



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 6, 2024

The Honorable Gary Peters  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Section 5(d) of the Promoting Rigorous and Innovative Cost Efficiencies for Federal Procurement and Acquisitions (PRICE) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-88, required the Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAO Council) to submit a report on acquisition innovation, including its benefits for small business contractors in the Federal marketplace. The enclosed report is submitted in accordance with section 5(d).

The President's Management Agenda<sup>1</sup> (PMA) lays out a multi-prong strategy to strengthen the Federal acquisition system so that it consistently delivers greater value to the taxpayer while operating as a catalyst to address some of our nation's top priorities—from advancing equity, to improving the competitiveness of U.S. industries, to mitigating climate risk. The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) Better Contracting Initiative<sup>2</sup> builds on the PMA's vision of a strengthened acquisition system with initiatives designed to help agencies get better return on their dollars in the face of a constrained fiscal environment. The adoption and scaling of innovative techniques and technologies is critical to all of these efforts because it enables the workforce to execute agency missions more efficiently with increased customer satisfaction, better performance and lower cost.

Since 2016, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) has been working with Federal agencies to create an innovation-friendly acquisition environment that empowers, enables, and encourages members of the acquisition workforce to test and share new and better ways of conducting procurements. With the help of acquisition innovation advocates at every cabinet department and agency and a growing number of labs, coaches, and workforce development tools, agencies are using more than 30 different innovative techniques to help them keep pace with the growing challenges facing the Federal Government. These techniques are

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<sup>1</sup> President's Management Agenda: <https://www.performance.gov/pma/>.

<sup>2</sup> Better Contracting Initiative: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2023/11/08/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-new-better-contracting-initiative-to-save-billions-annually/>.

described on the CAO Council's government-wide knowledge management portal for acquisition innovation, known as the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations<sup>3</sup> (PTAI).

The PTAI includes well over a hundred artifacts contributed by agencies across the Federal enterprise documenting successful results, including increased small business participation. Small-business friendly practices include advisory notifications that can save a small business offeror the time and expense of pursuing a weak proposal, technical demonstrations that allow small businesses to showcase their capabilities as they would to their private sector customers instead of engaging in costly proposal writing contests, and debriefings that give small businesses the insight they need to be more competitive in future competitions.

Agencies are also leveraging innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, natural language processing, and robotic process automation (RPA) to modernize procurement operations. The PTAI currently includes 29 use cases discussing how emerging technologies<sup>4</sup> can help agencies increase speed, improve accuracy, reduce administrative cost, and lower risk across the acquisition lifecycle. The use cases are designed to help avoid duplicating efforts and highlight opportunities for partnering on projects. These activities will be guided by OMB policy that advances responsible AI innovation and manages risks from sensitive government uses of AI.

The Federal Acquisition Institute recently released training to increase workforce awareness and encourage use of innovative techniques and technologies. The ongoing emphasis on an innovative mindset that values collaborative problem-solving and risk management over compliance is contributing to greater job satisfaction within the acquisition workforce. The most recent Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey conducted in 2021 and 2022 shows the acquisition workforce providing an 8 percent more favorable response than the workforce at large to questions about being encouraged to find new and better ways to do their jobs<sup>5</sup>.

Adopting and scaling innovation requires a variety of workforce development actions. Earlier this year, the General Services Administration submitted a government-wide proposal to Congress to bolster acquisition workforce development by increasing the Acquisition Workforce Training Fund (AWTF) credit from 5 percent to 7.5 percent of fees paid by agencies in connection with certain interagency contracts. The proposed increase would enable a greater investment in workforce training, including for acquisition innovation activities, but have no impact on net outlays or revenues because the fees used to fund workforce development would already have been paid by agencies through otherwise available appropriations. OMB encourages Congress to expeditiously adopt this proposal.

OFPP will also work with the CAO Council, the Acquisition Innovation Advocates Council, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council, and other acquisition leaders to review current statutory requirements to evaluate where enhancements might be offered to support and accelerate acquisition innovation to better support the acquisition workforce of the future and

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<sup>3</sup> Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations: <https://acquisitiongateway.gov/periodic-table>.

<sup>4</sup> The PRICE Act uses the language "advanced technologies." Throughout this report the term "emerging technologies" is used synonymously with "advanced technologies."

<sup>5</sup> This information was gathered through data analysis by comparing the FEVS results of federal workforce employees at large to the FEVS results of the acquisition workforce.

their customers. Areas of consideration will include, among others, the current responsibilities of Chief Acquisition Officers and Senior Procurement Executives, authorities to pilot new innovative techniques, authorities to help agencies acquire new technologies, and authorities to attract new entrants to the marketplace.

The enclosed report provides additional information on the techniques and technologies that are advancing acquisition stewardship, including small business participation, the key actions that agencies have taken to create a culture that rewards use of innovation, and future actions to scale use of innovation throughout the acquisition workforce. OFPP and the members of the CAO Council look forward to working with Congress on actions that can accelerate the adoption of acquisition innovation to help agencies capture greater value from their contracts and build the diversity and resilience of the Federal marketplace.

Sincerely,



Jason Miller  
Chair, CAOC



Christine Harada  
Senior Advisor  
Office of Federal Procurement Policy  
performing, by delegation,  
the duties of the Administrator  
for Federal Procurement Policy



Andrea Brandon  
Vice Chair, CAOC

Identical Letter Sent To:

The Honorable James Lankford  
The Honorable James Comer  
The Honorable Jamie Raskin

REPORT TO CONGRESS

# Acquisition Innovation & Small Business Participation in Federal Procurement



**Idea**



**Pilot**



**Result**

MAY 2024

The President's Management Agenda<sup>6</sup> (PMA) lays out a multi-prong strategy to strengthen the Federal acquisition system so that it consistently delivers greater value to the taxpayer while operating as a catalyst to address some of our nation's top priorities, from advancing equity, to improving the competitiveness of U.S. industries, to mitigating climate risk. The adoption and scaling of innovative techniques and technologies is critical to all of these efforts because it enables the workforce to execute agency missions more efficiently with increased customer satisfaction, better performance, and lower cost.

The Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAO Council) works closely with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) to support the implementation of the PMA's vision for a world class acquisition system supported by modern practices and technologies. Examples of these collective activities include:

- Developing an innovation-friendly infrastructure for the Federal acquisition system through targeted tools and resources
- Scaling a culture of innovation with leadership support for testing and sharing
- Expanding experimentation opportunities and sustained use of innovative acquisition practices that contribute to meeting the Administration's increase of contracting goals for small disadvantaged businesses and other socio-economic small businesses through increased small business participation in Federal procurement
- Working to strengthen the collaborations of equity in procurement networks, including acquisition innovation and small business communities

This report discusses the innovative techniques and technologies agencies are using to promote acquisition stewardship and the steps that have been taken to create an innovation friendly culture. It also provides a roadmap for the scaling of acquisition innovation.

This report addresses section 5(d) of the [Promoting Rigorous and Innovative Cost Efficiencies for Federal Procurement and Acquisitions \(PRICE\) Act of 2021](#).<sup>7</sup> The OFPP Administrator and the Department of Homeland Security Chief Procurement Officer led a cross-functional working group of [acquisition innovation advocates](#), [industry liaisons](#), and small business representatives under the auspices of the CAO Council. These members convened and collaborated on the Federal Government's use of innovative acquisition practices and emerging

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<sup>6</sup> President's Management Agenda: <https://www.performance.gov/pma/>.

<sup>7</sup> Section 5(d) requires the report address: (i) innovative acquisition practices and applications of technologies that have worked well in achieving better procurement outcomes, including increased efficiency, improved program outcomes, better customer experience, and meeting or exceeding the goals under section 15(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(g)), and the reasons why those practices have succeeded; (ii) steps to identify and adopt transformational commercial business practices, modernized data analytics, and advanced technologies that allow decision making to occur in a more friction-free buying environment and improve customer experience; and (iii) recommendations for statutory changes to accelerate the adoption of innovative acquisition practices.

technologies<sup>8</sup>, including in small business contracting. A total of thirteen agencies participated in the working group.<sup>9</sup>

## **I. Innovative Techniques and Technologies**

### **A. Innovative techniques**

As acknowledged in the PRICE Act, in virtually every segment of the economy of the United States, there are small businesses working to support the mission and playing a critical role in delivering efficient and innovative solutions to the acquisition needs of the Federal Government. From 2016 through the end of fiscal year 2023—with the support of agency acquisition innovation advocates—agencies have identified and implemented over 30 innovative strategies and techniques that have helped them to add new value through the acquisition system. These techniques are captured on the [Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations](#)<sup>10</sup> (PTAI), the government-wide acquisition knowledge management portal for innovative business practices and technologies. Each technique identified on the table is supported by artifacts provided by agencies that demonstrate one or more of the following values: accelerated delivery, increased customer satisfaction, improved performance, or lower cost. A short summary of each technique is set forth in Appendix A.

Many innovative buying strategies are designed to reduce bid and proposal costs, making opportunities for doing business in the Federal marketplace more accessible and more affordable, both for new and recent entrants as well as small businesses who are longstanding participants in agency supply chains. More than half of the innovative techniques on the PTAI have been shown to be beneficial to small businesses, either because the technique can reduce the administrative burden of small business participants or increase the participation rate of small businesses within the government procurement process. These practices include: advisory notifications (known as down-selects) that can save a small business offeror the time and expense of pursuing a weak proposal; virtual oral presentations that reduce costly travel expenses associated with agency engagement during the source selection process; technical demonstrations and code challenges that allow small businesses to showcase their capabilities as they would to their private sector customers instead of engaging in costly proposal writing contests; and oral debriefings that give small businesses the insight they need to be more competitive in future competitions. Agencies have combined these innovations with set-asides to save significant lead-time in identifying a small business awardee.

While most innovative techniques on the table originate from agency ideas, the vendor community also plays an important role in helping to shape innovative acquisition strategies.

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<sup>8</sup> The PRICE Act uses the language “advanced technologies.” Throughout this report the term “emerging technologies” is used synonymously with “advanced technologies.”

<sup>9</sup> In addition to the Department of Homeland Security, agency participants include: General Services Administration, Department of Defense, Department of the Treasury, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, Small Business Administration, Department of Commerce, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Department of Interior, Department of State, Social Security Administration, and Department of Education.

<sup>10</sup> Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations: <https://acquisitiongateway.gov/periodic-table>.

Industry partners are encouraged to provide ideas of their own<sup>11</sup> as well as feedback on existing strategies through the platform. Additionally, agencies are encouraged to request voluntary feedback from industry partners about their experiences with agencies’ use of innovative strategies in acquisitions. The Federal Acquisition Regulation was recently amended to encourage agency use of a new “Acquisition 360” survey tool to help standardize the collection of vendor feedback and experience with the federal marketplace.<sup>12</sup>

Table 1 describes each of the innovative buying practices on the PTAI that are identified as small business friendly with their associated benefit.

**Table 1. Small Business Friendly Acquisition Innovative Techniques**

<b>Innovative Technique</b>	<b>Technique Overview</b>	<b>Small Business Benefit</b>
Affordability	Disclose quality government cost estimates or price ranges early in the procurement process	Provides for better alignment of industry capabilities and government requirements when deciding whether to invest bid and proposal costs
Commercial Simplified Development Procedures	Procure technology development solutions with an agile approach	Improves opportunities for small businesses to obtain Government contracts through manageable commercial-style processes that focus on helping offerors engage with potential government customers, minimize administrative redundancies and maximize opportunities to demonstrate strengths
Discovery	Review and familiarize with requirements in-depth prior to delivery of final proposals	Allows new entrant small businesses to gain insight and a level of understanding about the requirement that would otherwise not be available
Modular Contracting	Make large term contracts into several short-term, lower dollar procurements	Provides small businesses more manageable opportunities, better aligned with their capabilities when they compete for smaller requirements
On/off ramp	Add or drop contractors on multiple-award contracts during the contract’s performance period	Gives small business offerors more opportunities to enter an agency’s supplier base by gaining a spot on the contract vehicle after initial competition and award rather than

<sup>11</sup> For example, the “Challenge-based Acquisition” technique, which gives vendors the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities in response to real-life challenge scenarios, was added to the PTAI based on a recommendation from industry, and includes uses cases from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Defense, among other artifacts: <https://acquisitiongateway.gov/periodic-table/resources/4934>.

