U.S. General Services Administration

ANSWER

Applications 'N Support for Widely-diverse End-user Requirements

Ordering Guide

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General

The ANSWER Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) is a Multiple Award, Indefinite Delivery /Indefinite Quantity (MA/IDIQ) contract vehicle with a ceiling value of $25 Billion. The following industry partners are prime contractors on ANSWER:

- General Dynamics (*formerly Anteon*)
- Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.
- Computer Sciences Corporation
- CSC Systems and Solutions, LLC (*formerly Dyncorp*)
- L-3 Service, Inc (*formerly L-3Communications,Government Services,Inc & EER Systems*)
- CACI (*formerly Information Systems Support*)
- ITS Corporation
- TASC, Inc.(*formerly Litton /PRC*)
- Northrop Grumman Information Technology (*formerly Logicon*)
- Science Applications International Corporation

Through the use of ANSWER, all Federal government agencies have a flexible means of meeting Information Technology (IT) needs quickly, efficiently, and cost effectively. Solutions provided under ANSWER encompass the full spectrum of IT requirements, including hardware, software, firmware and other related supplies that are integral and necessary for the IT being acquired under the order. Services include, but are not limited to:

- Information Assurance
- Communications and networking solutions
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Information Center/ Help Desk Support
- Client Relationship Management (CRM)

- Software Engineering and Management
- Systems Integration
- Web-Enabled Solutions
- Global Information Systems
- Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA)

Authority

The Office of Management and Budget has designated the US General Services Administration as an Executive Agent for Governmentwide IT acquisitions pursuant to Section 5112(e) of the Clinger-Cohen Act, 40 U.S.C. 1412(e).

Economy Act

Orders issued against the ANSWER contracts are not subject to the Economy Act. FAR 17.500(b) (2), states the Economy Act does not apply to acquisition using Governmentwide acquisition contracts.

Order Types

As defined in FAR Part 16, Type of Contracts, all fixed-price, time and materials (T&M), and labor-hour (L-H) contract types are permissible for orders under the basic contract.

Contract Period of Performance

ANSWER is a 10-year contract with a two-year base and eight one-year options (December 30, 1998 to December 30, 2008). Note: A modification was issued to extend the ANSWER contract period of performance by six months. The ANSWER GWAC expires on **June 30, 2009**.

Task Order Period of Performance

Task orders issued under the ANSWER contract must be completed within the contract period or within five years of task order award whichever is later ***(i.e., ANSWER task orders issued prior to the expiration of the ANSWER contract can be issued for a period of up to five years inclusive of base and options).***

Protests

In accordance with FAR 16.505(a)(9), no protest under FAR 33.1 is authorized in connection with the issuance or proposed issuance of an order under a task order or delivery-order contract except for a protest on the grounds that the order increases the scope, period or maximum value of the contract.

Who Can Use ANSWER?

The ANSWER GWAC is for use by all Federal agencies and authorized support services federal agency contractors (See GSA Order ADM 4800.2E "Eligibility to Use GSA Sources of Supply and Services")

Fee

The Enterprise GWAC Center receives a Contract Access Fee (CAF) of 0.75% for task orders placed under the ANSWER Contracts. The CAF is applied to all invoiced costs, including other direct costs (ODCs), in accordance with Section G.3.3 of the contract. While this fee is incorporated into the ANSWER ceiling rates for labor, it is not already accounted for on ODCs and will be separately itemized. The fee is remitted back to GSA via the contractor.

How to Access the ANSWER Contract

Orders are placed on the ANSWER contract by Contracting Officers who have received a delegation of procurement authority (DPA) from the ANSWER Procuring Contracting Officer (PCO). If the Contracting Officer with a DPA placing the order is a GSA employee, the action is considered a GSA-Managed Acquisition. If the Contracting Officer is not a GSA employee, the action is considered a Client-Managed Acquisition.

GSA-Managed Acquisitions:

An agency may elect to have GSA provide full acquisition services from cradle to grave. Please visit the ANSWER website to contact any of our regional assisted service centers.

Client-Managed Acquisitions:

GSA can delegate, on an individual basis, direct procurement authority to issue and manage your own task order. This is called direct order direct bill authority (DODB), and is established with client agency entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with GSA. Once an MOU is established and training has been completed, GSA will issue a Delegation of Procurement Authority (DPA) to the client Contracting Officer to issue, modify, and manage task orders (to include task order closeout).

Ordering Steps

The procedures for selecting contractors for task order awards under this contract are governed by FAR 16.505.

Six Easy Steps to Awarding an ANSWER Task Order Requirement

Step 1 – Develop Acquisition Plan
Step 2 –Complete MOU and DPA, Obtain GWAC Training
Step 3 - Develop SOW or PWS or SOO
Step 4 – Request for Task Order Proposal
Step 5 - Evaluation
Step 6 –Debrief and Award

Note: The processes and procedures in this ordering guide do not override your agency specific procedures. It is the responsibility of the Agency's CO to be aware of any agency-specific policies regarding the issuance of task orders against existing vehicles and incorporating those requirements at the task order level.

