proposed show an escalation of 1.58% for bidding purposes and to updated at the time of exercising option periods for years 6-15?

A35 - Within the solicitation, the Pricing Template will show the same escalation rate for years 2 through 15. Prior to the exercise of the Master Contract option period, if the average annual ECI for the previous three years is different at the start of Contract Year 5 then at time of the solicitation, the maximum rates for Years 6 through 15 will be adjusted to reflect the new escalation rate.

Q36 - What is required for price increases and decreases of labor categories and how often can they occur?

A36 - As stated in B.8.4, an escalation factor will be applied to the awarded Contract Year 1 rates to establish pricing for Contract Years 2 through 15. Prior to the exercise of the Master Contract option period, if the average annual ECI for the previous three years is different at the start of Contract Year 5 then at time of the solicitation, the maximum rates for Years 6 through 15 will be adjusted to reflect the new escalation rate.

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Q37 - Are offerors required to propose pricing for each of the labor categories?

A37 - Yes, an offer may be rejected if complete pricing is not proposed for all labor categories.