<sup>12</sup> Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 1.102-3: [https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-1#FAR\\_1\\_102\\_3](https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-1#FAR_1_102_3).

		being locked out of the market as a prime contractor for a number of years
Rates Only for Pricing Evaluations	Limit price proposal to best hourly rates	Streamlines small businesses' pricing submissions
Remote Acquisitions	Leverage new or existing technology to facilitate all phases of the acquisition lifecycle	Allows new entrants, recent entrants, and small businesses to participate in Federal contracting opportunities who might not be able to otherwise on equal footing as established contractors
Confidence Ratings	Assign holistic ratings rather than strengths, weaknesses, deficiencies or risks	Evaluates offers holistically to capture raters' overall confidence of each offeror's likelihood to succeed, helping small businesses who may be significantly stronger than some more seasoned larger businesses in certain areas
Down-Selects	Conduct source selection in phases with smaller number of companies proceeding to the next phase of the acquisition	Reduces bid and proposal costs for small businesses when they receive earlier feedback, so they can focus their resources more effectively on acquisitions where they have the greatest likelihood of succeeding
Oral Presentations	Hear directly from vendors and their technical experts	Allows small business teams to showcase their technical expertise, even engaging in a dialogue with Government evaluators, while avoiding the cost of submitting a lengthy written technical proposal
Technical Demonstrations	See and test solutions before buying	Allows small businesses to showcase their product, system or team directly with Government evaluators rather than writing lengthy written technical proposals
On-the-spot Consensus	Conduct an immediate consensus evaluation in conjunction with oral presentations or a reading of proposals	Decreases time for evaluation, which reduces the cost and other burdens that a small business must absorb in order to be ready to perform if selected for award
Oral Debriefings	Inform unsuccessful offerors of the award decision	Increases the opportunity for small businesses to compete more effectively for future work because they have a greater understanding of the award decision and their own weaknesses
Select Best-Suited, then Negotiate	Conduct negotiations only with the prospective awardee	Reduces bid and proposal costs for small businesses by focusing only on the apparent successful awardee



Releasing the Selection Decision Document	Release the government award rationale	Increases the likelihood for small businesses to compete more effectively in the future because they have greater clarity and understanding of technical evaluation reports or the award decision
Commercial Solutions Opening	Source innovative commercial solutions with this pilot authority	Lowers barrier to entry for non-traditional companies to work with the government by targeting innovative commercial products and services and not requiring commercial Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clauses
Other Transactions	Use commercial business practices for research, prototype and limited production efforts	May attract small businesses and non-traditional vendors based on agency practices and subject to size or status verification processes
Prize Competitions	Solve unique challenges when prestige, access, or money incentivizes participation, and only reward success	Levels the playing field for small businesses by focusing on knowledge to achieve result (vs. understanding procedural rules) while still giving participants an opportunity to interact with Federal agencies
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I and II Competitions	Demonstrate technological potential for Research/Research and Development (R/R&D) efforts and facilitate commercialization of innovate technology	Increases opportunities for small businesses to develop and bring their products to market, thereby strengthening the small business industrial base
Small Business Innovative Research Phase III Sole Source Awards	Leverage results of SBIR Phase I and II investments	Reduces barriers to entry by helping small business concerns (SBCs) become established sources for the Federal Government, providing capital to help bridge the gap between R/R&D and the commercial marketplace, and expanding marketplace options for SBCs

Table 2 contains some success stories of how one or more innovative practices have enabled agencies to increase acquisition value while promoting greater small business participation.

**Table 2. How Innovative Techniques Have Improved Stewardship and Small Business Participation**

<p><b>ACCELERATED TIME TO AWARD</b></p> <p>The DHS’ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) made a single \$20 million Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity <i>award to a HubZone</i> in 52 days after the solicitation, compared to the prior award in 308 days—an 82 percent reduction in award time. This FAR 15 recompute for doctrine services required the evaluation team to evaluate 18 Phase 1 proposals. Using <i>advisory down-select</i> procedures, the team identified the three most highly rated offerors in Phase 2, and efficiently conducted <i>in-depth oral presentations</i>. The evaluators spent six days in consensus selecting the most highly rated offeror, and then quickly returned to their mission-oriented jobs.<sup>13</sup></p>
<p><b>REDUCED BARRIERS TO ENTRY</b></p> <p>The HHS’ Centers for Medicare &amp; Medicaid Services (CMS) made a <i>small disadvantaged business award</i> for project management and enterprise architecture support to (i) improve Medicare enrollments and beneficiary data and (ii) strengthen and streamline internal and external collaborations. <i>Confidence ratings</i> allowed a thorough technical panel evaluation review of the offerors and a more concise technical evaluation report than that of the traditional strengths/weaknesses format, while maintaining established contract milestones within the established procurement administrative lead time of 105 days.</p>
<p><b>INCREASED AWARDS TO NEW ENTRANTS</b></p> <p>The Treasury’s Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Procurement Innovation Branch partnered with its Industry Liaison and small business office to conduct outreach with vendors who have not done business with the IRS before. Using <i>commercial simplified acquisition procedures</i>, the modular contracting methodology allowed the IRS to make a total of 84 percent of Pilot IRS<sup>14</sup> awards to small businesses. Early Q4/FY 2022 data indicated 58 percent of Pilot IRS <i>awards to new entrants/first time contract holders</i> in the Federal Government and 26 percent of Pilot IRS awards to small businesses registered in the System for Award Management as a small business.</p>
<p><b>INCREASED EFFICIENCIES IN A SMALL-BUSINESS SET-ASIDE</b></p> <p>The Small Business Administration (SBA) streamlined the procurement of the agency’s enterprise agile delivery system, including agile software development and DevOps. The team used multiple innovative techniques in the three-phase evaluation process with <i>brief written submissions, end-users and sample products</i> (user stories and mock sprints), and <i>oral presentations with interview-style questions</i>. In this <i>small business set-aside</i>, the SBA made six \$203M awards in 51 days after release of the solicitation. Many of the quoters expressed their appreciation for the <i>streamlined process</i>, which <i>helped the vendors save preparation costs</i>.</p>

<sup>13</sup> DHS PIL Webinar #52, 2/18/2021: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oo2GPieVs1w>.

<sup>14</sup>The IRS Procurement Innovation Branch implemented Pilot IRS—a procurement technique that allows the IRS to identify, test, and deploy new technologies on faster timelines—to help speed modernization and innovation.

## IMPROVED DELIVERY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Acquisition Management Division, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, and Office of General Counsel collaborated to ensure a successful award for the engineering assessment and data center contract. The NRC conducted hybrid site tours and hosted *remote and interactive capability briefings* with vendors. The collaborations and streamlined access to vendors resulted in an acquisition to a *new entrant and small disadvantaged business located in a historically underutilized business zone (HubZone)*.

## CONTRACT COST SAVINGS and IMPROVED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The Department of Education's evaluation team used *advisory down selects, live oral demonstrations, and on-the-spot consensus* to acquire a modern Acquisition Management System (AMS). The development and implementation of the AMS will create a secure business environment for mission support. Outcomes of this acquisition included improved procurement administrative lead time from 120 days to under 74 days and \$3.5M cost savings from the independent government cost estimate of \$22.1M. *Integrated project team members and program office customers stated, "Transparency allowed reduction in costs and burden to industry, reduction in final proposal reviews, higher confidence with live demos and streamlined evaluation consensus documentation."*

As the above examples demonstrate, innovative buying techniques enable buyers to be more responsive to their customers while simultaneously building diversity and resilience. To build on this progress, the PMA<sup>15</sup> requires every CFO Act agency to demonstrate no later than the end of FY 2024 it has issued guidance requiring use of at least 5 innovative techniques on the PTAI, including at least 2 that are small business friendly.

### B. Innovative technologies

Agencies are leveraging the innovative application of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), natural language processing (NLP), and robotic process automation (RPA) to modernize procurement operations. These innovative technologies are being deployed across the acquisition lifecycle—primarily to reduce human intervention in procurement processes helping agencies increase speed, improve accuracy, reduce administrative cost, and lower risk. The PTAI currently showcases 29 use cases that demonstrate how agencies are effectively utilizing emerging technologies to enhance and streamline acquisition processes throughout the acquisition lifecycle. These use cases include acquisition automations that agencies have either deployed to support ongoing acquisition processes or are actively in development, showing a high probability of implementation. See Table 3.

Similar to the innovative techniques, the 29 automations on the PTAI are organized by acquisition phases, and are featured on "cards" with titles that correspond to the procurement process, activity, or task that they support. Each card provides comprehensive information to help users understand, share, and adapt or adopt the featured automations. This includes a detailed description of how the automation works, its benefits, availability of the automation

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<sup>15</sup> President's Management Agenda's Priority Area 3, Strategy 1, Goal 1.1: <https://www.performance.gov/pma/businessofgov/strategy/1/>.

code, and contact information for inquiries. Additionally, the PTAI offers useful artifacts that can serve as templates for developing or implementing similar innovative technology solutions. In this way, the PTAI encourages knowledge sharing and prevents duplication of efforts, enabling agencies to capitalize on each other's experiences and expertise by partnering on projects, which leverages limited resources.

**Table 3. Automations that Support Acquisition Processes or Analyses Across the Acquisition Lifecycle**



Market Research	
Automation Name	Market Research Bot
Implementing Agency	Department of Labor (DOL)
Description of Automation	The Market Research Bot collects information from various government and public access websites for consideration by contracting officials. This automation is a simplified standard process for conducting and documenting market research to satisfy agency needs (FAR 2.101). This automation covers commercial items or non-developmental items (FAR 10.002(b)), other than full and open competitions with justification (FAR 6.303-2(b)(8)), potential Socio Economic and Small Business Set-asides (FAR 19.202) based on the circumstances and complexity of procurements (FAR 10.002(b)). This automation does not provide any preference or recommendation of the offerors listed.
Type of Technology Used	Robotic Process Automation (RPA)
Solicitation	
Automation Name	Contract Clause Review Tool
Implementing Agency	Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
Description of Automation	A web-based tool allows users to upload contract documents and the Contract Clause Review Tool conducts a review of clauses within the documents to assess whether they are complete and current. Relevant clauses are identified primarily by having the software examine the words in an uploaded document, in addition to a user answering some questions. Missing, outdated, or otherwise erroneous clauses are rapidly identified by the software based on the clause recommendation logic. The Contract Clause Review Tool also provides recommendations for potentially relevant clauses so that Contracting Officers can adjust clause language and move forward with signing a contract that thoroughly addresses FAR and agency policy requirements.
Type of Technology Used	Web application Natural Language Processing/Understanding (NLP) Cloud Computing

Automation Name	Projected Contract Award Date Web App
Implementing Agency	Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
Description of Automation	This web app automates generating projected contract award timeframes. An interactive user interface displays projected award timeframes for pending shopping carts (procurement requests). Projections are made based on a statistical analysis of actual award timeframes from past awards with considerations for type of requirement, time of submission, and workload. The machine learning approach aims to provide ballpark award timeframe projections to build transparency with customers who can access these estimates shortly after submitting their requirement.
Type of Technology Used	Artificial Intelligence (AI)
<b>Award</b>	
Automation Name	Determination of Responsibility Assistant (DORA) Bot
Implementing Agency	Department of Defense (DoD) United States Army
Description of Automation	This automation provides screenshot outputs from SAM.gov and the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIS) websites and populates results that it scrapes into a standard formatted memo that can be used to document contract files after contracting official review.
Type of Technology Used	Robotic Process Automation (RPA)
Automation Name	Negotiation Memorandum
Implementing Agency	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Description of Automation	This automation supports the production of a negotiation (neg) memo for modifications. The automation uses information pulled directly from the contract writing system to pre-populate a neg memo that is reviewed and refined as necessary by contracting officials.
Type of Technology Used	RPA
<b>Post Award</b>	
Automation Name	Contract Closeout Initiation Bot (CCI)
Implementing Agency	Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Description of Automation	The CCI is designed to assist contracting professionals with routine contract closeout tasks. It streamlines and eliminates many of the repetitive and mechanical activities that are a part of the closeout process, allowing contracting professions to spend time and resources on more complex tasks. The CCI bot identifies expired contracts that are available for closeout by scanning the contract writing system and the financial system to identify remaining contract balances. Communications are initiated by the CCI to the COR and vendor to obtain the required documentation for closeout (e.g., verification of satisfactory services, release of claims). CCI creates and populates a draft modification for CO signature upon receipt of applicable documentation. For contract actions with zero-dollar

	balances and a CO confirmation that actions are complete for closeout, the CCI completes the closeout process in the contract writing system.
Type of Technology Used	RPA

In addition to detailed information to help users test, share, adapt, and adopt, as appropriate, acquisition automations, the PTAI acknowledges the pivotal role that culture plays in driving technology adoption and implementation. The "Cultural Adaptation Journey" outlines effective practices agencies have used to address cultural considerations during the development and implementation of acquisition automations.

