

Request for Information (RFI) for Potential Government-wide Furniture Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI)

BACKGROUND

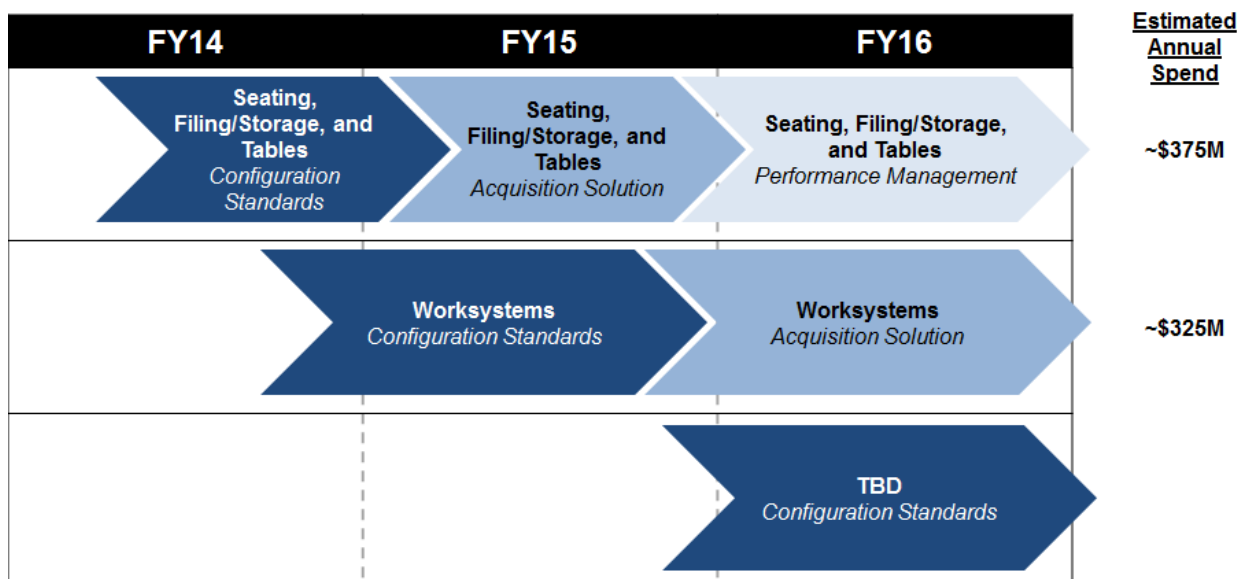
GSA is working with OMB and partner agencies to create 10 new government-wide strategic sourcing (S2) solutions for a range of commonly purchased products and services. One of these new solutions has been proposed for furniture. GSA is taking a lead role in developing this solution, along with several other agencies that makeup the Furniture Commodity Team. Together, the Commodity Team is looking to bring common sense improvements to the acquisition process.

The Furniture Commodity Team consists of more than 14 federal agencies, both military and civilian, that are actively participating in the development of this solution. An important part of the process is working with industry to understand ways the government can reduce its costs through demand management, smarter contracting and performance management.

PRODUCT SCOPE

Due to the complexity of the overall furniture category, the Furniture Commodity Team is considering a phased approach as depicted in the graph below. Under this approach, the strategic sourcing initiative would begin with standardizing configurations government-wide, followed by an acquisition solution to procure the configurations, and finally implementing best practices to manage the assets. The initial scope of this solution would consist of Office Seating, Office Filing & Storage, and Office Tables, estimated at an annual spend of \$375 Million.

Furniture Strategic Sourcing Phased Approach



OBJECTIVE

The objective is to ensure the most effective strategic sourcing solution possible. The objective of this request for information is to foster meaningful and significant Industry feedback through written and verbal communications.

PROCESS

This Request for Information (RFI) is being conducted as a two-step process. The first step is for Industry Partners to fill out responses to questions asked in this document (Each Industry Partner response to these questions will be referred to as a “white paper”). Industry Partners may elect to mark their white papers as proprietary.

After completion of the first step, the second step is to agree to the Ground Rules detailed below and to request a One-on-One session with the Furniture Commodity Team. This request along with the white paper and a statement confirming agreement to the ground rules should be sent via email to: FSSI.Furniture@GSA.GOV

NOTE: *We encourage all interested parties to complete the questionnaire and submit it to the email address above; however, Step 2 is optional and only applies to those Industry Partners who wish to participate in the One-on-One sessions.*

GROUND RULES

1. Both the Government and Industry Partner will communicate with honesty, integrity, and confidentiality.
2. Government resources to perform this effort are limited, so we are only able to accommodate one session per company.
3. No marketing efforts. The intent of this effort is to discuss issues and generate ideas affecting the Furniture strategic sourcing vehicle, not to discuss company capabilities.
4. Participation in this process is strictly voluntary.
5. Industry Partners are asked to provide a substantive response to several of the questions on the white paper. Please keep the length of the white paper to no more than 4 pages (4 one-sided, single spaced pages in Size 12 Font, Times New Roman or similar font). Vendors will have the chance to further expand on their answers during the One-on One sessions.
6. Participation in this effort will have no bearing on future awards of contracts under the Potential furniture FSSI solution.
7. One-on-One sessions will generally last 60 minutes. The content of the One-on-One sessions will be centered around the Industry Partner’s white paper and related matters affecting Furniture, not around specifics of the company.
8. One-on-One sessions will be conducted with two Furniture Commodity team members. However, there may be additional team members present to observe.

