



“How to Obtain a GSA Federal Supply Schedule Contract” Workshop

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is GSA? What is the GSA SBUC?

If you have a product or service to sell, it's probably something that the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) buys. Each year, GSA – the Federal Government's business manager, supplies and services buyer, real estate developer, telecommunications manager, and computer solutions provider – contracts for billions of dollars worth of products and services. Because it provides the workspace, supplies, equipment and support that other federal agencies need to do their jobs, GSA is one of the Federal Government's biggest buyers.

GSA's Small Business Utilization Center, or SBUC, is the first point of contact for information on how to do business, or how to obtain a contract with the federal government. The centers' small business assistance teams are dedicated to identifying bidding opportunities and contracting vehicles for small businesses. They also provide counseling, information, and resources. The Northeast and Caribbean Region SBUC serves small businesses in New York, northern New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Please visit the GSA Office of Small Business Utilization's (OSBU) website at <http://www.gsa.gov/smallbusiness> to download a copy of the "**Doing Business with GSA**" publication. Please click on the "Small Business Publications" link on the left hand side of the page to access it.

2) How do I obtain a GSA contract? What is a GSA Number?

You may have gone into the office of a Federal agency to try to sell your products or services to them, and the first thing they asked you was, “Do you have a GSA number?” A GSA number is a GSA

Federal Supply Schedule contract number. You can get a GSA number by downloading a solicitation, which is an invitation to submit an offer, from the FedBizOpps web site (www.fbo.gov). Then you will need to send your offer to the GSA Contracting Officer listed in the solicitation package. The Contracting Officer will review your offer and let you know if additional information is required. If you meet all the requirements, you may be awarded a GSA Federal Supply Schedule Contract, which means you have been approved by that Contracting Officer to sell your products or services to the Federal Government.

3) What is the advantage of having a GSA Number?

GSA's Federal Supply Schedules program is the preferred method of procurement for the Federal government. Federal agencies prefer to buy from GSA Schedules because they know they are getting an approved product. Also, it means GSA has done all the legwork for them and negotiated the best price and the best value for their dollar.

4) How long will it take me to get a GSA Number?

In many cases, the average time is 90 days. However, in some cases, due to the volume of offers received, it may take a bit longer to evaluate. This is generally true for the Information Technology schedule, where the contracting staff may receive up to a hundred offers per week!

5) Once I get a contract, how will I know where to sell my products and/or services?

As a contract holder, you will be required to upload information about your awarded products and/or services onto the GSA Advantage web site (www.gsa.advantage.gov). GSA Advantage is the worldwide shopping network that any Federal agency can access and browse to locate and buy a wide variety of products and services from GSA Schedule contracts, and you will be listed along with these vendors. You will also receive a list of Federal agencies along with your award information.

6) Do I need to maintain a certain level of sales once I have a GSA Schedule contract?

Yes, you will need to show at least \$25,000 in sales every year, or your contract may be cancelled. That's why it's so important to market yourself as much as possible to the Federal agencies that buy your supplies and/or services. Most regions have a Customer Service and Marketing Division that can offer assistance in your marketing efforts. The local regional point of contact is Judy Poskanzer. She can be reached at (212) 264-0305 or judy.poskanzer@gsa.gov

7) How do I know if the products/services my company provides are on a GSA Federal Supply Schedule?

Please contact the GSA SBUC at R2.SBUC@gsa.gov or 212-264-1234 for a listing of the Federal Supply Schedules, or please visit Schedules E-Library to obtain a listing and do a search of all the GSA Schedules Contracts at: www.gsa.gov/elibrary

Architecture & engineering, general construction, janitorial and some building services are not on the GSA Federal Supply Schedule.

8) What if my company provides architecture & engineering, general construction, janitorial or a building service that is not on the GSA Federal Supply Schedule?

If you provide these services, then this workshop would **not** be beneficial for you. Instead, please contact the GSA SBUC for additional information, including a list of GSA Building Managers in the Northeast and Caribbean Region. Most Building Management Offices can procure items up to \$100,000 directly.

You can visit FedBizOpps (www.fbo.gov), which is the single government point-of-entry (GPE) for Federal government procurement opportunities over \$25,000. Government buyers are able to publicize their business opportunities by posting information directly to FedBizOpps via the Internet. Through one portal - FedBizOpps (FBO) - commercial vendors seeking Federal markets for their products and services can search, monitor and retrieve opportunities solicited by the entire Federal contracting community. You can register to receive solicitations under the vendor notification service.

