



PBS Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



Topic: Federal Coworking Solutions

Presenter: Jane Schuster

Dates of Presentation: November 18, 2021

Link to Client Enrichment Series Information: www.gsa.gov/ces

Additional Coworking Information

- Federal Coworking Solutions - CES Session [YouTube Video](#) and Passcode - qWGH7%qp
- Flexible Coworking Solutions (FCS) - [Information Sheet](#)
- GSA FlexHub - [Information Sheet](#)
- City Tier Listing - [Information Sheet](#)

[***Jump to questions about the GSA Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ Contract***](#)

[***Jump to questions about the GSA FlexHub Pilot at GSA HQ***](#)

GSA Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ Contract

1) **Question:** Are the offered coworking spaces in federal buildings or commercial space?

Answer: Coworking sites under the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract are located in commercially operated vendor space. The GSA FlexHub pilot site will be a federally operated coworking space within GSA's HQ at 1800 F St. NW, Washington, D.C.

2) **Question:** I saw in the press that the IDIQ was a \$20 million contract. What did that pay for?

Answer: To clarify, GSA awarded to 5 firms under the IDIQ vehicle and only obligated a minimum guarantee of \$1,000 to each awardee. If an offeror is awarded a task order during the base year, the minimum will not be paid. Each of the five vendors has a maximum ordering limit of \$10 million, per year. This limit is the maximum dollar value of work GSA can order annually from each vendor. This IDIQ contract has a base year, plus four one-year option periods. Given the potential for 5 years of performance, the magnitude of this procurement was \$50 million, not \$20 million, per vendor.



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- 3) **Question:** Can the agency opt to turn down GSA vacant space in favor of a private industry site?

Answer: No. GSA will look at its vacant federal and leased inventory to determine if there is more appropriate space available prior to putting a task order for Flexible Coworking Services in place. If GSA determines that vacant space is available, an agency will need to occupy that in lieu of private coworking spaces.

- 4) **Question:** You said that IDIQ vendor prices vary. How can we target one of the lower-cost vendors?

Answer: We will be competing each task order and awarding based on adherence to requirements and price. We are unable to exclude a vendor from competing based on price alone.

- 5) **Question:** Is this available in all 50 states?

Answer: The flexible coworking services provided under the contract shall be performed within the Continental United States (CONUS).

- 6) **Question:** Will there be a comprehensive listing of the tier locations?

Answer: Reference the PDF in the linked files for this CES session.

- 7) **Question:** Understanding that requirements and city tiers will vary in each case, is it possible to discuss what a general range of costs might be and how FCS costs would compare with GSA-controlled space?

Answer: Please reach out to Jane Schuster to discuss costs for coworking space in the city(ies) of interest. If GSA-controlled space is vacant and meets the agency needs, this will be the most appropriate space solution. jane.schuster@gsa.gov

- 8) **Question:** Are any of these co-working spaces available in smaller cities? For WeWork, I checked the locations and they seem to be in major cities where our Agency already has viable locations. Some agencies in those smaller cities with small offices that may ultimately close, could potentially benefit from a formal office space intermittently in non-metropolitan areas.

Answer: Under the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract, vendors can offer coworking space across the continental US in large and small cities. Not all vendors will offer a coworking space in all areas, but since we have access to both



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owner/operator vendors and aggregator vendors, we have broad coverage across the country.

9) **Question:** Are you able to share whether we have awarded any contracts yet?

Answer: GSA is currently working on several task orders, but the task orders have not yet been awarded (as of November 2021).

10) **Question:** How will parking requirements be met / handled with the IDIQ coworking option?

Answer: Parking is not included and will be the responsibility of the end user.

11) **Question:** Is the pricing for the five companies' schedules on GSA's website?

Answer: Awarded rates for the five coworking vendors is not currently available on GSA's website. GSA can work with you on an individual basis to provide an estimate and to look at available options.