**II. Steps to Adopt Innovative Techniques and Technologies**

In 1997, the FAR was amended to expressly recognize and encourage innovation as a guiding principle for the Federal Acquisition System.<sup>16</sup> For many years following this regulatory change, few agencies answered the call to innovate. Lack of “top cover”, a compliance mindset, and concerns of acquisition protests were common reasons for reluctance cited during conversations with CAO Council members.

To overcome this reluctance and enable the type of outcomes described in the first section of this report, OMB and the members of the CAO Council began a concerted effort in 2016 to create a culture within the acquisition community that recognizes the value of innovation and embraces its adoption in everyday acquisition activities. This effort includes: building leadership buy-in and issuing guidance; developing and distributing knowledge management tools; building a cadre of agency advocates; establishing procurement innovation labs; developing and deploying coaches; and investing in workforce development. In addition, since 2016, the CAO Council and OFPP have jointly sponsored an acquisition excellence award to

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<sup>16</sup> [FAR 1.102-5\(e\)](#) states, “The FAR outlines procurement policies and procedures that are used by members of the Acquisition Team. If a policy or procedure, or a particular strategy or practice, is in the best interest of the Government and is not specifically addressed in the FAR, nor prohibited by law (statute or case law), Executive order or other regulation, Government members of the [Acquisition] Team should not assume it is prohibited. Rather, absence of direction should be interpreted as permitting the [Acquisition] Team to innovate and use sound business judgment that is otherwise consistent with law and within the limits of their authority. Contracting officers should take the lead in encouraging business process innovations and ensuring that business decisions are sound.”

increase the visibility of innovative acquisition processes and share information about successful practices.<sup>17</sup> To view all OFPP/CAOC Acquisition Excellence Award winners, visit [fai.gov](https://fai.gov).<sup>18</sup>

Efforts to promote an innovative mindset that values creative thinking, outcomes, and risk management over compliance is contributing to a greater sense of empowerment to problem solve within the acquisition workforce. According to Federal Employee Viewpoint Surveys (FEVS) conducted between 2017-2022, the acquisition workforce has consistently responded more favorably than the workforce at large to questions about feeling empowered to use good business judgment in meeting the daily responsibilities of government service.<sup>19</sup> As shown in Table 4, the difference in responses has grown from 1.6 percent in 2017 to 8 percent in 2021 and 2022.

**Table 4. Positive Responses to Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey on Encouragement to Come up with New and Better Ways of Performing their Jobs**

	<b>Acquisition Workforce</b>	<b>Federal Workforce</b>	<b>Level of Acquisition Workforce Positive Response over Federal Workforce</b>
<b>2022</b>	72%	64%	+8%

<sup>17</sup> CAOC FY 2020 Award: As the COVID-19 outbreak occurred, a need was identified to develop a procurement program that would link the American farmer, produce distributors, and needy people across the country. The workforce member developed a concept paper which detailed a streamlined process for the procurement of fresh produce, taking advantage of emergency procurement regulations. The concept grew in scope to support the fresh produce, dairy, chicken and pork industries and it became the Farmers to Families Food Box Program. The Government issued the solicitation April 24, 2020. Over 500 proposals were received by May 1, evaluated within one week, and awards were made May 8, 2020. The innovative acquisition resulted in 329 contracts with vendors valued at over \$3.9 billion with no protests. As of the date of award, over 118 million boxes of food had been delivered to non-profit organizations across America.

CAOC FY 2022 Award: FEMA was tasked by the White House to help administer the COVID vaccine across the country to the American public. This was a massive undertaking, requiring over 6,000 medical professionals to deploy to all 50 states, numerous territories, and overseas. FEMA knew that there were not enough Government personnel to perform this critical function and decided that they needed to solicit the help of industry. The team was able to use six innovative procurement techniques - Advisory Down-Select, Confidence Ratings, Oral Presentations, Interview Style Questions and Brief Proposal Submissions during the Evaluation phase, and On-the-spot Consensus during the Award phase - to efficiently get through 54 proposals and award two \$1.6 billion IDIQs in “warp speed.” What would normally take months or perhaps years, was reduced to just 79 days. This allowed FEMA to immediately begin deploying medical staff across the country to help provide COVID-19 vaccinations to the American public. During the 12-month period of performance, FEMA awarded over 150 task orders and deployed almost 10,000 personnel to Community Vaccine Centers. This helped to rapidly vaccinate the American public, saving lives, flattening the curve, and reducing the burden that had been placed on American hospitals since the beginning of the pandemic.

<sup>18</sup> OFPP/CAOC Acquisition Excellence Awards: <https://fai.gov/about/award-programs>.

<sup>19</sup> This information was gathered through data analysis by comparing the FEVS results of federal workforce employees at large to the FEVS results of the acquisition workforce.

<b>2021</b>	72.6%	64.4%	+8.2%
<b>2020</b>	72.5%	66.6%	+5.9%
<b>2019</b>	65.2%	61.8%	+3.4%
<b>2018</b>	62.7%	60.8%	+1.9%
<b>2017</b>	61.1%	59.5%	+1.6%

Additionally, the Office of Personnel Management’s FEVS 2022 measures new concepts important to the effectiveness of the workforce now and in the future, including innovation, which represents a government priority in achieving agency mission and strengthening the Federal workforce.

OPM FEVS evaluates innovation as “the extent to which the workplace supports the development and implementation of new ideas and approaches. Innovation is foundational to organizational adaptability and employee motivation and, ultimately, organizational success.” In FY 2022, FEVS’s new measure on “Management encourages innovation” indicates an 11 percent more positive response rate from the acquisition workforce at 66.9 percent compared to the Federal workforce at 56 percent.

The discussion below provides greater detail on the individual steps OMB and the CAO Council have taken and how each step is contributing to an innovation friendly acquisition environment.

### **A. Leadership and Guidance**

Building a culture of testing and sharing, where the acquisition workforce continually finds ways to deliver better value for customers, starts with leadership providing the space to try new and better ways of doing business. Such leadership “top cover” not only empowers the workforce to innovate, it also allows industry to participate in Federal procurement more meaningfully to meet mission requirements.

The PMA seeks to empower the workforce and lays out a multi-prong strategy to strengthen the Federal acquisition system so that it consistently delivers greater value to the taxpayer while operating as a catalyst to address some our nation’s top priorities, from advancing equity, to improving the competitiveness of U.S. industries, to mitigating climate risk. The adoption and scaling of innovative techniques and technologies is critical to all of these efforts because it enables the workforce to execute agency missions more efficiently with increased customer satisfaction, better performance and lower cost. Since 2016, OMB has issued seven guidance documents to increase awareness and use of innovative buying practices. See Table 5 below.



**Table 5. Government-wide Management Guidance on Acquisition Innovation**

Policy	Synopsis
<p><a href="#"><u>Acquisition Innovation Labs &amp; Pilot for Digital Acquisition Innovation Lab</u></a> (March 2016)</p>	<p>OMB sets the course for agencies to foster a culture of managed risk-taking in procurement and for integrated project teams to experiment with flexible business practices. The memorandum, issued jointly by OFPP and the Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer (OFCIO), asks agencies to designate an <a href="#"><u>Acquisition Innovation Advocate</u></a> to serve as the agency’s official to encourage testing of new ideas and executing existing practices in better ways. As a result, OMB creates a Federal AIA Council where agencies partner with OMB and other agencies to share best practices and lessons learned, discuss projects, and exchange other related information. The memorandum further asks agencies to stand up an acquisition innovation lab or similar mechanism to help agency programs and their integrated project teams achieve better results. The memorandum also establishes the <a href="#"><u>Acquisition Innovation Hub</u></a>, the central repository for AIA Council materials, and references uses of the <a href="#"><u>TechFAR Hub created by the U.S. Digital Service (USDS) in collaboration with OFPP</u></a>, which includes guides for digital services acquisition techniques, agency case studies, and information about trained digital IT acquisition professionals.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Bringing Additional Software Developers into the Federal Marketplace</u></a> (January 2017)</p>	<p>OMB highlights an underutilized mechanism to increase new entrants in the Federal marketplace for emerging technologies. This joint memorandum, issued by OFPP, OFCIO and USDS, includes practical acquisition steps for agencies to attract new software developers and sample key provisions to incorporate in solicitations. USDS and the Small Business Administration also announce the <a href="#"><u>8(a) Digital Service Initiative</u></a> as a guide for the workforce to quickly procure digital services. This helps agencies implement the Digital Services Playbook <a href="#"><u>Digital Services Playbook</u></a> and <a href="#"><u>TechFAR</u></a> strategies with lowered risk and begin iterative development to attract new entrants with faster procurement lead time.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>"Myth-Busting #4" - Strengthening Engagement with Industry Partners through Innovative Business Practices</u></a> (April 2019)</p>	<p>OFPP brings attention to government-vendor engagements with ten myth-fact scenarios that address key issues in acquisition innovation and communication with industry during the acquisition lifecycle. The memorandum also includes agency examples that demonstrate successful steps agencies implement to overcome misconceptions with industry engagement.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Additional Guidance on Federal Contracting Resiliency in the Fight Against the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)</u></a> (July 2020)</p>	<p>OMB amplifies the importance of acquisition innovation as a key pillar of a modernized procurement system, which demonstrates to be an asset in the face of market conditions that require heightened agility during the pandemic. The guidance includes agency examples that leverage innovative business practices, such as virtual acquisitions that save time and enable acquisitions to continue where they might otherwise have been stopped.</p>

<p><a href="#"><u>Reducing Procurement Administrative Lead Time Using Modern Business Practices</u></a> (January 2021)</p>	<p>OFPP provides multiple agency examples of innovative practices that reduce procurement administrative lead time (PALT). Pursuant to the Federal Register Notice, PALT is defined—and tracked in the Federal award system FPDS-NG—as the time between the date on which an initial solicitation for a contract or order is issued by a Federal department or agency and the date of the award of the contract or order. The memorandum showcases examples on the PTAI, the knowledge management portal that highlights business practices and technologies that agency acquisition innovation advocates and industry liaisons promote for efficiencies across the acquisition lifecycle to improve the responsiveness of the acquisition process.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Advancing Equity in Federal Procurement</u></a> (December 2021)</p>	<p>OMB promotes steps agencies can take, including use of innovative acquisition practices, to meet and exceed the goal of awarding at least 11 percent of contract spend to small disadvantaged businesses in Fiscal Year 2022 in accordance with the President’s commitment for 15 percent of Federal contract spend to be awarded to small disadvantaged businesses by Fiscal Year 2025.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Strategies for Meeting and Exceeding the Small Disadvantaged Business Goal for Fiscal Year 2022</u></a> (June 2022)</p>	<p>OFPP’s joint memorandum with the Small Business Administration, the Department of Defense and the Department of Commerce targets members of the procurement equity network, including acquisition innovation advocates, small business representatives, and industry liaisons, so the partnership can help make advances in promoting equity and acquisition stewardship, including the use of innovative buying practices to attract new entrants in the Federal marketplace.</p>

**B. Knowledge Management**

As discussed in section I of this report, the [Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations](#) (PTAI) serves as the government-wide portal for acquisition innovation and houses agency examples of successfully tested innovative acquisition practices. The PTAI is a collaborative government-industry initiative, sponsored by the Chief Acquisition Officer’s Council (CAOC) and supported by the contributions of Federal agencies. The tool is designed to increase workforce and industry awareness of tested innovative business practices and technologies and encourage further testing, adoption (replication) and adaption (iteration) of these techniques and technologies, as appropriate and consistent with agency policy, the FAR, and applicable law.

Equity in procurement network members, such as acquisition innovation advocates, program managers, contracting officers, small business specialists, industry liaisons, procurement attorneys, and other stakeholders, can refer to the PTAI platform to interact more effectively with each other to build successful buying strategies for their agencies’ mission requirements.

The [Acquisition Techniques](#) page in the PTAI includes thirty-five business practices, from fifteen agencies and with approximately 150 artifacts. The “Small Business” filter identifies nineteen innovative techniques with particular benefits in contracting for small businesses. Three of the top 5 techniques users view in the PTAI—Affordability, Confidence Rating, and Down-

Selects—help increase participation of small businesses in acquisitions. These techniques are described in Table 1, above.

