

Quick Reference #3: Potential Solicitations and Outcomes Matrix

As discussed in the NIGP Business Council white paper, “*Everybody Wins: Crafting a Solicitation that Fosters Transparency, Best Value, and Collaborative Partnership*,” when practitioners permit industry experts to provide their agencies with information on best products, processes, and practices, the agencies increase the possibility of improving the effectiveness of government operations. This chart summarizes many of the topics discussed in the paper and can serve as a quick reference guide as you consider incorporating changes.

ACTION	OUTCOME	OUTCOME	OUTCOME
Soliciting information from suppliers before publishing a solicitation:	By evaluating, considering, and accepting many of the supplier community’s comments, the agency attracted qualified responses from a large pool of suppliers.	These actions ensure the agency is getting the highest value and most current products and practices for their spend dollar.	Having the opportunity to interact with companies and address questions provided the agency with information that they may not have gotten through a formal RFI.
Sharing evaluation criteria with bidders from the outset:	The process ensured the agency received the products, services, quality, and capacity it wanted	Pre-published criteria ensures compliant bidders and non-protestable, fair evaluations.	Knowing exactly what is important to an agency is valuable to suppliers, and it promotes transparency on both sides. This in turn will help the supplier prepare a better proposal in the future, thus helping the government agency down the road.
Allowing alternate responses:	By allowing alternate responses, the agency gave suppliers the opportunity to present other options that could be beneficial to the city.	The agency was able to consider fully updated solutions that could lead them to potential cost savings and efficiencies because they included all options available.	
Terms and conditions:	By checking their templates routinely, procurement professionals can ensure the terms and conditions are applicable and up to date. This allows more complete and accurate responses from suppliers.		
Incorporating best value into a solicitation:	By giving suppliers the opportunity to show off how their offering, service, and products could help the agency save time, money and increase efficiency, the agency was able to evaluate best value and potential efficiency gains.	By incorporating best value into its procurements, an agency’s procurement department can work with their end users to determine what is important to them other than getting the right equipment at the lowest cost.	Weighting an RFP to give extra consideration to companies who have a track record of staying up-to-date with technology and adding new features could provide better value to purchases over the life of the contract.
Staying up-to-date on innovations/ enhancements to products and services:	Staying up-to-date about products, services, and industry best practices will deliver the best solutions whether technical, financial or operational.	Procurement personnel do not need to become product experts, but a greater understanding of a product, application, or capability can help with the decision-making process and deliver far more value across the organization than it would have otherwise.	By separating the functional/technical evaluation from the price evaluation, agencies can establish evaluation criteria and be clear about what may outweigh pricing.
Pre-bid conferences and equal access to information vs. confidential or non-disclosed information.	The value of pre-bid conferences is to ensure consistency in its communications to suppliers, increase its transparency, and reduce the risk of a protest after the contract has been awarded.	It allows the agency to incorporate the good ideas and changes in the RFP/ITB without going through the modification process.	