12) **Question:** Can you share who the GSA vendors are?

Answer: The Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract was awarded to five vendors: DeskPass Corporation, LiquidSpace Inc, Novel/Expansive (Level Office Management, LLC), The Yard Operating Company, LLC, and WeWork Commons, LLC.

13) **Question:** Is there an easy way to use the meeting space from private industry on a smaller scale basis? Such as a 1-off meeting in a different state, nothing continuous or necessarily predictable?

Answer: For a single meeting need, agencies could go directly to any coworking vendor, even one that was not awarded under this contract, and use a Government Purchase Card to secure a single day use. However, agencies doing this would not go through GSA, it would not be associated at all with the GSA Flexible Coworking Services (FCS) IDIQ contract, nor would the agency be using the awarded FCS IDIQ contract rates.

14) **Question:** Do we contact our current GSA managers to inquire about pricing and location of space for the Flexible CoWorking Service? Our agency would be looking for conference room space.

Answer: Meeting room use must be incidental to use of workspaces under this IDIQ contract and cannot be the driving requirement. You may contact the FCS COR, Jane Schuster, to inquire about pricing and location availability: jane.schuster@gsa.gov



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15) Question: Can an agency just have 5 - 10 spaces in a permanent manner or is use only temporary?

Answer: All workspaces provided through the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract are intended to be on a temporary basis. This means that an agency does not have exclusive access to any workspaces. If an agency intends to use a set of workspaces (offices or workstations) every single day of the week, a vendor *may* be able to accommodate the same workspace on a daily basis. However, the vendor would still maintain access to the space and would be able to re-assign workspaces as needed throughout the duration of the task order.

16) Question: Is there a way for agencies to try out coworking space before committing to it for 6-12 months?

Answer: GSA can put a task order in place for anywhere between 1 day and 12 months. GSA does require an RWA to be in place for task orders, so Government Purchase Cards cannot be used with this contract.

17) Question: Can an agency tour coworking spaces?

Answer: If your agency is interested in touring a co-working site, you may contact a coworking vendor directly to see if they offer virtual or on-site tours. If touring, there are a couple of things to note:

- Your agency will need to coordinate any tours independently in order to ensure that GSA does not give the impression that we are favoring any vendors.
- Each task order under this contract will be competed, regardless of locations toured.
- Since we have access to hundreds of coworking sites across the country, your local vendor tour guide may not be fully briefed on our Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract and may discuss coworking features that aren't available under this contract.

18) Question: How do we obtain contact information for the coworking vendors to set up a site visit?

Answer: You may reach out to the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ COR, Jane Schuster, to discuss coworking locations in your area to understand who to reach out to in order to set up an on site tour. jane.schuster@gsa.gov



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19) Question: Are these spaces unclassified only or include access to classified spaces?

Answer: All space is unclassified. Classified space is not included in this service contract.

20) Question: Given that GSA typically takes 2 years to get permanent space online, would GSA issue two consecutive 12 month task orders to meet an agency's temporary requirement? What are the guidelines to go beyond the 12 months?

Answer: If an agency is aware that they need coworking space for a period longer than 12 months, the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract should not be used. However, if an agency is using FCS space for up to 12 months and determines that additional time in temporary coworking space is required, a second task order may be able to be put in place. In this event, GSA will re-examine vacant federal or leased space as the first solution. If vacant space is not available, a new task order may be recompleted. An agency is not guaranteed space with the same vendor or within the same coworking location between task orders.

21) Question: How long does it take for GSA to award a contract once the RWA is received?

Answer: Once the RWA has been accepted by GSA, we anticipate a five week turnaround.

22) Question: What transfer authority is used for the RWAs for this type of coworking service (e.g., Economy Act)?

Answer: Economy Act would be the appropriate authority for this work given it is for services being done in facilities outside of the jurisdiction, custody or control of GSA.

23) Question: Will the GSA fee be flat or 7%?

