

# **RFP Request For Proposal**

## **WORK INSTRUCTIONS**

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# 1 POLICY

Competition between suppliers is one of the most effective ways to ensure that a product or service is secured at the most favorable price and terms. Additionally, the University is the recipient of federal funds and therefore must comply with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) that mandate competitive bidding and require supplier diversification. Based on audit requirements, the University must certify that all transactions comply with the University's policies - not just those that are federally funded.

Procurement Services reviews all vendors for potential regulatory deficiencies, including suspension and debarment listings maintained by the System of Award Management (SAM) and the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). The University may not enter into agreements if a vendor is debarred, suspended, or declared ineligible by a statutory or regulatory authority.

A form of competitive bidding is required for products or services with an aggregate total value of \$10,000 or more. In these instances, a minimum of three bids is required and must be included with the contract request and/or requisition as evidence. Please note, the splitting of purchases through contractual obligations to meet the micro dollar purchase limit is a violation of this policy. The bid amounts include the total term of the contract (example: a blanket contract of \$8000 for five years is a \$40,000 contract). Bids should be solicited whenever the items can be purchased from multiple sources. Upon request, Procurement Services will assist in locating potential suppliers and obtaining pricing and product availability information. In certain circumstances, competitive bids are not appropriate, and the requirement may be waived as outlined in the "Non-Competitive Proposal - Single & Sole Source Justification Form Required" section below. The minimum bid requirements have been established based on dollar thresholds to promote competitive bidding as summarized below and detailed in corresponding sections:

Purchase Type	Contract Value	Bidding Required	Documentation Requirement
Micro Dollar	Under \$10,000	No	Sole bid/quote
Small Dollar	\$10,000 - \$100,000	Yes	Minimum of 3
Request for Quote	Greater than \$100,000	Yes	Minimum of 3
Request for Proposal (RFP)	Greater than \$100,000	Yes	Please contact Procurement Office for assistance
Single/Sole Source	Greater than \$10,000	No	Single/Sole Source Form and relevant supporting documents
Preferred Vendor	N/A	No	Sole bid/quote
Consortium Partner	N/A	No	Documentation from sourced contract through consortium to include bids, RFP, final contract, amended contracts

When the total cost for goods and certain services is greater than \$100,000 and the buyer knows exactly what product or service is wanted or needed and the buyer only needs to know the price, a Request for Quote (RFQ) is required.

When the cost of goods and certain services is \$100,000 or greater and the goods or services to be procured may be complex and/or not have standardized specifications, the Request for Proposal (RFP) process is required. An RFP may be needed if the following conditions exist:

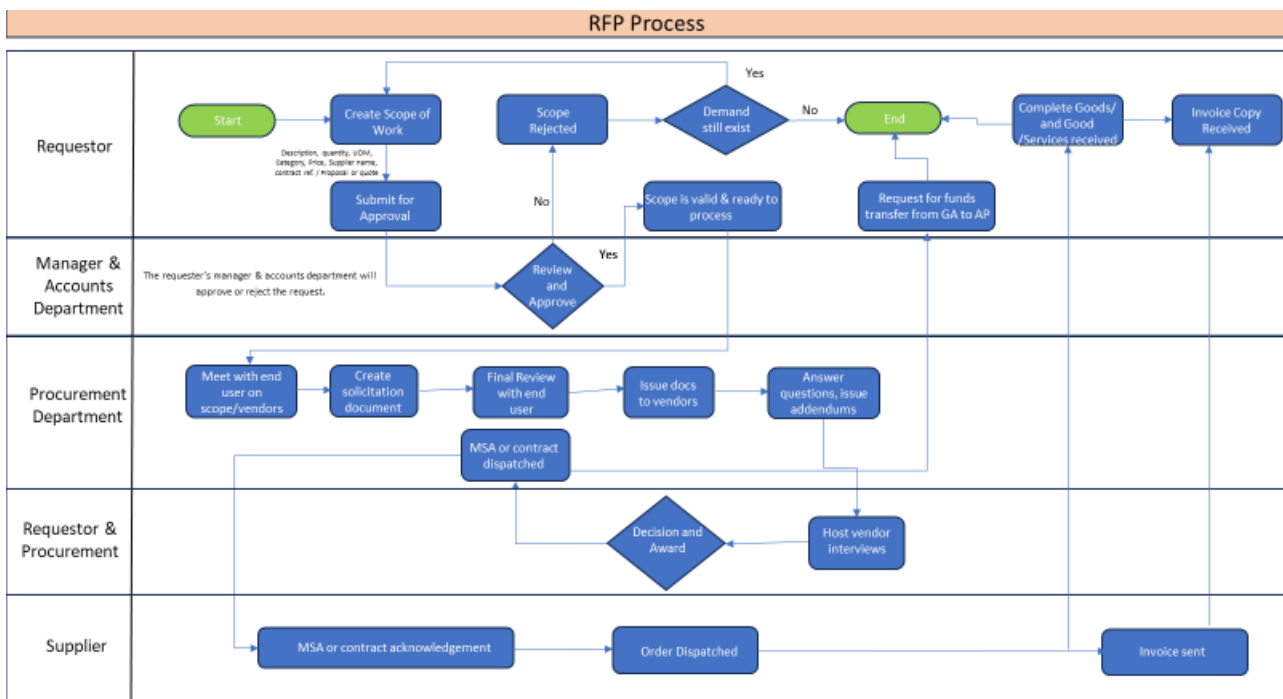
- ☐ multiple solutions are available that will fit the need.
- ☐ numerous suppliers can provide the exact solution.
- ☐ there is a requirement to determine the "best value" of the supplier's available solutions.
- ☐ products/services for the project cannot be specified.
- ☐ different skills, expertise, and technical capabilities are required from the suppliers.
- ☐ the lowest price is not the only determining criterion for awarding the contract.