The [Acquisition Automations](#) page in the PTAI includes emerging technology projects to modernize procurement operations with the use innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing, and robotic process automation. Results include reduced human intervention in processes or improve decision-making. The automations are provided as examples to encourage further experimentation and testing of existing automations, developing and sharing of new automations across the acquisition lifecycle, and partnering on projects, which leverages limited resources. Twenty-nine examples and a journey map represent information agencies have shared thus far on technology projects to help avoid duplicating efforts and highlight opportunities for partnering on projects.

The automations viewed most frequently support the following procurement processes, activities, or tasks:

- conducting basic market research;
- making determinations of contractor responsibility;
- selecting appropriate provisions and clauses for solicitations and contracts;
- estimating procurement acquisition lead time; and
- uncovering historical acquisition information to help understand the marketplace and assess the availability of sources.

Examples of agency automations that support these procurement processes, activities, or tasks are identified in Table 3 above.

## **C. Acquisition Innovation Advocates (AIAs), Labs, and Coaches**

### **1. Acquisition Innovation Advocates**

[Acquisition Innovation Advocates](#) (AIAs) are agency designated representatives from CFO Act Agencies that support the development and adoption of new and modern acquisition strategies -- including improved and underutilized practices -- in their agency's ecosystem while managing risk and promoting the dissemination of practices and tools.<sup>20</sup> The AIAs support improvements to all forms of acquisition, but focus in particular on non-commoditized buys. In 2022, with an increased focus on emerging technology in procurement, agencies have also designated AIAs for emerging technologies.

Agency appointed AIAs make up the interagency AIA. This Federal body, chaired by OFPP, meets regularly to broaden awareness of acquisition innovation practices, foster cross-agency collaboration, and exchange information with innovation communities regarding successes and ways to overcome challenges. The interagency council provides a forum for information sharing, including, but not limited to: practices, resources and tools, workshops,

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<sup>20</sup> The initial requirement to designate AIAs is set forth in OMB's 2016 guidance, [Acquisition Innovation Labs & Pilot for Digital Acquisition Innovation Labs](#).

demos, and safe-zone pitches. The discussions encourage the testing and adoption of new and modern business practices and technologies in the Federal acquisition system.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the interagency AIA Council, several agencies have established intra-agency councils of acquisition innovation advocates, including at the Department of Commerce, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Transportation.

## 2. Labs and other safe spaces

A growing number of agencies support environments to test and share practices in safe spaces, and they welcome providing interagency support across government. Three key principles of acquisition innovation labs are (i) leadership support, (ii) experimentation and application of new or underutilized practices, and (iii) information sharing. The following labs embody these principles that help increase adoption (replication) and adaption (iteration) of innovative acquisition practices across the Federal acquisition ecosystem to build a culture of continuous testing and sharing:

- **U.S. Agency for International Development’s Global Acquisition & Assistance (A&A) Lab.** The USAID Lab develops A&A guidance on new approaches for posting on the Agency's Business Process Improvement platform. The USAID Lab participates in global webinars where experienced A&A staff present lessons learned from their work with new procurement and assistance approaches. Coaches work with A&A teams on various aspects of new procurement and assistance methodologies.
- **Department of Agriculture’s Procurement Innovation Effort (PIE).** PIE educates and supports the agency’s Procurement Operations Division contracting officers and their program offices to capitalize on FAR flexibilities. PIE’s framework of techniques, links to videos and resources, and compilation of sample documents is available in their Acquisition Innovation Recipes. Agencies can collaborate with PIE on acquisition innovation basics.
- **Department of Commerce’s [The Lab](#).** The Lab integrates all members of the acquisition team, including contracting personnel, program managers, and procurement attorneys, early and throughout the acquisition and program lifecycle facilitating the use of innovative and underutilized acquisition techniques and smart program management tools. The Lab provides a catalyst for institutionalizing changes that promote flexibilities.

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<sup>21</sup> In addition to the AIA Council, OFPP also chairs several affinity groups where innovators across government share their acquisition experiments and results. Examples of these interagency gatherings include the Procurement Policy and Attorney Roundtable and the Front Line Forum. Presentations broaden attendees’ awareness of innovative acquisition practices and encourage discussions regarding successes and ways to overcome challenges. These cross-agency collaborations encourage testing and sharing and adoption and adaption of new and modern business practices in the Federal acquisition system.

Agencies can consult The Lab on acquisition innovation and program management through an iterative review, analysis, and refinement of techniques.<sup>22</sup>

- **The Department of Defense (DoD).** The DoD has a large innovation ecosystem with numerous acquisition innovation mechanisms across the Services such as incubators, accelerators, and other pathways from doing business as usual.
- **Department of Health and Human Services' Strategic Acquisition Innovation Lab (SAIL).** The Senior Procurement Executive oversees the establishment of an acquisition innovation lab framework to formalize ongoing activities that strengthen testing and sharing of innovative acquisition practices in the department components. Centralization of information sharing and training will help increase use of flexible business practices. Additional support includes experimentation of automations that decrease burden and increase efficiencies in the procurement process.
- **Department of Homeland Security's Procurement Innovation Lab (PIL).** The PIL encourages experimentation with innovative acquisition techniques across the agency enterprise. The PIL provides a safe space to test new ideas, share lessons learned, and promote best practices. It fosters cultural changes that promote innovation and managed risk-taking through a continuous feedback cycle. Agencies can consult the PIL on best practices for using innovative buying strategies, standing up labs and other test spaces, and attending training led by acquisition innovation experts.<sup>23</sup>
- **The Department of the Interior's Innovation Team (DoI Team).** The DoI Team in the Office of Acquisition and Property Management encourages bureau support and participation in the identification of projects to be considered for review and innovation and align those projects with departmental strategic goals.
- **Department of the Treasury's IRS Procurement Innovation Branch (PIB) Innovative Contracting Lab (ICL).** The PIB's ICL uses a modular contracting method based on the flexibility of the FAR to foster innovative procurement for technology at the IRS. The techniques of Pilot IRS allow for non-traditional and small business firms to enter into contracts that test and prototype their solutions. Agencies can collaborate with PIB on acquisitions for emerging technology and other innovative technology solutions for government.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs' Technology Acquisition Center (TAC).** The TAC is a cross-functional organization that provides streamlined business and contracting

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<sup>22</sup> More on The Lab at the Department of Commerce can be found here:

<https://www.commerce.gov/oam/lab/about-the-lab>.

<sup>23</sup> More on the Procurement Innovation Lab at the Department of Homeland Security can be found here:

<https://www.dhs.gov/pil>.

solutions for a variety of major Information Technology (IT) programs using agile acquisition methods to procure cutting-edge IT goods and services for customers. Agencies can collaborate with the TAC on innovative acquisition strategies that support IT Modernization.

- **Department of Veterans Affairs' Acquisition Innovation Lab (VAIL).** The VAIL is a workspace designed to experiment innovative acquisition practices and promote alternate perspectives on existing practices across the Department. The VAIL offers a platform to examine pioneering ideas, along with the sharing of results and lessons learned. The purpose is to inspire ideas from the entire acquisition workforce: program/project managers, contracting professionals, and contracting officer's representatives. The VAIL's goal is to help the acquisition workforce successfully implement evolving and well-established acquisition practices and improve acquisition management throughout the Department.
- **Environmental Protection Agency's Cutting-Edge Contracting Innovation Lab (CECIL).** CECIL supports agency experimentation with innovative acquisition techniques/concepts/strategies and automations/emerging technologies that may be implemented or made available agency-wide. The CECIL framework encourages idea submissions for sampling and experimentation and provides resource guides and toolkits to assist the EPA acquisition workforce with leveraging tested innovations. The [CECIL portal](#) is a web community space for information sharing of acquisition innovation best practices to address Federal and agency-wide acquisition challenges and innovation news.<sup>24</sup>
- **General Services Administration's Acquisition Process Solutions Division.** This safe space, within GSA's Public Building Service Office of Acquisition Management, is dedicated to identifying and implementing emerging technologies to improve processes for the acquisition workforce. The Process Solutions Division is a safe space to pursue emerging technology from testing to production.
- **NASA Acquisition Innovation Launchpad (NAIL).** The NAIL embeds innovators, the workforce and integrated project team members and propels acquisition innovation practices and program management tools for the discovery and use of innovations. The NAIL's cross-collaboration model also matches mission requirements with [industry](#).
- **Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Innovation Incubator (I<sup>2</sup>).** NRC's I<sup>2</sup> serves as an advisory and consultative forum for contracting officers to identify and evaluate emerging technologies and business models with the potential to drive acquisition innovation through adaptation of creative approaches and mindful risk-taking.

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<sup>24</sup> More on the Cutting-Edge Contracting Innovation Lab at the Environmental Protection Agency can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/contracts/cutting-edge-contracting-innovation-lab-cecil>.

I<sup>2</sup> strives to create an inclusive, collaborative, and experimental learning environment where acquisition professionals explore and test new ideas and their feasibility and develop strategies for implementing innovative solutions that enhance NRC's acquisition processes and capabilities. The goal of I<sup>2</sup> is to support contracting officers and agency partners as they navigate the procurement lifecycle in the areas of processes and procedures, timeframe for contract awards, cost, and procurement administrative lead times.

### 3. Coaches

Agencies are creating cadres of experts on the use of innovative techniques who support workforce development and training. AIAs and other workforce members provide instruction on the application of strategies through consultation, hands-on testing of practices, and related assistance. Agencies with established coaching networks for business techniques include USAID, USDA, DoC, DoD, DHS, ED, NASA, Treasury, and VA. All of these agencies, in addition to other agencies, receive procurement innovation coaching training by attending the DHS PIL Coaching Clinic, such as DoI who consults with the acquisition workforce to advance use of innovative acquisition techniques and the SBA. The EPA requires a coach to possess acquisition/procurement proficiency commensurate with FAC-C Level II and a suite of soft skills such as analytical and creative problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, adaptability, and risk-taking. In addition to coaching flexible business practices, GSA provides mentor/mentee support for work related to robotic process automation and DoL has dedicated support particularly for robotic process automation.

#### D. Workforce Development

Training the acquisition workforce is vital to the adoption of innovative practices. Agencies are encouraging, empowering and enabling the workforce to learn from experts and experiment with flexibilities in their acquisitions through training opportunities such as boot camps, clinics, badge programs, experiential learning, and continuous learning credits and certificates.

- [Contract Innovation Exploration](#). This FAI video (FAC 098) helps the workforce recognize cultural barriers to innovation and ways to address them, identify authoritative sources that empower and/or encourage acquisition innovation, and leverage resources and tools that support use of innovative practices and technologies by acquisition teams.
- [Innovations in Acquisitions](#). This interagency video (FCL-A-0036) introduces policy officials and leading innovation practitioners' key initiatives and agency examples of tools and techniques and practical steps of what to do, how to do it, and what to think about as the Federal government looks to increase innovation, reduce duplication, and deliver services more efficiently.
- [PIL Primer](#). This training video (FCL-A-0038) describes the DHS PIL and the lab's approach to changing the procurement culture in the agency and how it is a model to

change the procurement culture in agencies. The presenters share eight techniques that improve procurement outcomes. This is a condensed version of what is taught in the full-day PIL Boot Camp intensive workshop.

- **DHS PIL Boot Camp.** The DHS conducts PIL Boot Camps where the PIL shares the most innovative procurement techniques by the DHS Acquisition Workforce and attendees collaborate in small groups to develop an innovative acquisition solution for a project scenario. This fast-paced, immersive (in-person and virtual) session provides real-life samples, examples, stories, and techniques of acquisition innovation strategies that save time and money while strengthening the supplier base. The DHS offers these sessions internally to DHS and across agencies and/or externally to industry.
- **DHS PIL Boot Camp – The Next Level.** The DHS PIL team conducts this follow-on training to the original PIL Boot Camp by teaching nine additional innovative procurement techniques and conducting small group exercises that focus on optimizing the use of all innovative procurement techniques, including those taught in the original PIL Boot Camp. The DHS offers these sessions internally to DHS, across agencies, and externally to industry.
- **DHS PIL Coaching Clinic.** This hands-on training in real-time is where experts share strategies and the workforce learns new and better innovative practices. The DHS instruction is open to DHS and Federal agencies, which allows for a growing cadre of acquisition innovation coaches across government. The coaching techniques for cross-government workforce development helps scale the application of innovative acquisition practices at agencies in response to their respective mission needs.
- **White House Webinar on Equitable Procurement.** This webinar, with senior acquisition thought leaders and frontline contracting officers, highlights strategies—including innovative acquisition practices—that support achievement of the aspirational small disadvantaged business goal and the President’s Management Agenda strategic goals to address supplier base diversity to advance racial equity in the Federal marketplace.
- **Acquisition Open Opportunities.** This mechanism is a modernized professional skills’ strengthening platform supported by OPM that enhances workforce cross-training, competencies and knowledge transfer by offering or gaining expertise to build skills and collaboration across the Federal government.
- **[Digital IT Acquisition Professional Training \(DITAP\)](#).** This training and development program created and administered in collaboration by USDS and OFPP teaches Federal government acquisition professionals to design innovative and flexible procurements for IT/Digital Services. More than 1,000 acquisition workforce members have been trained in digital services.