Answer: In August 2020, GSA transitioned to a new RWA stepped fee structure. The fee rate decreases as the project costs increase. This RWA fee covers the cost of GSA administration on the contract. Other than the RWA fee, GSA is not charging any additional fees to use this Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract.

24) Question: Is the admin fee only on the RWA, or is there an additional cost similar to the PBS fee on OAs? If so, what is that pricing structure for space as service?

Answer: In August 2020, GSA transitioned to a new RWA stepped fee structure. The fee rate decreases as the project costs increase. This RWA fee covers the cost of GSA



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administration on the contract. Other than the RWA fee, GSA is not charging any additional fees to use this Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract.

25) Question: Can you review once more both the GSA fee and pricing structure?

Answer: In August 2020, GSA transitioned to a new RWA stepped fee structure. The fee rate decreases as the project costs increase. This RWA fee covers the cost of GSA administration on the contract. Other than the RWA fee, GSA is not charging any additional fees to use this Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract.

26) Question: How far in advance can we start the task order? To get the RWA approval started. If I wanted to have a space ready for Feb. 1 2022 Could I put in a RWA request Dec 1. to prepare and be able to have it ready for Day 1 of the need? Also, to give time for any delays or bugs in the GSA predicted 5 weeks forecasted timeline?

Answer: We would recommend submitting your RWA Work Request as soon as your needs are known. The five weeks of forecasted timeline begins from RWA acceptance, so providing your project needs sooner than later will ensure we are able to accept the RWA, issue the task order and make an award by your in-place need date.

27) Question: When can we submit our RWAs?

Answer: RWAs can be submitted to GSA anytime for task orders placed on the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ through the eRETA RWA Customer Portal. An RWA Work Request must be submitted to begin the process.

28) Question: Should the RWA be per agency or can the RWA be within agencies?

Answer: If each sub-agency will be using different funding sources, you will need to submit separate RWAs. If the funding source is the same, a single RWA can be provided by the agency.

29) Question: During COVID, what sort of precautions are being taken in co-working spaces related to COVID-19? (Concerns about cleaning, vaccinations, mask wearing, etc.)

Answer: Each of our vendors have certified that they are complying with executive orders and have put additional precautions in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In addition to federal requirements, agencies and employees using coworking space will need to follow all state, local, and municipal guidelines. Although vendors are regularly cleaning the coworking spaces, individuals may choose to wipe down surfaces and equipment before and after use.



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30) Question: Who is responsible for adherence to COVID protocols such as sanitizing and vaccination status?

Answer: Each of our vendors have certified that they are complying with executive orders and have put additional precautions in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Individual agencies and end users are responsible for agency vaccination attestation, following mask-wearing and social distancing protocols and contributing toward a safer work environment. Although vendors are regularly cleaning the coworking spaces, individuals may choose to wipe down surfaces and equipment before and after use.

31) Question: Will we be able to VPN? What will be our access and the equipment to be used in these workspaces?

Answer: Each of the Flexible Coworking Service (FCS) vendors will offer wireless internet access. Agencies will need to access their network through their agency VPNs, just as individuals would if accessing the network while on telework status. Agencies using FCS coworking spaces will need to bring any necessary individual IT equipment, such as laptops and cell phones. Coworking sites will offer access to communal printers and copiers.

32) Question: Has this program been cleared in terms of IT security?

Answer: Agency individuals using shared coworking space should use their agency's VPN to securely access network files. Individual agencies may have additional security protocols that end users must follow. If your agency deals with highly secure and sensitive information and has IT security concerns, the individual agency OCIO should evaluate to determine if a shared office environment is appropriate.

33) Question: Do all of the contractors need to provide spaces that comply with the Architectural Barriers Act standards?

Answer: Per the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ contract, all coworking spaces and areas must be accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with the Architectural Barriers Act.

34) Question: Is there a good POC Map we could reference if our agency was interested?

