



SOLICITATION PROCESS

Get projects started sooner. Make purchases quicker. Free up purchasing staff. Use PCA cooperative contracts!

A typical procurement process (either RFP or RFQ) takes 6-9 months and thousands of dollars. Purchasing Cooperative of America (PCA) performs all of the required steps of the solicitation process--preparing the solicitation, issuing and advertising, and evaluation and award--and provides the due diligence documentation to Members upon request. Region 3 ESC awards, holds and administers PCA contracts.

Development

- PCA staff with contracting experience and cooperative expertise, along with consultants who are industry-specific products/service experts, develop the Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on behalf of PCA Members.
- Each solicitation template clearly states the terms and conditions, instructions for response, and the due date and time.
- Unique scopes, specifications, evaluation criteria, and pricing sections are written for each solicitation.
- Solicitations include governing law so as to be in compliance with Texas contracting and purchasing statutes and other states' and federal FAR contracting requirements.

Issuing & Advertising & Response

- Solicitations are openly and competitively bid. HUB companies are encouraged to participate.
- Solicitations are advertised in a national publication and (a) local newspaper(s) for at least two (2) consecutive weeks, with responses due at least 3 weeks later.
- Solicitations are posted to the PCA website, the Region 3 ESC website, and the Texas Comptroller's Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD) website.
- PCA provides approved contractors with an electronic link to the solicitations via the PCA website.
- A pre-proposal conference, if required, following the release of the solicitation.
- An amendment to a solicitation, as issued, clearly states what has changed. Responders are asked to sign and submit the amendment page along with their response to verify that they have read and understand the amendment.
- Solicitation responses may only be modified or withdrawn at any time prior to the due date and time.
- Submissions are time and date stamped upon receipt.

Evaluation & Award

- Submissions can only be accepted until the due date and time. Late submissions will not be reviewed.
- Interested parties are welcome to attend the public opening. However, only the names of the respondents are read aloud.
- Responses are reviewed by evaluation committee members in accordance with the evaluation criteria stated in the solicitation. Evaluation factors include qualifications, references, performance capabilities, and best price (which includes pricing and value add products and services).
- Because PCA is a national cooperative, multiple contracts are usually awarded to serve Members in all 50 states. Vendor must score at least a minimum score to be considered for a contract award.
- Contracts are awarded by the Board of Directors of Region 3 Education Service Center, an agency of the state of Texas, and an Award Packet or Non-Award Letter is sent to each company submitting a response.
- Awards are posted to the PCA website.

Learn more about **Purchasing Cooperative of America** at www.pcamerica.org or call Elaine Nichols, Director, at 713-851-1471. Offices at 11811 North Freeway (I-45N), Suite 500, Houston, Texas 77060