- **Innovate to Win.** The DOD innovation competencies and skills model focuses on an individual's lifelong learning journey in three areas of practice dominant in an innovation mindset. The initiative, informed by an advisory group of DoD, industry, and academia, codifies users' innovation skill readiness. The DOD kicked off the Innovate to Win pilot for more than 200 members of the defense acquisition workforce. In the MVP portal, users take a self-assessment, receive an innovation readiness report and commence a personalized curated learning pathway. The initiative could be leveraged as a model for the civilian acquisition innovation credential.
- **USAID Professional Development.** USAID runs a Professional Development and Training program for their Acquisition & Assistance Workforce worldwide. Using research findings and subject matter experts, the program delivers short e-learnings and other micro learning opportunities, provides case studies and toolkits for innovative acquisition techniques and approaches, and hosts a "Spotlight on Innovation" series where guests internal and external to the agency have an interactive space to learn about different innovative techniques.

In addition to the initiatives described above, many CFO Act agencies sponsor a wide range of acquisition innovation events to facilitate workforce awareness and motivate interest in innovative practices and techniques. Events include roadshows, webinars, podcasts, conferences, townhalls, tournaments and idea competitions. More than half of all CFO Act agencies also sponsor different types of workforce recognition and appreciation awards to inspire, incentivize and empower the workforce. See appendices B and C for a government-wide snapshot and agency-by-agency description of training, events and recognition initiatives.

## **E. E-Platforms**

Agencies are encouraged to post innovative acquisition practices and related information on a dedicated portal for government (internal access) and, as appropriate, the public (external access). Twenty-one CFO Act agencies currently host dedicated internal E-Platforms for acquisition innovation (see Appendix B). In addition, at least six acquisition innovation labs maintain public facing portals<sup>25</sup> to increase external awareness and participation in acquisitions that use innovative techniques.

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<sup>25</sup>Public facing portals include those from acquisition innovation labs:

DoC The Lab: <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/lab/about-the-lab>

DHS PIL: <https://www.dhs.gov/pil>

EPA CECIL: <https://www.epa.gov/contracts/cutting-edge-contracting-innovation-lab-cecil>

NASA NAIL: <https://www.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nail-industry-interest>

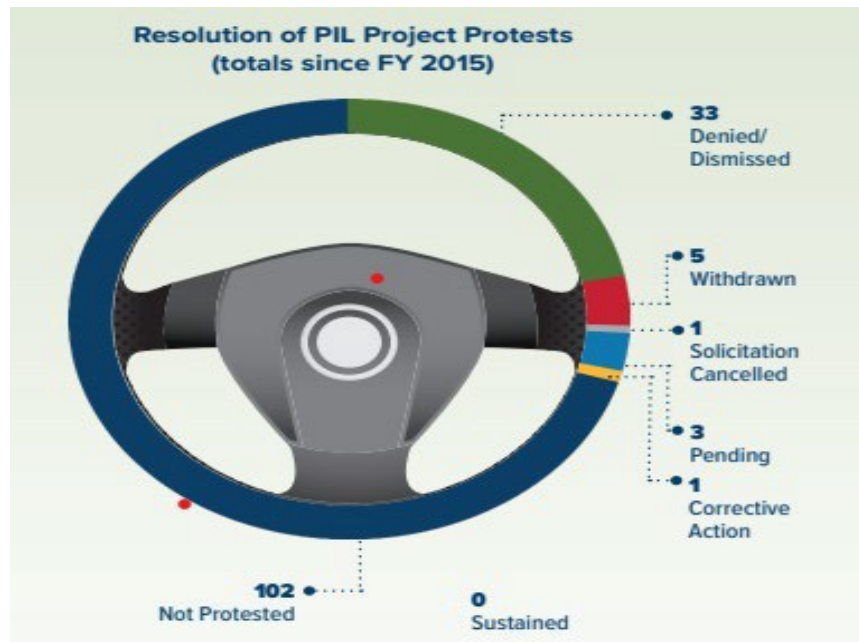
PIB's Pilot IRS: <https://www.irs.gov/about-irs/procurement/about-pilot-irs>

VA TAC: <https://www.va.gov/opal/tac/index.asp>

## F. Measurement

A few agencies have identified measures to help evaluate the impact of their innovative techniques. For example:

- The DHS conducts an annual Competing Values Framework (CVF) Assessment that measures cultural change across the department’s contracting activities. This organizational analysis tool measures four high order values that motivate the DHS acquisition workforce, and shows that the perceived value of innovation (innovation and change; creative problem solving; new ideas) is catching up in importance in the view of the acquisition workforce relative to three other high order values (process control, human relations, and mission outcomes).
- The DHS PIL tracks protest rates on procurements where teams engage with the PIL. Culturally, the fear of protest seems greater than the reward from innovating. Possible solutions to overcome this challenge are for senior leaders to give the workforce appropriate cover and for agencies to involve their general counsel early in the process and provide robust debriefings to offerors. For instance, the DHS reports in its PIL FY 2022 Yearbook they have zero sustained protests since FY 2015 for innovative acquisition techniques in PIL projects (see the visual below).



### III. The Path Ahead: Accelerating Acquisition Innovation

As discussed in this report, noteworthy progress has been made to encourage, empower, and enable interested members of the acquisition workforce to test and share better ways of doing business with the Federal Government. Moving forward, OFPP will work with

agencies to accelerate the adoption and scaling of innovative practices and technologies throughout the acquisition workforce. Some key actions include the following:

- **Increasing emphasis on knowledge management.** This fall, OMB released a proposed Circular<sup>26</sup> to improve acquisition data management and support “hi-definition” acquisition, where agencies acquire supplies or services using relevant, acquisition data that is easily accessed and consumed at the time of need. The proposed Circular recognizes that a hi-def environment requires agencies to actively contribute to existing knowledge portals on innovative techniques and emerging technology, such as the PTAI. The PTAI is helping to improve awareness and adoption of innovative techniques and technologies. Future efforts will focus on design and functionality improvements to make knowledge management even more accessible to rank and file members of the workforce, so promising practices and technologies can be more easily scaled, as appropriate.
- **Continuing stakeholder outreach and workforce inreach.** OFPP will continue to work with agencies to increase visibility of acquisition innovation activities in a centralized manner, including materials that can increase vendor, including small business, awareness of innovative techniques and tools the agency is using to lower barriers to entry and make acquisition processes more efficient and effective. In addition, OFPP and SBA will work together with the AIA Council and the Small Business Administration’s Small Business Procurement Advisory Council to consider how to further improve understanding and use of small business friendly innovative practices on the PTAI.
- **Ensuring adequate acquisition workforce development resources and authorities.** Acquisition innovation is critical to the Federal Government’s ability to keep up with a continuously evolving procurement environment. Adopting and scaling innovation requires a variety of workforce development actions – from increased emphasis on the innovative mindset when an employee first enters the acquisition workforce, to improved knowledge management, as described above, and on-demand learning assets that meet the needs of an agile twenty-first century workforce. Earlier this year, the General Services Administration submitted a government-wide proposal to Congress to bolster acquisition workforce development by increasing the Acquisition Workforce Training Fund (AWTF) credit from 5 percent to 7.5percent of fees paid by agencies in connection with certain interagency contracts. The proposed increase would enable a greater investment in workforce training, including for acquisition innovation activities, but have no impact on net outlays or revenues because the fees used to fund workforce development would already have been paid by agencies through otherwise available appropriations. The Administration will continue to encourage Congress to pass this important legislative proposal.

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<sup>26</sup> *Strategic Management of Acquisition Data and Information:*  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/11/17/2023-25370/acquisition-data-management>.

OFPP will also work with the CAO Council, the Acquisition Innovation Advocates Council, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council, and other acquisition leaders to review current statutory requirements to evaluate where enhancements might be offered to support and accelerate acquisition innovation to better support the acquisition workforce of the future and their customers. Areas of consideration will include, among others, the current responsibilities of Chief Acquisition Officers and Senior Procurement Executives, authorities to pilot new innovative techniques, authorities to help agencies acquire new technologies, and authorities to attract new entrants to the marketplace.

**Descriptions of Innovative Techniques  
Addressed on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations**

**Market Research:**

Affordability: The Government incorporates its quality cost estimate or target price range in the draft and final solicitation, which can reduce pricing gamesmanship for interested offerors, remove inherent incumbent advantages, and ensure a more competitive or realistic pool of offerors.

Facilitated Requirements Development Workshop: The Government facilitates a multi-functional integrated project team through the performance-based acquisition process.

Interactive Q&A: The Government uses interactive sessions to help clarify questions, surface issues in draft and final solicitations, uncover unrealistic requirements and disseminate information to industry quickly without risk to the acquisition schedule. These sessions can be virtual webinars, in-person, or over the phone after the release of the draft solicitation and prior to the submission of questions and answers.

One on Ones: The Government meets with potential offerors interested in conversing with government officials and exchange general information.

Reverse Industry Day: Industry presents its perspectives to the Federal acquisition workforce.

**Solicitation:**

Betterment: The Government incorporates an evaluation factor in the solicitation where offerors can formally propose a solution that exceeds or enhances the Government's requirement; the Government incorporates the Betterment promise, the best-value solution, in the resulting award.

Broad Agency Announcement: The Government issues a notice for a technical/scientific approach for the acquisition of basic and applied research.

Challenge-Based Acquisitions (ChBA): Offerors conduct technical demonstrations in response to a real-life challenge scenario for the Government to test or interact with the technology before it selects the challenge-proven solution for the best suited working prototype or functional automated solution.

Commercial Simplified Development Procedures: The Government uses an agile approach that includes a brief goal-oriented solicitation, short proposal times and short periods of performance for successfully demonstrated technology development services.

Discovery: Offerors ask questions about the requirement and the as-is operational landscape after release of the solicitation and before submission of a proposal.

Enhanced Contract Type Conversion: The Government incorporates a term in the solicitation where it reserves the ability to convert the contract type after award to allow for efficiencies.

Fusion Procurements: The Government incorporates closely related requirements into one solicitation that allows for single awards based on scope to individual vendors.

Highest Technically Rated Offeror with Reasonable Price: The Government ranks or rates offerors based on their scores of the technical factors (see Self Scoring Model) and makes an award to the highest technically rated offeror with the reasonable price.

Modular Contracting: The Government solicits for shorter-term, lower-dollar contracts, such as for software development, that help avoid cost overruns and lengthy schedules.

On/off ramp: The Government can add or remove vendors to multiple award contract vehicles.

Rates Only Pricing for Evaluation: Offerors submit streamlined price proposals and the Government conducts efficient price evaluations.

Remote Acquisitions: The Government and offerors leverage technology and tools to interact virtually or remotely.

Self Scoring Model: Offerors self-certify, or self-score, the technical factors in the solicitation with supporting assertions or documentation.

### **Evaluation:**

Comparative Evaluation: The Government compares one offeror to another, factor by factor and then overall including price quotes; the Government does not use ratings (e.g., adjectives, numbers, colors).

Confidence Rating: The Government replaces ratings (e.g., adjectival with strengths and weaknesses) with confidence ratings.

Down-Selects: The Government uses phases, either in a firm or advisory down-select, to inform low-rated offerors of their limited opportunity to move to the next round before the offerors submit detailed technical and price proposals.

Oral Presentations: Offerors orally present their solutions, which may include an interactive dialogue with the Government.

Technical Demonstrations: Offerors showcase their products' capabilities for Government evaluators to see and test the solutions.

### **Award:**

Brief Decision Documents: The Government documents a concise award decision with material elements of the award decision.