STEP 1 Develop an Acquisition Plan

a) FAR 16.505(a) (7) states, "Orders issued under a task order or delivery order contract awarded by another agency (i.e., a Governmentwide acquisition contract or multi-agency contract) are not exempt from the development of acquisition plans (see Subpart 7.1), and information technology strategy (Part 39).

b) Other factors to consider in your acquisition plan:

- Consider price or cost under each order as one of the factors in the selection decision
- Competition requirements in FAR Part 6 and the policies in Subpart 15.3 do not apply to the ordering process

STEP 2 Complete a MOU, DPA and Obtain GWAC Training

a) Complete a Memorandum of Understanding.
b) Complete a Delegation of Procurement Authority.
c) Submit a copy of your warrant.
d) Obtain GWAC training.

- Contact the ANSWER Director of Client Support, Mimi Bruce, or contact the GWAC Call Center at 1-(877)-534-2208.

Note: GSA Contracting Officers are not required to obtain a MOU.

STEP 3 Develop Statement of Work (SOW) or Performance Work Statement (PWS) or Statement of Objective (SOO)

When defining requirements for services, agencies are encouraged to consider the use of performance-based work statements with measurable performance standards to the maximum extent practicable. Upon completion of the SOW/PWS/SOO the responsible Contracting Officer (CO) shall forward the document to answer@gsa.gov to determine if the requirement is within the scope of the ANSWER GWAC.

STEP 4 Request for Task Order Proposal

a) A request for task order proposal may include a SOW, evaluation criteria, contract type, period and place of performance, due date and other applicable instructions identifiable to the performance of the work effort. A task order proposal can be submitted either through the ANSWER email at answer@gsa.gov, the ANSWER Industry Partner website, or through GSA's electronic RFP/RFQ system e-Buy.

b) The contracting officer must provide each ANSWER awardee a fair opportunity to be considered for an order exceeding $2,500 issued under multiple delivery-order contracts or multiple task-order contracts, unless one of the statutory exceptions under FAR 16.505(b) (2) applies: urgency, specialization, efficiency and economy, and minimum guarantee (N/A at task order level).

Note: Exceptions to fair opportunity must be fully documented, and the responsible party must forward a copy of the determination and findings (D&F) supporting the exception to answer@gsa.gov.

c) Other factors to consider when issuing the RFP:
- Incorporating agency specific clauses at the task order level
- Recognizing the amount of time contractors need to make informed business decisions on whether to respond to potential orders (i.e., complexity, risk,)
- Tailoring your task order procedures to each acquisition

STEP 5 Evaluation

a) Evaluation, proposal procedures, and other information specific to particular requirements will be articulated in the individual task order.

b) Other factors to consider in the evaluation process are:
- Evaluating task order proposals consistent with the methodology and selection criteria identified in the order
- Evaluating past performance of similar requirements
- Verifying that labor rates on T&M and labor hour task orders are at or below the ceiling rates proposed on the basic IDIQ contracts
- Determining a fair and reasonable price for Other Direct Costs (ODCs) not established at the basic contract level in accordance with the procedures set forth in Subpart 15.4
- Identifying and validating T&M and Labor Hours task order G&A and material handling rates for ODCs in accordance with each ANSWER contractor's DCAA approved rates (contact the Enterprise GWAC Center for the specific rate information)
- Include options, when applicable (IAW FAR Part 17)
- When citing options in a task order, the full cost or price for the performance of the work must be established and evaluated

- Funding for options must be available prior to exercising the option and no continuation of service shall be permitted until the option has been exercised

c) Document the price and placement of each order, including the basis for award and the rationale for any tradeoffs among cost or price and non-cost considerations in making the award decision. The documentation need not quantify the tradeoffs that led to the decision.

d) Ensure appropriate usage of funding in accordance with the effort being procured and in consonance with appropriations law.

STEP 6 Debrief and Award

a) To preserve equity and fairness and stimulate continuous competition within the ANSWER GWAC contractor pool, debriefs are strongly encouraged.

b) Although, protests are not allowed unless you exceed the scope, duration, and amount of the task order, contract disputes related to other matters affecting the task order award may be directed to the Ombudsman designated for this contract. The Ombudsman will be responsible for those duties described at FAR 16.505(b)(5).

c) Upon award the Task Order Contracting Officer must email the following information to answer@gsa.gov:

- To which ANSWER contractor the award was made
- Exception to Fair Opportunity (if applicable)
- Number of bids received

Client Support

The Enterprise GWAC Center will continue to provide support throughout the life of your task order. You may contact our center with any comments and concerns at 1-877- 534 -2208 or email answer@gsa.gov.

ANSWER Points of Contact

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