The RFP process brings structure to the procurement decision by outlining requirements, articulating evaluation criteria including relative importance, and communicating formal activities such as a pre-bid meeting/conference in a single document. An RFP should include standard University requirements maintained by Procurement as well as requirements specific to the product/service being sought. Specifications must be precise and describe the technical specifications for the product or service. The description should include the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards and not contain parameters that unduly restrict competition. Potential suppliers should not participate in the requirement development of the RFP. Suppliers that participate in the requirement development of the RFP will be disqualified from the bidding process for the RFP. For all transactions requiring formalized bids, the department is encouraged to consult with Procurement Services once an RFQ/RFP has been drafted. Procurement will work with the department to ensure the process is completed following University policy and applicable Federal guidance and regulations. If you are unsure if an RFP or RFQ is required for your purchase, please contact the Procurement Services office.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

- **Scope of Work** - The scope of work in a procurement is a component of a solicitation and describes the Department's needs and desired outcomes for the procurement. The scope of work helps to ensure that the product or service meets the documented needs and establishes the parameters of what could be included in the contract.
- **Requestor** – The person or department who is requesting goods or services for purchase.
- **Procurement Department** – The department responsible for procuring and buying the goods or services from the vendor.
- **Vendor** – The company or individual providing the goods or services.
- **Account Department** – The department that handles the invoicing and payment to the vendor or individual for goods or services.
- **Vendor Interviews** – The procurement department will coordinate interviews for those vendors down selected in the process to determine the best fit for the requestor's needs.

## 3 THE PROCESS



### Expanded Process Map

## 4 PROCESS STEPS

1. Requestor creates a scope of work detailing out the general goal of the RFP, including but not limited to:
  - a. description of goods or services
  - b. category
  - c. quantity and/or units of measurement
  - d. estimated value of contract or budget
  - e. potential vendors
  - f. identify specific needs vs. nice-to-haves.
  - g. duration of contract (one-time buy vs. ongoing)
  - h. key internal stakeholders for the project
  - i. existing contract (if applicable)

This information will be entered into a Google Form and then sent over to procurement. Google Form is located here: [RFP Intake Form](#)

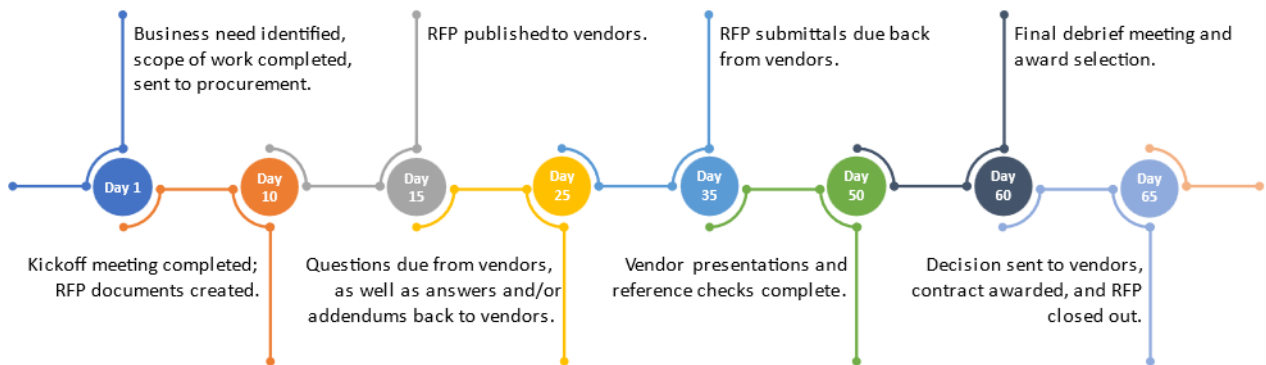
2. Procurement will review the form and the requirements and depending on the category and workload of the sourcing team, they will confirm receipt of the request and identify a procurement agent to lead the project and schedule the initial kickoff call. The Procurement Agent will add the RFP to the internal tracker and assign a new RFP number to manage the project.