Answer: You may contact the Flexible Coworking Services IDIQ COR, Jane Schuster, directly with agency requests for coworking space. Jane will pull in the regional team for specific locations. jane.schuster@gsa.gov



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Questions related to the GSA FlexHub

35) Question: Have you considered partnering with another Department that is more centrally located? (18th&F can be challenging to get to).

Answer: Our GSA FlexHub pilot site will be located in the GSA HQ location at 1800 F Street, Washington, D.C. However, based on the results of the pilot we may be looking to expand the FlexHub offering in the near future, if customer demand indicates the need for additional locations. Upon expansion, we are exploring alternate locations and partnering.

36) Question: This is great re 1800 F. St NW. Any idea when this may begin as our agency continues to plan our return to the office, we can consider this location as an alternative. Also, will there be small conference rooms, large ones or huddle space?

Answer: We are currently anticipating our FlexHub pilot site will be open for external federal agencies to use and tour in Spring 2022. We are including collaborative spaces, such as huddle and conference rooms as part of the FlexHub. We have not finalized the sizes or layouts of collaborative space that will be available yet. More information will be shared on the FlexHub when it becomes available.

37) Question: For agencies with underutilized space, does the agency return the space back to GSA for use as a part of GSA FlexHub, or does the agency retain the OA and open the space up for other agency use and then is reimbursed for that usage?

Answer: Since our GSA FlexHub concept is in development, we have not yet resolved this question. We are exploring multiple solutions to determine the optimal solution. More information will be shared on the FlexHub when it becomes available.

38) Question: How about not charging agencies for use of FlexHub? Just figure out the reservation rules. That's simplistic.

Answer: Since our GSA FlexHub is in development, we do not yet have pricing available. We are exploring any and all pricing solutions to determine the best overall solution. More information will be shared on the FlexHub when it becomes available.



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39) Question: How can agencies schedule a site visit for the 18F location? How do we obtain contact information for the co-working vendors to set up a site visit?

Answer: The GSA FlexHub site is currently anticipated to be open to external agencies to use or tour in Spring 2022. GSA will share information on this location, including tour info, when we are ready for guests.

40) Question: How can an agency volunteer to be a part of the pilot? We are already trying to share space with another agency. We have merged with several offices already with the shared open space concept.

Answer: Please reach out to Jane Schuster if your agency is interested in occupying space in our FlexHub pilot, or if your agency has additional coworking and space sharing solutions that you would like to discuss. jane.schuster@gsa.gov

41) Question: Does GSA already have reservation software they are using? Will you be restricted to a singular coworking space or will employees have use of multiple spaces within that same network?

Answer: GSA is securing a reservation software system for our FlexHub that will be accessible by federal employees. At the outset, our FlexHub will only be a single pilot location; however, if expansion of this concept is deemed desirable, the reservation software will allow end users to make reservations at any FlexHub location.

42) Question: Regarding the GSA Flexhub, can an agency just have 5 - 10 spaces in a permanent manner or use only temporary?

Answer: Since our GSA FlexHub is in development, we do not have all of the details and protocols determined yet. More information will be shared on the FlexHub when it becomes available.

43) Question: Is there any pricing available for FlexHub?

Answer: Since our GSA FlexHub is in development, we do not yet have pricing available. More information will be shared on the FlexHub when it becomes available.

44) Question: Are you considering pilot locations in an area with ample parking? E.g., suburban area. Many more people might be more comfortable driving in a post-pandemic environment.

Answer: If additional FlexHub sites are deemed to be desirable, GSA will consider many factors for their location, including federal population, building location, parking availability and amenities.



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45) Question: How will parking requirements be met / handled with the FlexHub coworking option?

Answer: Individual end users will be responsible for parking.

46) Question: Is there a delay in projects, systems furniture due to COVID?

Answer: Please check with your GSA regional project manager for any specific project impacts caused by COVID-19 or supply chain disruptions.