

Frequently Asked Questions for IT BIC Solution Owners

May 01, 2024

The IT Governmentwide Category, under the principles of Category Management (CM), engages in activities to increase small business utilization across the Federal Government. These activities raise awareness of and support contract improvements and opportunities via the IT Best-In-Class (BIC) contract solutions that benefit small businesses to the acquisition workforce. CM has a role in promoting small business utilization through the following OMB Policy Memos: Increasing the number of new and recent entrants (M-22-03); Increasing the Share of Contract Dollars Awarded to Small Disadvantaged Businesses for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 and in Subsequent FYs (M-24-01) Increasing Small Business Participation on Multiple-Award Contracts (OMB Memo 1/25/24).

This FAQ is intended to help the IT BIC Solution Owners continue to meet and/or exceed the Government-wide IT Category Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Small Business (SB) utilization goal of 39%.

The questions and answers in this document were produced as a result of the focus on Acquisition Equity at the Government-wide Information Technology Category Best-In-Class (BIC) Solution Owners April 2024 Check-In meeting and the small business utilization survey issued to the IT BIC Solution Owners.

This FAQ will be updated as needed. Additional questions for Acquisition Equity may be sent to itvmo@gsa.gov.

1. **Small Business Utilization (SBU)** - What strategies can be utilized by the IT BIC contract solutions to continue to increase Small Business utilization on IT BICs?

Strategies that were identified and recommended by IT BICs include the following:

- Review the performance data on GSA's Data 2 Decisions (D2D) Solution Profile [Report](#) on a monthly basis to identify SBU trends early.
- Review the small business resources tab on the ITVMO's [website](#) on a periodic basis for the latest information, guidance, and tools on improved small business utilization.
- Establish regular meetings with your agency's OSDBU and PTAC to provide

training to small businesses on how to find upcoming federal contracting opportunities.

- Conduct training for your IT BIC on small business set-asides at the task order level.
- Participate in vendor engagement, outreach efforts and matchmaking events with large and small businesses that connect industry partners with Federal requirements owners and program offices around forecasted contracting opportunities.
- Develop post event surveys for all industry engagement events to gauge satisfaction and gather feedback from small businesses to make improvements to better support the SB's in the federal IT marketplace.
- Review subcontracting plans and ensure prime contractors are being held to subcontracting goals.

2. Incentives to increase SB Utilization: What incentives can be utilized to increase SB participation?

The incentives include the following:

- **Negotiate Service Level Agreements (SLAs)** into the contract and/or task order, to include incentives to increase SBU.
- **SLA SBU incentive example:** If the contractor meets or exceeds SBA/GSA SB goals for a specific FY, POP, or option yr the contractor can increase their pricing by x (e.g. 1% for every 1% over the SBA/GSA goal for each socioeconomic category) for the following FY, POP, or OY.

3. Barriers: What barriers impede the IT BICs from utilizing small businesses?

The barriers include the following:

- Low number of small businesses in the federal IT marketplace.
- Low number of small businesses in certain IT industries (e.g. COMSATCOM & Wireless)
- Small businesses not understanding how to find upcoming federal contracting opportunities via GSA e-tools.
- Small businesses not forming pre-established teaming arrangements (for those small businesses that already have a MAS IT contract) or entering into subcontracting arrangements, as well as learning from experienced IT BIC vehicle holders who have achieved success post-award.
- Unrestricted IT BIC Vehicles with limited small business competition.

4. Mitigation Strategies: What mitigation strategies can be utilized by the IT BIC's to decrease the number of barriers?

The mitigation strategies include the following:

- Continuously monitor the marketplace outside of the contract to ensure the contract is reflective of emerging/innovative businesses.

- Compare the federal IT marketplace to the commercial market to ensure the markets are reflective, i.e., there is not a substantial small business presence in the commercial marketplace which is not also in the federal marketplace.
- Provide training to small businesses on how to find upcoming federal contracting opportunities via GSA's Forecast of Contracting Opportunities [Tool](#).
- Increase the number of outreach efforts and matchmaking events with large and small businesses.
- Conduct periodic training for the contracting officers and contract specialist using your IT BIC vehicle.
- Increase the number of small business set-asides at the task order level and when new IT BIC contract vehicles are established.
- Hold prime vendors accountable to small business subcontracting goals.