3. The assigned procurement agent will schedule a kickoff call with the requestor and any applicable stakeholders to further understand the requirements, talk through the proposed timeline, answer any questions about the RFP process, and review the list of potential vendors. Based on the needs of the requestor, if a pre-bid meeting or the interviews of down selected vendors will take place, the timeline will need to account for these. The selection committee and proposed scoring of vendors will also be solidified on this call. If an RFP has been supplied by the requestor, it can be reviewed during this call as well. SLA - Procurement to schedule kickoff call within 5 business days of receipt of the RFP Intake Form, dependent on the availability of the stakeholders.
4. If after the kickoff call it is determined that an RFP is still needed, the procurement agent will either take the existing RFP supplied by the requestor or begin to create a new one with the RFP template (found on the procurement website). SLA – Procurement to create RFP document within 5 business days of the kickoff call.
5. With a completed draft of the RFP document, the procurement agent will schedule a final review call with the requestor and any applicable stakeholders. At this time the draft of the RFP will be reviewed, notating any changes or updates that may need to be made, as well as the timeline of the RFP. We will also review any applicable documents to accompany the RFP, which will vary depending on the type of request. These could be a map of the area, equipment needed list, example of an MSA, detailed list of services required, etc. This call will take place before the publish date of the RFP, to allow for final edits or changes to be made.
6. Once the final draft of the RFP has been approved by requestor and key stakeholders, the procurement agent will issue the RFP and any applicable documents to the selected vendors. The RFP will include details such as: timeline of questions, responses, pre-bid meeting, submittal due date, and selection date. The procurement agent will be monitoring this timeline, to ensure vendors are responsive and communicate any issues that may arise.
7. Pre-Bid Meeting (if applicable) – In some instances, notably in construction or landscaping projects (but can be any category), sometimes a pre-bid meeting is held. These are held to explain the details of the solicitation documents and suppliers are permitted to ask questions at that time and ask for clarifications. These can be labeled as mandatory or non-mandatory – meaning if mandatory, a supplier’s absence is essentially removing themselves from consideration for this project. These are coordinated by Procurement but hosted by the requestor or stakeholder for the project.
8. As questions come in from the vendors, the procurement agent will collate them and send them to the requestor and key stakeholders to review and provide answers. At this point, a call may be scheduled by the procurement agent to review the questions/answers to see if an addendum or clarification needs to be issued. This can also affect the timeline, and the procurement agent will review that as well. Once all the questions have been addressed, the procurement agent will collate the responses and issue them back to the vendors (reminding them of the due date for submittal of their bid).
9. Once the bids from the vendors have been received, the procurement agent will schedule a meeting with the requestor and key stakeholders to discuss the bids and the next steps. The procurement agent will coordinate the scheduling of the presentations based on availability and timeline.
10. Vendor presentations or interviews are needed to further demonstrate the supplier’s ability to complete the contract and answer any questions around scope of work, pricing, etc. The procurement agent will assist in scoring criterion and any general questions that may need to be addressed by the vendor in the meeting. The procurement agent will schedule meetings with each of the vendors to present their proposals. If required, the vendors will need to submit references (notated in original RFP), and vendors will be notified in this meeting we will perform a reference check.
11. When meetings are complete, the procurement agent will schedule a debrief meeting with the requestor and key stakeholders to discuss the presentations, review vendor evaluation documents, and determine an award. If reference checks are required, the procurement agent will coordinate scheduling these at this time. Sometimes an RFP doesn’t produce the exact result the requestor is looking for, and a path forward can be discussed at that time as well. This could be a cancellation of the RFP, a re-submittal of the RFP to further address the scope and can include new or existing vendors.
12. The procurement agent will assist the requestor and key stakeholders in reference checks to interview the references and ask specific questions presented by the requestor, stakeholders or the selection committee.

13. Once the reference checks have been completed and assuming a vendor has been selected, the procurement agent will move forward with the award to the selected vendor (example in Appendix). They will also notify the vendors who were not selected of the decision as well (example in appendix).

## 5 GENERAL TIMELINE

### RFP Timeline



## 6 APPENDIX

[Supplier RFP Scorecard](#)

[Award Letter](#)

[Non-Award Letter](#)