On-the-spot Consensus: The Government immediately documents a consensus decision after evaluation of each offeror instead of preparing individual evaluators' findings and reports.

Oral Debriefings: The Government verbally informs unsuccessful offerors of the award rationale.

Select Best-Suited, then Negotiate: The Government negotiates with the apparent successful offeror (prospective awardee) after evaluation and selection to finalize the award.

### **Post Award:**

Award Term Incentives: The Government motivates contractors to exceed performance requirements, monitored by objective measures, with additional periods of performance, unlike traditional Option periods and award fees.

Releasing the Selection Decision Document: The Government shares the award decision document.

### **Alternative Authorities:**

Commercial Solutions Opening (CSO): The DHS and GSA competitively procure innovative commercial items, technologies, and services using CSO pilot procedures.<sup>27</sup> “Innovative,” within the meaning of this statute, is any new technology, process, or method, including research and development; or any new application of an existing technology, process, or method.

Joint Venture Partnership: The National Technical Information Service (NTIS), within the Department of Commerce, leverages innovative companies, academia, and non-profits to help solve complex data challenges within the Federal government.<sup>28</sup>

Other Transactions: Other transactions are agreements other than procurement contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements, used to attract nontraditional contractors with promising technological capabilities to the Federal marketplace. Twelve agencies have OT authority.

Prize Competitions: The Government establishes a goal and pays only for success. All Federal agencies—except any agency of the legislative branch—have the authority to conduct prize competitions under the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act.<sup>29</sup> Prize competitions are

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<sup>27</sup> The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 (Pub. L. 114-328) Sec. 880 authorized DHS and GSA to implement the Commercial Solutions Opening (CSO) pilot program to competitively acquire innovative and commercial solutions. The Continuing Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117-180) Div. A, Sec. 140 extended Sec. 880 of the FY 2017 NDAA to December 16, 2022 with no other changes. The Further Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117-229) Div. A, Sec.101 extended the date in the Continuing Appropriations Act from Dec. 16, 2022 to Dec. 23, 2022. The FY 2023 NDAA was signed into law on December 23, 2022.

<sup>28</sup> The NTIS joint venture partnership authority allows agencies to enter into an interagency agreement with NTIS.

<sup>29</sup> The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act (Pub. L. 111-358).

useful when ingenuity, flexibility, and collaboration are desired and other government contract instruments are not likely to attract sufficiently innovative solutions. Prize competitions are successful at attracting individuals, small disadvantaged businesses and nontraditional contractors. Prize competitions are not suited for routine services or well understood requirements.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)<sup>30</sup> Phase I and II Competitions: The SBIR program is a three-phased competitive awards-based program that enables small businesses to explore their technological potential and provides the incentive to profit from its commercialization of Research/Research and Development (R/R&D) efforts.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase III Sole Source Awards: SBIR and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Phase III awards provide a rapid and agile approach for all Federal agencies to leverage the R/R&D investments made through competitive SBIR/STTR Phase I and/or II awards for work that derives from, extends, or completes efforts made under either a prior SBIR or STTR Phase I or Phase II funding agreement.

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<sup>30</sup> SBIR and STTR Extension Act of 2022 (Pub. L. 117-358) amended Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. § 638(e)) to extend the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program to 2025.



## Appendix B

### Progress in Creating an Innovation Friendly Acquisition Environment: A Government-wide Snapshot

This appendix provides an agency-by-agency government-wide snapshot of the progress CFO Act agencies are making in adopting and adapting the tools, resources, and cultural practices discussed in this report towards an innovation friendly acquisition environment. A more detailed description of each agency’s innovation profile is set forth in Appendix C. The table below reflects agency progress as of September 30, 2023.

Agency	TOOLS and RESOURCES						CULTURE				
	AIA	Lab	Coach	Training	Sharing on the PTAI*		Leadership Comms	Event Sponsor	Recognition	E-Platform**	
					Technique	Automation				External	Internal
USAID	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
USDA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
DoC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DoD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DoE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
DoI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
DoJ	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
DoL	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
DoS	✓			✓			✓		✓		
DoT	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
DHS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ED	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
EPA	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GSA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HHS	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
HUD	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
NASA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NRC	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
NSF	✓			✓		✓	✓				✓
OPM	✓			✓			✓				✓
SBA	✓						✓				✓
SSA	✓			✓			✓				
Treasury	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
VA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

\*Denotes agencies that have shared techniques (business flexibilities) and automations (technologies) on the Periodic Table of Acquisition Innovations (PTAI).

\*\*Denotes agencies that have an acquisition innovation E-Platform that is either external facing and/or internal to the agency.

**Agency Acquisition Innovation Profiles and Vignettes**

This appendix includes an acquisition innovation profile for each CFO Act agency describing actions the agency has taken to adopt and adapt tools, resources, and cultural practices discussed in this report towards an innovation friendly acquisition environment. Each profile also includes a vignette to describe acquisition innovation in action at the agency.

**Agency for International Development (USAID)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council members
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ Global Acquisition & Assistance (A&A) Lab
	<b>Coach</b>	✓ Coaches ✓ Support USAID ✓ Support for procurement planning and award and innovative procurement tools
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Professional Development and Training webinars ✓ Spotlight on Innovation series ✓ Multi-Faceted Instructor Led Co-Creation training ✓ Interactive Co-Creation Toolkit
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 02 Techniques ✓ 01 Automation
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	✓ Lab Lessons Learned sessions
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ USAID Appreciation Month
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

**Acquisition Innovation at the Agency for International Development (USAID)  
Accelerates Time to Award and Increases Access to Small Businesses**

Increase efficiencies through acquisition innovation. USAID used a **phased acquisition** for an approximately \$500 million contract. The criteria in Phase I enabled the acquisition team to reduce the number of offerors from seven to two between Phase 1 and Phase 2. The **down-select** approach greatly reduced the procurement time for this acquisition. It also reduced barriers to entry for working with USAID by simplifying the proposal preparation process.

**Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ Procurement Innovation Effort (PIE)
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 Coach</li> <li>✓ Support USDA</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Quarterly Senior Procurement Executive Talks
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 02 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 01 Automation</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) Talks</li> <li>○ Innovation is a procurement priority of USDA’s Four Pillars of Sustainability through Acquisition</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Acquisition Workforce Splash page directs user to the PTAI from the agency’s contract writing system</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

**The Department of Agriculture (USDA) Uses a Suite of Innovative Buying Practices  
to Ensure Sustainability for its Data Center Co-location and Migration with an Award to a Small Business**

USDA awarded a contract to relocate the agency's Digital Infrastructure Service Center (DISC) to a Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business for a 10-year period of performance valued at \$22M with a potential of up to \$36M with options. As a result of the contract award, the agency's DISC facility will operate on 100% renewable sourced power. The contract additionally offers many other climate friendly attributes, enabling DISC's comprehensive cloud-based hosting services, associated operations, security, and professional support services to a customer base of 35 federal organizations while supporting the White House's Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad dated January 27, 2021.

Innovations used in this acquisition allowed for ease and effectiveness in selection of highly capable vendor. The innovative techniques used in this procurement were: (i) **one on ones** communications during market research to develop the requirement and to determine effective evaluation factors, (ii) **rates only for pricing evaluation** of offered labor categories using pre-determined scenarios based on anticipated hourly use cases, (iii) **confidence ratings** for efficiency in evaluation, and (iv) **select best suited, then negotiate** which allowed for minor adjustments to technical and price and for the possibility of a Government site visit to ensure the apparent awardee's site condition's power, cooling, availability, and redundancy were tested against required specifications without the burden to verify all offered sites prior to award. The culmination of the innovations used in this acquisition were successful in achieving efficiency in evaluation for the best possible outcome.

### Department of Commerce (DoC)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> <li>✓ Internal agency AIA council</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Lab</li> </ul>
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 Coach</li> <li>✓ Support DoC</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation to award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Badging Program (3 Badges: Innovator (3 levels), Coach (3 levels), Inventor)</li> <li>✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training</li> <li>✓ Disseminate government-wide (FAI/DAU) acquisition innovation training</li> <li>✓ Complete agency specific Digital IT Acquisition Professional (DITAP) training course</li> <li>✓ Webinars and Podcasts/Videocasts</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 04 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 01 Automation</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Lab newsletter</li> <li>✓ The Lab mailbox (TheLab@doc.gov)</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovation sessions at the Big A Conference</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Inventor badge</li> </ul>
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.commerce.gov/oam/lab">https://www.commerce.gov/oam/lab</a></li> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>

**The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Saves Time  
in the Acquisition of Intelligent Automation and Innovation Support Services**

USPTO awarded a \$2.8M Blanket Purchase Agreement task order in 43 days after release of the solicitation. Using a **two-phase, down-select advisory approach**, combined with several other innovative techniques, USPTO efficiently down-selected from nine quoters to select the best suited technical solution. Using the Select Best-Suited, then Negotiate technique, USPTO only requested a Performance Work Statement (PWS) from the apparently successful quoter, then negotiated the PWS with only that quoter. Services include providing external users the ability to search and download bibliographic data in bulk and manage the volume of data downloaded at any given period of time by a particular user to improve patent search capabilities and produce higher quality results that strengthen mission operations.

### Department of Defense (DoD)

Category	Element	Activities ( <i>illustrative example</i> )
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ Acquisition innovation cells throughout the department
	<b>Coach</b>	✓ Support DoD ✓ Support for agile acquisitions
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Credentials ✓ Innovate to Win pilot
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 07 Techniques ✓ 02 Automations
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Blogs ✓ Briefings ✓ Newsletters ✓ Press conferences
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	✓ Public-Private Talent Exchange
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ Defense Acquisition Workforce Awards' Flexibility in Contracting ✓ David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ External <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Innovate to Win: <a href="https://www.dau.edu/innovatetowin">https://www.dau.edu/innovatetowin</a></li> <li>○ Tradewind Marketplace Solution: <a href="https://www.tradewindai.com/">https://www.tradewindai.com/</a></li> <li>○ Defense Innovation Unit: <a href="https://www.diu.mil/">https://www.diu.mil/</a></li> <li>○ Defense Advanced Research Project Agency Acquisition Innovation: <a href="https://acquisitioninnovation.darpa.mil/">https://acquisitioninnovation.darpa.mil/</a></li> </ul> ✓ Internal



**Innovative Buying Practices Help the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)  
Improve Acquisition Responsiveness for Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD)**

The DTRA revamped the multiple-award indefinite delivery indefinite quantity task order process of the \$4B research and development CWMD program. DTRA's process improvements included: a) **two-phase proposal submission and evaluation process** and b) **robust government and contractor interchanges**. The streamlined approach promoted innovation, competition, responsiveness, and efficiency. Results achieved include (i) lowered barriers to entry with reduced bid and proposal preparation costs for each contract holder, (ii) reduced procurement process time by approximately 60 days for competitive task orders, and (iii) improved customer satisfaction.

**Department of Energy (DoE)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ Other Transaction (OT) Working Group
	<b>Coach</b>	✓ 2 coaches ✓ Support for OT planning, evaluation and award
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training ✓ Disseminate in-house training
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 02 Techniques ✓ 02 Automations
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Associate Administrator and Senior Procurement Executive emails for the workforce and remarks at town halls</li> <li>○ Newsletter for the workforce</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	✓ Annual agency wide and component specific symposia ✓ Small Business Exposition with One on Ones
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ External: <a href="https://www.energy.gov/technologytransitions/doe-partnership-intermediary-agreement">https://www.energy.gov/technologytransitions/doe-partnership-intermediary-agreement</a> ✓ Internal

**Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Helps DoE Contracting Officers  
Perform Contractor Responsibility Determinations More Efficiently**

DoE adopted an **RPA bot** which allows contracting officers (COs) to perform **streamlined contractor responsibility determinations** prior to contract award or option exercise. COs utilize the bot, which automatically checks required systems within a matter of minutes and validates the results. This automated process **saves DoE time and decreases errors.**

**Department of Interior (DoI)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ DoI Innovation Team
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support DoI</li> <li>✓ Support procurement planning</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training</li> <li>✓ Innovation focus at Contracting Workforce Town Hall</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 02 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 01 Automation</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive’s DoI Acquisition Flash</li> <li>○ Monthly Acquisition Management Partnership meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovative Acquisition Techniques Focus Group session</li> <li>✓ Contracting Officer briefings to DoI’s Office of Acquisition and Property Management and Bureau Heads of Contracting Activity</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ Small Business Champion Award through innovation
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

**Suite of Innovative Buying Practices Helps the National Park Service Save Time  
Making a Competitive Award to a Small Business for Visitor Center Rehabilitation**

The Cane River Creole National Historic Park rehabilitated the Texas and Pacific Railway Depot with the design and installation of two interpretive exhibits. The procurement team implemented a **two-phase advisory down-select** with brief proposal submissions to view offerors' **sample design products** and hear short pitches through **oral presentations with interactive dialogue**. The team used **confidence ratings, on-the-spot consensus evaluations, and streamlined evaluation documentation** for all factors. After use of **select best-suited, then negotiate**, the agency awarded the contract 33 days after release of the solicitation to a small business within the **affordability** range.