9) I am interested in attending this event. Can you please explain the information that will be covered?

This workshop will explain how to access Government solicitations, the most significant sections of an offer, how to submit an offer, and the evaluation and award process. The information is intended to get you started in the process for obtaining a GSA Federal Supply Schedule.

Specifically, here is a list of some of the topics that will be discussed:

- What is a Schedule?
- How do you become a Schedule Contractor?
- FedBizOpps
- Helpful GSA Websites
- Schedules e-library
- Vendor Support Center
- Sections of the Solicitation
- Submission of your offer
- Steps to assist you in applying for a Federal Supply Schedule contract
- Award Process
- After Award
- GSA Advantage
- eBuy
- What are BPAs?
- What Does a Best Value Selection Mean?
- Maximum Order Provisions
- How does the Contractor Teaming Arrangements work?
- eMod

10) I have little or no knowledge about GSA. Is there any information I can review ahead of time that will assist me at the event?

The information contained in this document is meant to provide you with a general overview of GSA. Please visit the GSA website at <http://www.gsa.gov>. Also, as mentioned previously, please visit the GSA Office of Small Business Utilization's (OSBU) website at <http://www.gsa.gov/smallbusiness> to download a copy of the "**Doing Business with GSA**" publication. Please click on the "Small Business Publications" link on the left hand side of the page to access it.

11) I just downloaded a solicitation package. Can I bring it with me to the event?

Sure, you can bring the solicitation package that you downloaded as reference and to assist you at the workshop.

12) I am currently in the process of completing a solicitation package and have a list of specific questions. Should I attend this workshop?

GSA personnel will explain the most significant sections of an offer and will be available to answer questions. However, if you have very specific questions related to a particular schedule, you may wish to call the contracting officer listed in the solicitation package. He/she can best assist you with your questions, since he/she has the expertise and thorough knowledge of that schedule.

Please note that workshop is targeted to someone who has little or some knowledge of the process involved in obtaining a GSA FSS contract. If you have advanced knowledge, then this workshop will be too elementary for you.

13) Will this workshop offer one-on-one training? Will it offer step-by-step training?

Unfortunately, we will not be able to offer one-on-one training at this workshop since there will be approximately 50 small businesses in attendance. Step-by-step training in filling out a solicitation package cannot be offered either due to time constraints.

14) Will I have a GSA contract at the end of this workshop?

This workshop is being conducted to assist you in getting started in the process of obtaining a GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract. You will not leave the workshop with a completed solicitation package or a GSA contract.

15) What if I need additional assistance after the event to complete the solicitation package?

Please contact the GSA SBUC if you are interested in attending future workshops and training seminars. Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) can provide bid preparation assistance, educate businesses on different vendor registrations and incentive programs, and offer one-on-one consulting services as well as training seminars and conferences to keep businesses educated on any new procurement topics. You can find a complete list of PTACs at www.sellingtothegovernment.net.

You can also call the Contracting Officer listed in the package if you have specific questions related to that package. Please note that the Contracting Officer cannot help you fill out the solicitation.

16) I already have a GSA contract. Should I attend this workshop?

If you are already a GSA schedule contract holder then this workshop will **not** be beneficial for you. If you need marketing assistance, please contact Judy Poskanzer at (212) 264-0305 or judy.poskanzer@gsa.gov

17) Will this workshop discuss how to obtain a contract from another civilian and/or military agency?

No. This workshop will only provide information on how to obtain a GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract. If you are interested in obtaining information from other agencies, please download our procurement directory of government contacts. You can access it at <http://www.gsa.gov/smallbusiness/>. On the left-hand side of the screen click on the link for "Small Business Publications" then you can click on the "Northeast and Caribbean Region Procurement Directory".

18) Will this workshop target a specific GSA Federal Supply Schedule?

No. The information that will be discussed is relevant to all of the GSA Federal Supply Schedules. The solicitation packages for all of the GSA schedules are similar and contain a lot of the same basic information.

Since the GSA schedules are handled throughout the country, it is not possible to have contracting officers for each schedule present at the workshop. If you have specific questions about a schedule, please call the contracting officer for that schedule.

19) I still have questions about the event and/or I am not sure if this event is appropriate for me. What should I do?

Please contact us, the GSA Small Business Utilization Center, at R2.SBUC@gsa.gov or 212-264-1234.

Please send us any questions that you may have prior to the workshop, to ensure maximum value to you and to the other attendees. (We will ask that you hold your questions to the end of the workshop, during the Q&A session, as to not interrupt the presentation and flow of information.)