9. One-on-One sessions may be conducted via telephone and/or Meeting Space (web based application).
10. One-on-One sessions may be conducted in person in the Washington DC metro area as Government resources allow.
11. One-on-One sessions will be scheduled on a first come, first serve basis.
12. The window to schedule a One-on-One session via submission of a white paper begins immediately and ends on April 25, 2014.
13. There will be a limited number of twenty-five (25) time slots for the One-on-One sessions. We cannot guarantee that all session requests can be scheduled. Once all spots are filled, further requests will be waitlisted.

COVER SHEET FOR WHITE PAPER

Please use the following cover sheet for your submission.

WHITE PAPER COVER SHEET	
	Author's Name:
	Company Name:
	Company Address
	Phone:
	Email:
	Market Research Questions:
1.	Under which NAICS Codes has your company performed under the past 2 years?
2.	For each NAICS code, please identify if you are a large or small business.
3.	If small business, are you a:
3a.	Small Disadvantaged 8(a)?
3b.	Woman-Owned?
3c.	HUBZone?
3d.	Service Disabled Veteran Owned?
4.	What GSA contracts does your company currently hold?
	NOTE: These questions are for market research purposes only and will not have an impact on the award process

WHITE PAPER QUESTIONS

NOTE: Questions marked with an asterisk (*) must be answered in the white paper in order to be considered for a One-on-One session.

1. Should Office Seating, Office Filing / Storage, and Office Tables be considered together or as three separate categories within one acquisition vehicle solution? For example, hypothetically, if the solution breaks out each category separately, vendors would have the option to bid on one, two or all three categories.*
2. What other products would make sense to include in the initial scope and why?*
3. What other products should be considered under scope for the second phase and why?

IDENTIFYING COST DRIVERS

Understanding and addressing operational inefficiencies can deliver win-win solutions for both the Federal Government and Vendors.

4. What purchasing behaviors add to your cost of doing business with the federal government? Are there government operating practices that could be changed to reduce your costs and therefore allow you to offer lower prices?*
5. What other factors affect prices? Examples might include: freight, delivery times, security clearance requirements, “gold plating”, minimum quantities, etc.
6. How can we best streamline the evaluation process, lower your proposal costs, and still make meaningful distinctions?*

STANDARD CONFIGURATIONS

Standard configurations are being developed to consolidate and streamline customer options across the government and serve as a basis for an office furniture acquisition solution. Each standard configuration will define a base model and a limited number of options available (e.g. types of fabric, sizes, etc.), thus limiting the possible number of permutations of a given product that can be procured.

7. What are the benefits (e.g. cost savings) and drawbacks of setting government-wide standard configurations as described above?*
8. What are typical cost saving levers attributable to implementing standard configurations? Examples might include reduction in design services, volume leverage, reduction in “gold-plating”, etc.
9. What are commercial best practices for implementing standard configurations across a decentralized organization?*

ACQUISITION STRATEGY

In addition to measurable cost savings, a new acquisition solution will need to maintain or increase small business utilization, improve procurement efficiencies, and help achieve other socio-economic goals such as sustainability.

10. What ancillary services should be included as part of a government-wide solution? Examples might include design, delivery, installation, warranty, maintenance, reconfiguration, disposal, inventory/storage, buy-back plan, etc. Please include typical terms & conditions for services proposed.
11. Are there specific segments of Small Business that lend themselves to some of the categories better than others?*
12. Are there specific challenges, particularly for Small Businesses, to meeting government-wide requirements under the scope of this initiative? Examples might include capacity, multi-brand requirements, ancillary services, geographic reach, etc.*

OTHER

13. Please use this question to identify any other thoughts, concerns, or ideas your organization would like to share with the Furniture team.

PUBLIC RECORDS AND REQUESTS FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

Any document submitted that contains confidential information must be marked on the outside as containing confidential information, and each page upon which confidential information appears must be marked as containing confidential information. The confidential information must be clearly identifiable to the reader wherever it appears.

COPYRIGHTS

By submitting a response, the vendor agrees that the Government may copy the response for purposes of facilitation of review or to respond to requests for public records. The vendor represents that such copying will not violate any copyrights in the materials submitted.

CONTENT OF RESPONSES

Responses should be based on the material contained in this RFI and any other relevant information the vendor thinks is appropriate. Responses will not be returned.

COST TO VENDORS

The Government is not responsible for any costs incurred by a vendor in relation to the preparation of a response to this RFI.

NO OBLIGATION TO ISSUE REQUEST FOR QUOTE

This notice is for informational purposes only. Responses to these notices are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract. The issuance of this RFI does not obligate the Government in any way to issue an RFQ.