**Department of Justice (DoJ)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> <li>✓ Internal agency AIA council</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 01 Technique</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) policy memorandum and Acquisition Innovation Guide</li> <li>○ Deputy SPE emails</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovation sessions at Conference</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>

**Acquisition Innovation Helps the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) Save More than \$150 Million of its Projected Cost for Operations and Maintenance Services**

The USMS acquisition team used a Performance Work Statement and **Voluntary Advisory Evaluation Procedures (VAEP)** (also known as **down-select**) to identify technically capable offerors. The team also used **on-the-spot consensus** to decrease the time to complete evaluations. The USMS team awarded a contract that withstood rigorous debrief activities and saw an overall cost savings of over \$150 million from the government’s original cost estimate, based on the previous contract’s traditional acquisition methodology. The program office expressed a high customer satisfaction with the contractor’s infusion of technology into the service solution.

**Department of Labor (DoL)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 3 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support DoL</li> <li>✓ Support innovative procurement tools (e.g., RPA)</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Bi-weekly particularly for innovative procurement tools
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 03 Automations
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) emails to the acquisition workforce</li> <li>○ Remarks at town halls</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Customer Engagement Meetings</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Procurement flash sessions</li> <li>✓ Refresher sessions for RPA tools</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

**Increasing Value Add Tasks for the Workforce through the use of Innovative Automations**

In furtherance of the Department of Labor’s (DOL) focus on increasing critical thinking assignments for the DOL Acquisition Workforce, the agency fielded a number of **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)** tools. These tools, namely the Contractor Responsibility Bot and the Letter of Intent Bot, automate certain routine tasks previously performed by highly-trained members of the Acquisition Workforce. Contracting Officers (COs) remain involved in these processes while these tools permit the COs to focus on the respective

task areas that require their highly developed skillsets. Another benefit of using the RPA tools is reducing risk by standardizing processes across the enterprise.



**Department of State (DoS)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training</li> <li>✓ Disseminate government-wide (FAI/DAU) acquisition innovation training</li> <li>✓ Complete agency-specific Digital IT Acquisition Professional (DITAP) training course</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive emails and remarks at town halls</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Innovation Corner in monthly acquisition newsletter</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ Innovation Award
	<b>E-platform</b>	

**RPA is Helping the Department of State (DoS)  
Increase Efficiency and Reduce Errors in its Acquisition Data Management Activities**

In furtherance of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act), the DoS successfully completed more than **1000+ transactions** with **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)** to auto-populate draft awards and required fields in the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), the system for federal contract spend. DOS also used RPA to correct data discrepancies between the agency’s internal system module for entering requests, tracking approvals, and placing orders and missing fields in FPDS. These RPA use cases demonstrate efficiencies in process improvements.

Additionally, the DoS' implementation of a **mass closeout functionality** provides overseas Contracting Officers (COs) the ability to close out up to 500 files at one time. The mass closeout functionality, with pre-established criteria, helps COs identify contract and procurement award files eligible for immediate closeout. Overseas contracts and procurements awarded using simplified acquisition procedures (purchase orders and purchase card orders under \$250,000) with proof of final receipt and final payment in the Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS, a contracting and finance tool) are now eligible for mass closeout. Using this functionality, the DoS closed out **more than 4,000 open records** in fiscal year 2023.

**Department of Transportation (DoT)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> <li>✓ Internal agency AIA council</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disseminate in-house training sessions</li> <li>✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 01 Technique</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Innovation is a strategic point in the Strategic Plan of the Office of the Senior Procurement Executive for fiscal year 2020-2024</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovation sessions at Acquisition and Financial Assistance Conference</li> <li>✓ Host DHS PIL training</li> <li>✓ Participate in a Civilian Service Acquisition Workshop</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition &amp; Financial Assistance Innovation Award</li> </ul>
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>

**The Department of Transportation (DoT) Leverages Competitive Research & Development Technologies with Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase III Awards**

The DoT's Operating Administrations advanced initial SBIR investments by utilizing **SBIR Phase III awards** to further adapt technologies for new or expanded purposes related to their respective missions. For example, the Federal Aviation Administration adapted technology to address fatigue in commercial trucking developed under a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration initiative for aviation maintenance workers. In another example, the Federal Transit Administration adapted drone-based grade crossing inspection technology originally developed in response to a Federal Railroad Administration for use in transit tunnels. Leveraging the SBIR Phase III award process saved time and money by streamlining the acquisition process and the ability to continue development from already existing technologies.

### Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> <li>✓ Internal agency AIA council</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Procurement Innovation Lab (PIL)</li> </ul>
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 4 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support DHS and government-wide agencies</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Boot Camps</li> <li>✓ Coaching Clinics</li> <li>✓ Webinars and PILCasts</li> <li>✓ Micro-credential ("PIL Digi-Badge" program)</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 24 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 1 Automation</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Innovation is a strategic point of the Chief Procurement Officer's (CPO) Strategic Plan</li> <li>○ CPO messages in the annual PIL Yearbook</li> <li>○ CPO and HCA "Tone from the Top" in recordings, such as webinars</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Idea competitions</li> <li>✓ Workforce feedback interviews and metrics</li> <li>✓ PIL Team Study Sessions</li> <li>✓ Competing Values Framework organization culture assessment (DHS-wide)</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CPO's excellence in innovation awards</li> <li>✓ Recognition in the annual PIL Yearbook</li> <li>✓ Procurement teams' nominations for government and industry forums/awards</li> </ul>

	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.dhs.gov/pil">https://www.dhs.gov/pil</a></li> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>
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**Acquisition Innovation Drives Cost Savings for Transportation Services  
at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)**

FLETC used a new innovative procurement technique to award a \$31 million contract in 6 months from solicitation release to award with a cost savings of \$2.3 million when compared to the independent government cost estimate. Using the **Share Price with Technical Evaluators** technique after completing the technical evaluation consensus report, the contracting officer shared offerors' price proposals with the technical evaluation team chairperson to ensure the price and technical proposals aligned. The contracting officer effectively completed the price evaluation without engaging in discussions with offerors. Lastly, with the technical evaluation report and price evaluation report complete the Source Selection Official conducted the tradeoff decision and determined which offeror was the best value to the Government.

**Department of Education (ED)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 5 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support ED</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Office Hours
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 01 Technique
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Newsletter</li> <li>✓ Dedicated mailbox for questions and suggestions</li> <li>✓ Remarks at town halls</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovation sessions at Workforce Conference</li> <li>✓ Bi-Monthly EPIC Staff Sessions</li> <li>✓ Workforce survey and metrics</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ All-Hands/town hall
	<b>E-platform</b>	

**The Department of Education (ED) Increases Access to Small Businesses with Innovative Buying Practices to Acquire Research Evaluation and Statistical Services**

ED awarded multiple-award, indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts, including a small business set-aside, for research evaluation and statistical services. The evaluation team used **pre-recorded industry day, small business industry day, multi-phase advisory**

**down-select, confidence ratings, and highest technically rated offerors with reasonable price.** These innovative techniques lowered barriers to entry and increased competition opportunities to a diversified and qualified pool of vendors.

### Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cutting-Edge Contracting Innovation Lab (CECIL)</li> </ul>
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 7 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support EPA</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CECIL Introduction Webinar and Knowledge Check</li> <li>✓ Resource guides, toolkits, and playbooks</li> <li>✓ Disseminate coaching clinics</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) communicates acquisition innovation is a strategic priority</li> <li>○ AIA developed media suite for acquisition innovation: CECIL Scenes and CECIL Notes</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Senior executives, mid-level managers, and innovation leads provide remarks at meetings and briefings</li> <li>✓ Idea submission box</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition Works (AcqWorks) event</li> <li>✓ CECIL Scenes podcasts</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ CLP Award Program for Idea Leaders, Innovation Coaches, Subject Matter Experts, and Testing Participants</li> </ul>
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/contracts/cutting-edge-contracting-innovation-lab-cecil">https://www.epa.gov/contracts/cutting-edge-contracting-innovation-lab-cecil</a></li> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>



### **The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Institutionalizes a VendorLab with Innovative Vendor Outreach Practices**

The EPA hosted a **small business reverse industry day** which highlighted the perspectives of underrepresented small business concerns. Five industry panelists from various socioeconomic firms shared their experiences with EPA acquisition and provided the acquisition workforce and leadership with recommendations/suggestions on how to improve vendor engagement and acquisition planning processes. The takeaways from this event are helping EPA formulate ways to improve acquisition processes and vendor communication strategies and build awareness among the EPA acquisition community on low-value and value-added industry interactions. An example of the impact of this discussion is EPA's effort to establish an industry-shared community of practice called the EPA VendorLab. The EPA VendorLab will provide technical assistance training and opportunities to dialogue on issues that impact EPA's focus on procurement equity.

### General Services Administration (GSA)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council members</li> <li>✓ Internal agency AIA council</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition Process Solutions Division</li> </ul>
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Support for GSA and government-wide agencies</li> <li>✓ Support for acquisition automation advising and resource sharing</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Federal Acquisition Institute’s (FAI) Cornerstone OnDemand (CSOD) learning assets, such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Innovation and the FAR Guiding Principles</a>; <a href="#">Contract Innovation and Risk Management</a>; <a href="#">Innovations in Acquisitions</a>; <a href="#">FAC 098 Contract Innovation Exploration</a>; FAC 090 Back to Basics: Building and Strengthening Effective Communication with Industry; <a href="#">RPA Video</a></li> <li>○ Knowledge checks (e.g., quiz for agency policy on acquisition innovation)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 08 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 04 Automation</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “A Message from the SPE” emails</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Acquisition Alerts</li> <li>✓ Acquisition by the Topic</li> <li>✓ Email listserv</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition Steering Committee meetings and presentations</li> <li>✓ Senior Procurement Executive meetings with the acquisition workforce and heads of contracting activities</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition Innovation in Action (AIA) awards</li> </ul>
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/acquisition-policy/procurement-innovation-resource-center">https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/acquisition-policy/procurement-innovation-resource-center</a></li> </ul>

		✓ Internal
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### **The General Services Administration Uses Acquisition Innovation to Ensure Sustainability**

The government team prioritized sustainability and early engagement with industry throughout acquisition planning on the Whittaker Facade Prospectus project. The team incorporated Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Low Embodied Carbon (LEC) requirements in the specifications and conducted **interactive market research with industry**. The advertised contract opportunities aligned with industry research to ensure the most favorable outcome - a higher performing building enclosure.

### Health and Human Services (HHS)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ HHS Strategic Acquisition Innovation Lab (SAIL)
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Acquisition Innovation Training ✓ Host DHS PIL training
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 02 Techniques ✓ 02 Automations
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive “tone from the top” remarks</li> <li>○ Acquisition Innovation Newsletter</li> <li>○ Head of Contracting Activity and Bureau Acquisition Career Manager communication channels</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	✓ Innovation sessions at Conference
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

#### **The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Uses Acquisition Innovation to Reduce Procurement Administrative Lead Time by 75 Percent in Making a Set-Aside Award for Biomedical and Clinical Research**

The NIH made a competitive small business set-aside award in 30 days, reducing procurement administrative lead time from 120 days, to a woman-owned small business. The agency used **highest technically rated offeror with reasonable price**, which provided a more efficient and expedient method to select the successful offeror for a full range of comprehensive and specialized, technical, and operational support for NIH’s critical mission of biomedical and clinical research for in-process, planned, and unanticipated requirements.

### Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition Workshop</li> <li>✓ Host DHS PIL training</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive remarks at acquisition forums, such as at All Hands Meeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	✓ Innovation sessions at The Acquisition Summit
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ Innovation in Acquisition Award
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

#### Acquisition Innovation Ensures Best Value Award at The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD's acquisition team awarded a \$12 million contract for the operation and maintenance of HUD's *Enterprise Talent Management System* (ETMS). The contract was awarded utilizing an innovative approach by having a **two-phased solicitation** process. Phase One allowed offerors to submit initial proposals addressing six specific criteria. Based on an evaluation of these initial submissions, HUD used a **down-select** approach and allowed only those offerors who successfully demonstrated their capability for these criteria to move forward to Phase Two. Phase Two included **live demonstrations** of the offerors applications/systems. From there, offerors submitted their technical proposals to include video recordings of their live demonstrations as supplemental information supporting their technical write-ups. Following the evaluation of initial proposal submissions, a competitive range was determined (which included all the Phase Two

offerors). This determination by the Contracting Officer allowed the offerors to address weaknesses, significant weaknesses, past performance, and deficiencies in a revised proposal submission. The entire solicitation process offered transparency, allowing offerors time to fully demonstrate their capabilities to HUD while addressing any ambiguities. This process ensured that HUD was confident in making a best value award to the capable vendor.

### National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ NASA Acquisition Innovation Launchpad (NAIL)
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 15 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support NASA</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Webinars
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 05 Techniques
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership forums</li> <li>○ Enterprise messaging</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovation Tournament</li> <li>✓ Workforce feedback interviews and metrics</li> <li>✓ NAIL Council Meetings</li> <li>✓ NAIL Operational Level Meetings</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Acquisition Improvement Awards (AIA)</li> <li>✓ Enterprise Awards</li> <li>✓ Agency Awards</li> <li>✓ Recognition in Annual State of Procurement Report</li> <li>✓ Continually nominates procurement teams for government and industry forums/awards</li> </ul>
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nail-industry-interest">https://www.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nail-industry-interest</a></li> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>

**The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)  
Uses Special Acquisition Authorities for Commercial Space Innovation**

NASA continues to iterate on its commercial cargo service model. The agency has built on lessons learned from when it first supported development of commercial cargo delivery services to the International Space Station (ISS) through Space Act Agreements (SAA), which are an **Other Transaction** authority, in the first Commercial Orbital Transportation (COTS) effort to develop new ways to deliver cargo to the ISS. The COTS program (i) enabled restoration of American capability to deliver and return ISS cargo in a cost-effective manner, (ii) boosted the U.S. economy by creating jobs in the commercial space sector and enabling the U.S. to recapture a majority share of the global launch market, and (iii) led to the newest spaceport capable of launching to orbit. These results led to additional opportunities for commercial and government users, including through the use of commercial cargo contracts. For example, COTS used SAAs (OTs) to facilitate industry development and demonstration of low-Earth orbit transportation capability, further advancing the commercial approach for the re-supply requirement of the ISS. NASA then awarded service contracts to use the new commercial capabilities for cargo delivery to the ISS. The more diverse supply fleet increased cargo capabilities and ensured more redundancy and flexibility for the ISS Program in the event of a contractor failure or schedule delay. Another key contract enhancement was the addition of an insurance requirement to cover damage to government property during launch services, reentry services or transportation to, from, in proximity of, or docking with the space station. This commercial services model was then applied, with modifications, to NASA's programs in commercial crew transportation, commercial communications relay, crewed and uncrewed lunar lander development, and commercial space station development.



### Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	✓ Innovation Incubator (I <sup>2</sup> )
	<b>Coach</b>	✓ 3 coaches ✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Innovation Catalyst Network Training ✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training ✓ Disseminate government-wide (FAI/DAU) acquisition innovation training
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Innovate NRC ✓ Acquisition Management Division’s portfolio meetings with NRC program and regional offices ✓ Coffee Chat
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	✓ Contracting Officer’s Representative Town Hall ✓ Idea sharing through IdeaScale platform
	<b>Recognition</b>	✓ Innovation in Acquisition Dragonfly Quarterly Award ✓ Innovation Success of the Year Award
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

**The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Uses Innovative Buying Practices  
and Awards its Multi-Million Dollar Case Management System Contract to a Small Business**

The NRC's Acquisition Management Division, including the contracting officer and contracting officer's representative, collaborated with the agency's Small Business Program on this mission requirement. The team explored the capability of the small business marketplace, issued **use case scenarios to drive relevant vendor product demonstrations and hosted interactive capability briefings**. This collaborative approach resulted in a multi-million dollar contract to a new entrant and small disadvantaged business.

### National Science Foundation (NSF)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disseminates DHS PIL training</li> <li>✓ Disseminates government-wide (FAI/DAU) acquisition innovation training</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	✓ 01 Automation
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior Procurement Executive and Policy Director remarks at town halls and trainings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

#### **The National Science Foundation (NSF) Uses Special Procurement Authorities to Increase Awards to New Entrants in the Federal Marketplace**

The NSF increased the use of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) flexibilities and non-FAR based acquisitions, which have increased the number of new entrants to the agency. Recently, more than 10 **Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)** have been awarded this past year. NSF will utilize BAAs, Other Arrangements (OA), and Other Transactional Authority (OTA) due to the success of the BAAs in bringing new entrants to the agency.

### Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training</li> <li>✓ Disseminate government-wide (FAI/DAU) acquisition innovation training</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Engage early in the acquisition planning process and encourages acquisition innovation in Early Acquisition Strategy Information sessions</li> <li>○ Participate in “Share Innovation and Evaluation Best Practices” in Contract Review Board sessions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

#### Acquisition Innovation at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Leads to Multiple Awards for the Acquisition of USALearning (USAL) Integrator Learning EcoSystem Support Products and Services

The OPM utilized the **highest technically rated with reasonable price** technique to award a suite of nine Best-in-Class multiple award indefinite delivery indefinite-quantity (IDIQ) awards with ceilings of \$1.76 billion to small businesses in less than 6 months. This technique enabled OPM to achieve both small business and category management (Best in Class) goals through these multiple award IDIQs for training and education solutions.

### Small Business Administration (SBA)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Primary contracting officer briefs agency contracting staff on innovative acquisition practices
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	✓ Internal

#### The Small Business Administration (SBA) Uses a Suite of Innovative Buying Practices to Award Multiple Blanket Purchase Agreements with On/Off Ramps for Enterprise Agile Delivery Services (EADS)

The SBA used a suite of innovative acquisition techniques throughout the procurement for recycling and media destruction services in regional locations. This **challenge-based acquisition**, with an **affordability** estimate of \$203 million, presented a problem in the Request for Quote and requested offerors to provide a solution. The **three-phase down-select** approach included an advisory down-select in the first phase and firm down-selects in the second and third phases with the team using confidence ratings. Offerors conducted **oral presentations remotely** in the last phase. The government team used **on-the-spot consensus** evaluations to award multiple Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs). With the **on/off ramp** technique, the SBA has the flexibility to remove EADS vendors and award to other vendors during the life of the BPA if there is a lack of performance or competition with BPA Call Orders.

**Social Security Administration (SSA)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	✓ Interagency AIA Council member
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	
	<b>Coach</b>	
	<b>Training</b>	✓ Disseminate DHS PIL training ✓ Disseminate acquisition innovation to the workforce
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	✓ Acquisition innovation publications in bi-monthly newsletter
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	

**Acquisition Innovation at the Social Security Administration (SSA)  
Accelerates Time to Award to Small Businesses for Information Technology Services**

The SSA utilized **oral presentations** in two of its major solicitations for IT services. In both cases, the agency was seeking IT support services through a multiple-award Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) vehicle set-aside for small businesses. SSA determined the use of oral presentations for one evaluation factor - relevant experience - could reduce the procurement administrative lead times and lower costs for small business participants. SSA considered the use of oral presentations successful: for one acquisition with an award value of \$125M over the life of the order, the agency made an award within 90 days; for the other acquisition, despite delays caused by a protest at the solicitation stage, SSA issued an award valued at approximately \$112M in less than 105 days. Additionally, while both awards were protested, the protest grounds were not related to the use or conduct of the oral presentations.

### Department of the Treasury (Treasury)

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Procurement Innovation Branch (PIB) Innovative Contracting Lab (ICL)</li> </ul>
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 4 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support Treasury</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Federal Acquisition Institute's (FAI) Cornerstone OnDemand (CSOD) learning assets, such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FCL-A-0036 <a href="#">Innovations in Acquisitions</a>; FCL-A-0038 <a href="#">Procurement Innovation Lab Primer Video</a>; HBS 421 <a href="#">Innovation and Creativity</a>; HBS 422 <a href="#">Innovation Implementation</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 05 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 05 Automations</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leadership information sharing and dissemination                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Innovation is a strategic point of the Senior Procurement Executive</li> <li>○ Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) leadership promotes and encourages support for innovation in acquisition practices and procedures. This is communicated in the BEP News Training Opportunity notifications, which is disseminated to all BEP employees, as well as the BEP Office of the Chief Procurement Officer Monthly newsletter, which is disseminated to all of the BEP Acquisition workforce.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Acquisition Innovation Advocates' Roundtable                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify opportunities for enterprise-wide adoption of emerging technologies and innovative acquisition techniques</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Treasury's Acquisition Council                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Serve as a primary conduit for sharing and promoting innovative acquisition techniques as well as government-wide updates on acquisition innovation developments.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ IRS' PIB</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promote the use of innovation across the acquisition lifecycle through its one-pager that is posted on the intranet and Procurement Communications news articles.</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ IRS' PIB Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Roadshows</li> <li>○ PIB-a-thon workshops</li> <li>○ Engagements with federal partners (e.g., SB Innovation Research Air Force, DOT and ED Acquisition Conference, DITAP Alumni Events, and Acquisition Innovation Advocate Round Tables)</li> <li>○ Industry engagement events, including IRS Day</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovation Achievement Awards Program (AIAAP)</li> </ul>
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.irs.gov/about-irs/procurement/about-pilot-irs">https://www.irs.gov/about-irs/procurement/about-pilot-irs</a></li> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>

**The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Uses Reimagined Simplified Commercial Procedures to Improve Data Management of Electronic Records**

One of the IRS Enterprise Digitalization & Case Management Office's (EDCMO) mission-related goals was to support the IRS' efforts in creating an environment where data is available, accessible, and usable in formats that enables data-driven decision-making at all levels of the organization. One of the requirements was to enhance taxpayer service and address the Transition to Electronic Records policy. It was EDCMO's goal to scan and extract machine-readable data for upwards to a billion pages. The Innovation Contracting Lab (ICL) supported EDCMO in achieving their mission by using an **incremental and modular contracting approach** to identify, test, and deploy solutions via the **Pilot IRS technique** (aka **commercial simplified development procedures**). ICL utilized **oral presentations** and **on-the-spot consensus** to evaluate all the potential vendors and quickly make five awards with the combination of innovation techniques.



**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

Category	Element	Activities
<b>Tools and Resources</b>	<b>AIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interagency AIA Council member</li> </ul>
	<b>Lab/Safe Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ VA Acquisition Innovation Lab (VAIL)</li> <li>✓ Technology Acquisition Center (TAC)</li> </ul>
	<b>Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 Coaches</li> <li>✓ Support VA</li> <li>✓ Support for procurement planning, evaluation and award</li> </ul>
	<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ VAIL emerging technology projects</li> </ul>
	<b>Sharing on PTAI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 05 Techniques</li> <li>✓ 01 Automation</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Leadership Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ VAIL emerging technology demos via agency-wide distributed emails</li> <li>✓ VAIL project information at agency town halls</li> <li>✓ VAIL mailbox for questions, submissions, and feedback</li> </ul>
	<b>Event Sponsor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Project demos at town hall meetings</li> </ul>
	<b>Recognition</b>	
	<b>E-platform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ External: <a href="https://www.va.gov/opal/tac/index.asp">https://www.va.gov/opal/tac/index.asp</a></li> <li>✓ Internal</li> </ul>

**The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Uses Acquisition Innovation and Makes Multiple Awards to Small Businesses for VA’s Customer Experience, DevOps & Agile Releases**

The VA established a \$250M multiple award indefinite delivery indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract to four service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSBs) within ten months of the solicitation release date for the VA’s Digital Modernization Strategy. The VA designed the solicitation to encourage new entrants to the market while supporting VA’s small business goals and VA’s Vets First

SDVOSB set-aside requirement. The agency utilized a **two-step evaluation** process with an **advisory down-select** in step 1. In the **remote decision challenge** in step 2, the agency gave offerors a real-world challenge to design a solution and deliver services incorporating the actual experience of the people whom they were meant to serve -- Veterans. The solicitation also utilized a **highest rated with a fair and reasonable basis** for award which allowed the VA to focus on the technical merits of a proposal prior to price considerations.